

[Pauperism in Poplar].

Contributors

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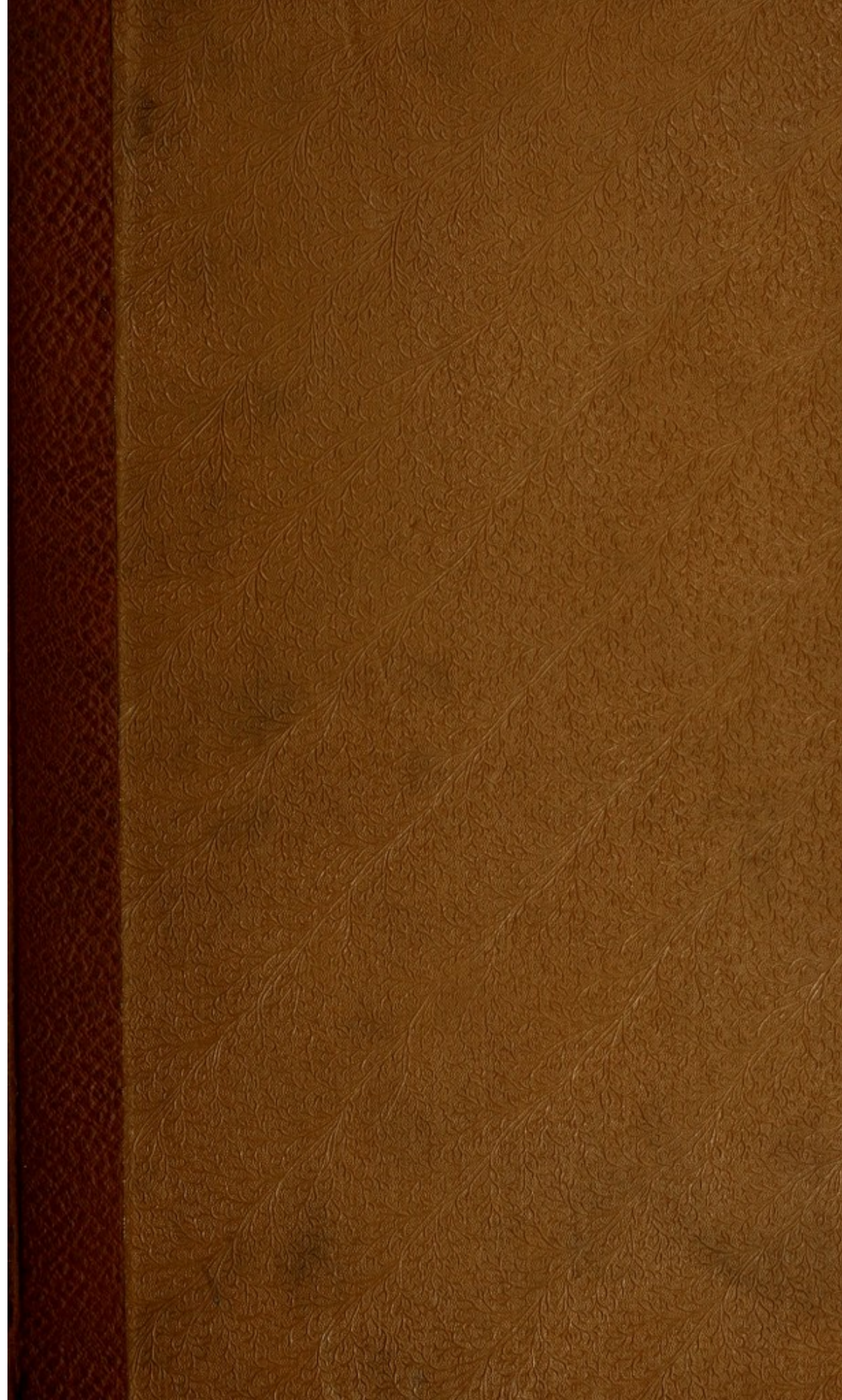
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Contents

- 1) Memorandum as to Pauperism in Poplar - 1906
- 2) Report to L. G. B. on Poplar Union - 1906
- 3) Transcript of Shorthand Notes taken at
Public Inquiry on Poplar Union - 1906





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MEMORANDUM

AS TO

PAUPERISM IN POPLAR.



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(Note.—The Tables and Charts marked with the same
letter correspond.)

MEMORANDUM AS TO PAUPERISM IN POPLAR.

1. Indoor pauperism in England and Wales grew steadily with the population up to the year 1900, since which date it has risen sharply. This rise is more marked in London than elsewhere, and is greater in Poplar than in the rest of London (*see* Table and Chart A and Table B). The following table gives a summary of the figures and the percentage of increase, both of pauperism and expenditure. The figures up to Lady-Day, 1906, as to expenditure are not yet available, and, therefore, the figures for 1906 have been estimated by doubling those for the half-year ending Michaelmas, 1905, an estimate which for obvious reasons is a good deal too low. It will be observed that in the second period the increase of indoor expenditure is quite out of proportion to the increase of numbers.

Indoor and
Outdoor
Pauperism.

INDOOR PAUPERISM IN POPLAR.

(*See Tables A and C.*)

Year.	Number of Indoor Paupers.		Cost.	
	Mean Number.	Increase.	Total Cost.	Increase.
1885	1,656	1,153	£ 21,131	£ 16,921
1895	2,809	or 70 per cent.	38,052	or 80 per cent.
1895	2,809	1,024	38,052	32,594
1906	3,833	or 36 per cent.	70,646	or 86 per cent.

2. The next table gives a summary of the figures with regard to outdoor pauperism :—

OUTDOOR PAUPERISM IN POPLAR.

(*See Tables A and C.*)

Year.	Number of Outdoor Paupers.		Cost.	
	Mean Number.	Increase.	Total Cost.	Increase.
1885	1,513	565	£ 7,370	£ 6,801
1895	2,078	or 37 per cent.	14,171	or 92 per cent.
1895	2,078	5,169	14,171	31,459
1906	7,247	or 249 per cent.	45,630	or 222 per cent.

3. A more detailed examination of the Table and Chart (A) shows that, with the exception of the period from 1896 to 1902 when the indoor numbers remained fairly constant, the rise in the numbers of indoor paupers has been steady and regular since 1886, but that the marked increase in the numbers receiving out relief only began in the latter part of the year 1899 and became more acute in the latter part of the year 1904.

The increase of the cost of outdoor relief is not disproportionate to the increase of the number of paupers; but during the last 11 years the cost of indoor relief has increased 86 per cent. while the increase in numbers has been only 36 per cent. The annual cost of in-maintenance per head has increased from £13.55 in 1895 to £18.73 in 1905. (Table and Chart C.)

Increase in
out relief
in Poplar.

4. The mean numbers on out relief in Poplar rose sharply from 2,238 in 1900 to 7,247 in 1906, while the number of able-bodied paupers and their children rose from 683 to 4,392 in the same period. As contrasted with the figures in the neighbouring Unions this increase is remarkable (see Table and Chart D).

It is contended that this increase may to some extent be accounted for by the fact that the Borough Council resolved to employ fewer men on the Unemployed relief works in order that they might be able to give more continuous employment to the selected men. The increase, however, began some time before the Borough Council took this step.

The Town Clerk writes—

"I find there is no definite resolution of the Council abandoning the system of three days' employment on relief works in favour of continuous employment for definite periods.

"The circumstances are that on the 20th October, 1904, the Council appointed its quota to a Joint Committee for the Borough as suggested by Mr. Long, President of the Local Government Board, at the Islington Conference on the 18th October, 1904. Arrangements were made by the Chairman of the Works Committee with the Borough Surveyor that all extra men employed should, as far as possible, be selected by the Joint Committee, subject to the absolute discretion of the Borough Surveyor as to the continuance of their employment.

"In accordance with Clause 9 (d) of Mr. Long's Scheme of 29th October, 1904, the employment given was made, as far as possible, continuous for a definite time, and the three day system abandoned."

On November 19th, 1904, the Guardians passed a resolution in the following terms:—

"That applications for relief from able-bodied men out of work be dealt with under Article 10 of the Out Relief Regulation Order, 1852, and that the Clerk be instructed to obtain special relief lists and application books for the relieving officers to enter cases dealt with under this Article and to report such cases fortnightly to the Local Government Board."

The Local Government Board informed the Guardians (December 9th, 1904), that each case must be reported separately, but the Guardians reported none of them and continued to give relief in kind to able-bodied men without work as being cases of sudden and urgent necessity.

The mean number of able-bodied with their dependents increased from 1,482 in the year ending Lady-Day, 1904, to 3,475 in 1905, and went up nearly another 1,000 in the following year.

Increase in
cost of
Indoor
Pauperism.

5. The cost of the indoor pauperism shows a startling increase since 1899, since which year the Guardians have had schools of their own. The mean number of indoor paupers has increased from 2,688 to 3,338 in 1905, and the cost of in-maintenance has increased from £35,003 to £46,301. The weekly average cost of the workhouse inmates has increased from 5s. 0 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. to 6s. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. During the same period the amount received from the Common Poor Fund has increased from £30,569 to £43,667; the salaries of officers from £12,163 to £16,916; and the amount received from Poplar rates from £95,682 to £152,908. The contribution to the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum, which is managed by a Joint Board, has risen from £23,742 to £42,390, the increase in the numbers chargeable to Poplar at Lady-Day being from 524 in 1899 to 601 in 1905. (See Table E.)

6. For the purpose of comparison a Table and Chart (D) have been prepared showing certain facts with reference to the four neighbouring Unions of Bethnal Green, Bermondsey, Stepney, and Whitechapel. This Table and Chart show the numbers of paupers (indoor and outdoor) in Poplar and the other four Unions reduced to a percentage of population. It will be noticed that while indoor numbers show no very marked divergence the curves for outrelief do not correspond in any respect.

Pauperism of Poplar compared with that of other districts in London.

In connexion with the Bermondsey out-relief curve, the fall in the early part of 1903 is accounted for by the fact that the Guardians discontinued outdoor relief to able-bodied persons in distress from want of employment at that time.

7. A series of Charts (F) compare Poplar with Bethnal Green, Stepney, and Whitechapel in the total weekly cost per head of maintenance, of clothing, and of provisions for inmates of the workhouse. The increase in the cost of provisions in Poplar is marked.

8. The numbers in receipt of relief in the several Metropolitan Unions at the beginning of the years 1895 and 1905 are shown in Table G. The following summary of that Table shows that the pauperism of Poplar is now something like twice as great as that of the Eastern District, and is 20 per 1,000 greater than that of Bermondsey, which is the next most pauperised Union; whereas in 1895 it was 10 per 1,000 less than that of Bermondsey, and only slightly greater than that of the Metropolis or that of the Eastern District. The expenditure per head of population is shown.

	1st January, 1895.				1st January, 1905.			
	Percentage of Pauperism.			Expenditure on relief per head of population. (In-maintenance and out-relief for year ended March, 1895.)	Percentage of Pauperism.			Expenditure on relief per head of population. (In-maintenance and out-relief for year ended March, 1905.)
	Indoor.	Outdoor.	Total.		Indoor.	Outdoor.	Total.	
Metropolis ...	1.42	.96	2.38	s. d. 5 3	1.51	1.13	2.64	s. d. 6 5½
Poplar ...	1.58	1.22	2.80	6 3½	2.05	4.65	6.70	12 2
East District ...	1.73	.79	2.52	5 7½	1.97	1.64	3.61	8 2½
Bermondsey ...	1.64	2.10	3.74	8 3½	2.38	2.33	4.71	11 6½

9. A comparative Table and Chart (H) are annexed showing the numbers in receipt of out-relief in the Poplar Union and in the Canning Town District of the West Ham Union during the period 1st January, 1896, to 1st July, 1905.

10. Tenders are taken in bulk, and at the last quarter day, in seventeen cases out of between thirty and forty tenders the lowest was not accepted. If the lowest tender had been accepted in every case apparently a saving of £1,507 would have been effected. Some of the tenders may have been for a year.

Contracts for Workhouse, &c.

May, 1906.

J. S. DAVY.

POPLAR

NUMBERS

(Taken from Local

YEAR.				INDOOR PAUPERS (excluding Vagrants).									
				Able-bodied and their Children.				Not Able-bodied.				Lunatics, Insane Persons and Idiots.	Total of Indoor Paupers.
				Adults.		Children under 16.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Total.		
				Males.	Females.								
(a) 1st January.													
(b) 1st July previous.													
1885	...	...	b	76	133	285	494	417	363	206	986	134	1,614
			a	129	149	271	549	454	339	218	1,011	138	1,698
			Mean	...			521				998	136	1,656
1886	...	...	b	98	140	247	485	394	313	246	953	134	1,572
			a	165	158	314	637	427	370	207	1,004	153	1,794
			Mean	...			561				978	143	1,683
1887	...	...	b	111	117	323	551	389	345	226	960	156	1,667
			a	184	143	415	742	500	382	173	1,055	155	1,952
			Mean	...			646				1,007	155	1,809
1888	...	...	b	68	135	410	613	428	353	185	966	157	1,736
			a	361	230	465	1,056	352	401	194	947	171	2,174
			Mean	...			834				956	164	1,955
1889	...	...	b	151	135	479	765	448	408	192	1,048	170	1,983
			a	316	193	500	1,009	493	364	169	1,026	173	2,208
			Mean	...			887				1,037	171	2,095
1890	...	...	b	197	144	534	875	448	345	168	961	185	2,021
			a	305	194	486	985	514	367	231	1,112	182	2,279
			Mean	...			930				1,036	183	2,150
1891	...	...	b	212	157	454	823	442	358	223	1,023	167	2,013
			a	310	210	492	1,012	510	386	224	1,120	172	2,304
			Mean	...			917				1,071	169	2,158
1892	...	...	b	194	145	536	875	473	386	212	1,071	188	2,134
			a	348	177	580	1,105	583	401	195	1,179	198	2,482
			Mean	...			990				1,125	193	2,308

Table A.

UNION.

OF PAUPERS.

(Government Board Returns.)

OUTDOOR PAUPERS (excluding Lunatics, Insane Persons and Idiots).											YEAR (a) 1st January. (b) 1st July previous.
Able-bodied and their Children.					Not Able-bodied.				Total of Outdoor Paupers.		
Adult Males.		Adult Females.	Children under 16.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Total.			
Relieved on account of their own Sickness, Accident, or Infirmary.	Relieved for other causes.										
27	4	170	509	710	162	586	33	781	1,491	b 1885.	
27	4	162	525	718	160	625	32	817	1,535	a	
				714				799	1,513	Mean.	
19	5	149	522	695	150	634	36	820	1,515	b 1886.	
20	22	167	522	731	168	676	36	880	1,611	a	
				713				850	1,563	Mean.	
18	8	160	546	732	183	722	34	939	1,671	b 1887.	
19	13	176	569	777	196	784	27	1,007	1,784	a	
				754				973	1,727	Mean.	
16	6	153	491	666	202	812	28	1,042	1,708	b 1888.	
31	9	148	470	658	204	825	25	1,054	1,712	a	
				662				1,048	1,710	Mean.	
26	4	151	450	631	207	842	31	1,080	1,711	b 1889.	
32	14	143	433	622	229	833	51	1,113	1,735	a	
				626				1,096	1,723	Mean.	
10	7	95	272	384	206	836	69	1,111	1,495	b 1890.	
55	7	151	417	630	200	842	61	1,103	1,733	a	
				507				1,107	1,614	Mean.	
20	6	109	305	440	182	850	75	1,107	1,547	b 1891.	
33	9	133	380	555	202	843	69	1,114	1,669	a	
				497				1,110	1,608	Mean.	
15	4	64	204	287	205	846	87	1,138	1,425	b 1892.	
35	6	88	249	378	189	840	86	1,115	1,493	a	
				332				1,126	1,459	Mean.	

POPLAR

NUMBERS

(Taken from Local

YEAR.				INDOOR PAUPERS (excluding Vagrants).									
				Able-bodied and their Children.				Not Able-bodied.				Lunatics, Insane Persons and Idiots.	Total of Indoor Paupers.
				Adults.		Children under 16.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Total.		
				Males.	Females.								
(a) 1st January.													
(b) 1st July previous.													
1893	...	...	b	226	183	639	1,048	504	355	202	1,061	199	2,308
			a	345	218	279	842	562	397	563	1,522	212	2,576
			Mean				945				1,291	205	2,442
1894	...	...	b	277	165	329	771	520	375	555	1,450	215	2,436
			a	366	228	276	870	640	430	646	1,716	225	2,811
			Mean				820				1,583	220	2,623
1895	...	...	b	193	150	270	613	702	459	694	1,855	223	2,691
			a	294	170	63	527	786	524	858	2,168	233	2,928
			Mean				570				2,011	228	2,809
1896	...	...	b	215	129	48	392	778	509	949	2,236	236	2,864
			a	269	142	51	462	912	547	883	2,342	242	3,046
			Mean				427				2,289	239	2,955
1897	...	...	b	179	144	30	353	827	536	847	2,210	200	2,763
			a	236	176	41	453	861	554	881	2,296	239	2,988
			Mean				403				2,253	219	2,875
1898	...	...	b	182	129	23	334	763	525	755	2,043	248	2,625
			a	246	197	39	482	866	527	816	2,209	248	2,939
			Mean				408				2,126	248	2,782
1899	...	...	b	188	162	40	390	813	522	819	2,154	251	2,795
			a	238	190	34	462	918	561	891	2,370	255	3,087
			Mean				426				2,262	253	2,941
1900	...	...	b	195	112	48	355	802	520	871	2,193	266	2,814
			a	221	135	21	377	885	540	848	2,273	245	2,895
			Mean				366				2,233	255	2,854

Table A—continued.

UNION.

OF PAUPERS.

(Government Board Returns.)

OUTDOOR PAUPERS (excluding Lunatics, Insane Persons and Idiots).											YEAR. (a) 1st January. (b) 1st July previous.
Able-bodied and their Children.					Not Able-bodied.				Total of Outdoor Paupers.		
Adult Males.		Adult Females.	Children under 16.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Total.			
Relieved on account of their own Sickness, Accident, or Infirmary.	Relieved for other causes.										
39	33	125	236	433	197	813	90	1,100	1,533	b 1893.	
59	34	339	317	749	221	823	104	1,148	1,897	a	
				591				1,124	1,715	Mean.	
33	52	321	382	788	257	894	111	1,262	2,050	b 1894.	
78	49	454	626	1,207	283	955	96	1,334	2,541	a	
				997				1,298	2,295	Mean.	
41	46	383	302	772	268	939	98	1,305	2,077	b 1895.	
52	42	347	349	790	259	936	95	1,290	2,080	a	
				781				1,297	2,078	Mean.	
62	43	360	353	818	324	974	102	1,400	2,218	b 1896.	
53	41	297	313	704	317	1,001	111	1,429	2,133	a	
				761				1,414	2,175	Mean.	
44	46	328	319	737	308	1,045	97	1,450	2,187	b 1897.	
53	29	281	319	682	297	1,039	87	1,423	2,105	a	
				709				1,436	2,146	Mean.	
52	28	299	299	678	277	1,011	90	1,378	2,056	b 1898.	
44	40	302	291	677	299	1,037	100	1,436	2,113	a	
				677				1,407	2,084	Mean.	
35	44	282	221	582	283	1,058	107	1,448	2,030	b 1899.	
46	35	269	267	637	300	1,092	85	1,477	2,114	a	
				609				1,462	2,072	Mean.	
49	31	287	212	579	329	1,116	78	1,523	2,102	b 1900.	
69	33	345	340	787	350	1,162	75	1,587	2,374	a	
				683				1,555	2,238	Mean.	

POPLAR

NUMBERS

(Taken from Local

YEAR.				INDOOR PAUPERS (excluding Vagrants).									
				Able-bodied and their Children.				Not Able-bodied.				Lunatics, Insane Persons, and Idiots.	Total of Indoor Paupers.
				Adults.		Children under 16.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Total.		
				Males.	Females.								
(a) 1st January.													
(b) 1st July previous.													
1901	...	...	b	143	133	18	294	799	483	897	2,179	244	2,717
			a	200	147	29	376	959	624	960	2,543	236	3,155
	Mean	...					335				2,361	240	2,936
1902	...	...	b	173	159	17	349	798	489	956	2,243	235	2,827
			a	237	140	10	387	945	513	996	2,454	239	3,080
	Mean	...					368				2,348	237	2,953
1903	...	...	b	184	158	28	370	845	482	1,022	2,349	249	2,968
			a	286	168	39	493	980	513	1,086	2,579	252	3,324
	Mean	...					431				2,464	250	3,146
1904	...		b	213	176	32	421	932	516	1,165	2,613	280	3,314
			a	280	173	45	498	1,104	553	1,168	2,825	294	3,617
	Mean	...					459				2,719	287	3,465
1905	...	...	b	254	175	77	506	994	515	1,186	2,695	292	3,493
			a	367	138	43	548	1,159	593	1,175	2,927	322	3,797
	Mean	...					527				2,811	307	3,645
1906	..	..	b	375	137	27	539	1,093	601	1,199	2,893	314	3,746
			a	442	172	23	637	1,195	655	1,133	2,983	300	3,920
	Mean	...					588				2,938	307	3,833

UNION.

OF PAUPERS.

Government Board Returns.)

OUTDOOR PAUPERS (excluding Lunatics, Insane Persons and Idiots).											YEAR. (a) 1st January. (b) 1st July previous.
Able-bodied and their Children.					Not Able-bodied.				Total of Outdoor Paupers.		
Adult Males.		Adult Females.	Children under 16.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Total.			
Relieved on account of their own Sickness, Accident, or Infirmary.	Relieved for other causes.										
41	28	345	373	787	351	1,190	46	1,587	2,374	b 1901.	
72	26	387	461	946	353	1,223	45	1,621	2,567	a	
				866				1,604	2,470	Mean.	
72	32	369	464	937	367	1,264	76	1,707	2,644	b 1902.	
95	24	394	454	967	449	1,404	97	1,950	2,917	a	
				952				1,828	2,780	Mean.	
79	41	404	486	1,010	455	1,424	84	1,963	2,973	b 1903.	
140	74	487	672	1,373	519	1,513	87	2,119	3,492	a	
				1,191				2,041	3,232	Mean.	
77	64	469	576	1,186	512	1,537	64	2,113	3,299	b 1904.	
150	107	624	897	1,778	578	1,620	79	2,277	4,055	a	
				1,482				2,195	3,677	Mean.	
124	101	610	930	1,765	620	1,688	80	2,388	4,153	b 1905.	
189	772	1,415	2,809	5,185	745	1,847	92	2,684	7,869	a	
				3,475				2,536	6,011	Mean.	
165	473	1,238	2,514	4,390	788	1,924	81	2,793	7,183	b 1906.	
177	528	1,220	2,470	4,395	832	2,010	74	2,916	7,311	a	
				4,392				2,854	7,247	Mean.	

Table B.

PAUPERISM IN POPLAR AND THE WHOLE METROPOLIS.

(Based on Local Government Board Returns.)

YEAR.	Indoor Paupers on 1st Jan. §	Outdoor Paupers on 1st Jan. *	Total Number of Paupers on 1st Jan. †	Ratio per 1,000 of Population on 1st Jan. †	Indoor Paupers on 1st July. §	Outdoor Paupers on 1st July. *	Total Number of Paupers on 1st July. †	Ratio per 1,000 of Population on 1st July. †
1890 ...	2,279	1,733	4,012	24·2	2,013	1,547	3,560	21·4
	<i>61,800</i>	<i>41,634</i>	<i>103,434</i>	<i>25·0</i>	<i>55,418</i>	<i>35,186</i>	<i>90,604</i>	<i>21·7</i>
1891 ...	2,304	1,669	3,973	23·8	2,134	1,425	3,559	21·3
	<i>61,545</i>	<i>40,909</i>	<i>102,454</i>	<i>24·5</i>	<i>54,816</i>	<i>33,622</i>	<i>88,438</i>	<i>20·9</i>
1892 ...	2,482	1,493	3,975	23·8	2,308	1,533	3,841	23·0
	<i>61,475</i>	<i>37,332</i>	<i>98,807</i>	<i>23·4</i>	<i>56,329</i>	<i>33,338</i>	<i>89,667</i>	<i>21·0</i>
1893 ...	2,576	1,897	4,473	26·6	2,436	2,050	4,486	26·7
	<i>63,473</i>	<i>40,424</i>	<i>103,897</i>	<i>24·3</i>	<i>59,188</i>	<i>36,128</i>	<i>95,316</i>	<i>22·1</i>
1894 ...	2,811	2,541	5,352	31·9	2,691	2,077	4,768	28·4
	<i>67,715</i>	<i>43,691</i>	<i>111,406</i>	<i>25·8</i>	<i>60,465</i>	<i>56,838</i>	<i>97,303</i>	<i>22·4</i>
1895 ...	2,928	2,080	5,008	29·6	2,864	2,218	5,082	30·1
	<i>68,762</i>	<i>41,659</i>	<i>110,421</i>	<i>25·4</i>	<i>62,554</i>	<i>39,098</i>	<i>101,652</i>	<i>23·2</i>
1896 ...	3,069	2,133	5,202	30·8	2,770	2,187	4,957	29·3
	<i>69,255</i>	<i>41,890</i>	<i>111,145</i>	<i>25·3</i>	<i>62,671</i>	<i>39,098</i>	<i>101,769</i>	<i>23·0</i>
1897 ...	2,996	2,105	5,101	30·2	2,634	2,056	4,690	27·8
	<i>68,302</i>	<i>40,328</i>	<i>108,630</i>	<i>24·6</i>	<i>62,290</i>	<i>38,381</i>	<i>100,671</i>	<i>22·6</i>
1898 ...	2,948	2,113	5,061	29·9	2,804	2,030	4,834	28·6
	<i>69,448</i>	<i>39,929</i>	<i>109,377</i>	<i>24·6</i>	<i>64,331</i>	<i>38,448</i>	<i>102,779</i>	<i>23·0</i>
1899 ...	3,146	2,114	5,260	31·1	2,837	2,102	4,939	29·2
	<i>69,633</i>	<i>39,598</i>	<i>109,231</i>	<i>24·4</i>	<i>64,016</i>	<i>37,831</i>	<i>101,847</i>	<i>22·7</i>
1900 ...	2,948	2,374	5,322	31·5	2,752	2,395	5,147	30·5
	<i>70,105</i>	<i>40,377</i>	<i>110,482</i>	<i>24·6</i>	<i>62,379</i>	<i>37,720</i>	<i>100,099</i>	<i>22·2</i>
1901 ...	3,241	2,588	5,829	34·5	2,864	2,667	5,531	32·7
	<i>68,548</i>	<i>39,930</i>	<i>108,478</i>	<i>24·0</i>	<i>63,326</i>	<i>39,607</i>	<i>102,933</i>	<i>22·6</i>
1902 ...	3,185	2,941	6,126	36·2	3,026	2,993	6,019	35·6
	<i>70,473</i>	<i>42,335</i>	<i>112,808</i>	<i>24·8</i>	<i>64,907</i>	<i>40,953</i>	<i>105,860</i>	<i>23·1</i>
1903 ...	3,424	3,509	6,933	41·0	3,370	3,313	6,683	39·5
	<i>73,254</i>	<i>44,899</i>	<i>118,153</i>	<i>25·8</i>	<i>67,363</i>	<i>40,378</i>	<i>107,741</i>	<i>23·4</i>
1904 ...	3,709	4,069	7,778	46·0	3,568	4,165	7,733	45·8
	<i>75,585</i>	<i>44,311</i>	<i>119,896</i>	<i>26·0</i>	<i>70,079</i>	<i>42,195</i>	<i>112,274</i>	<i>24·2</i>
1905 ...	3,881	7,886	11,767	70·0	3,860	7,197	11,057	65·8
	<i>78,105</i>	<i>52,753</i>	<i>130,858</i>	<i>28·1</i>	<i>73,466</i>	<i>47,348</i>	<i>120,814</i>	<i>25·8</i>
1906 ...	4,035	7,330	11,365	67·6	—	—	—	—
	<i>80,284</i>	<i>50,836</i>	<i>131,120</i>	<i>28·0</i>	—	—	—	—

The figures in italics relate to the Metropolis.

§ Inclusive of Casual Paupers.

* Exclusive of Lunatics in Asylums, &c.

† This total includes a few cases of persons who have been counted twice, viz., both as indoor and outdoor paupers.

† Poplar.—The population is estimated on the Census figures of 1881, 1891, 1896, and 1901.

Metropolis.—The estimated population (Registrar-General's) in the middle of each year is taken as the basis for the July of that year and the January following.

Table C.

POPLAR UNION.

COST OF RELIEF—INDOOR AND OUTDOOR.

(Taken from Local Government Board Returns.)

Year. Half-year ended (a) Michaelmas previous. Half-year ended (b) Lady Day.				In maintenance of Paupers in Workhouses, &c. under control of the Guardians and Maintenance of Paupers in Institutions not under control of the Guardians.	Outdoor Relief.				Total of Indoor and Outdoor Relief.	
					To Paupers other than Children Boarded-out.			To Children Boarded- out.		Total Outdoor Relief.
					In Money.	In Kind.	Total.			
				£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1885	...	...	a	10,407	3,023	648	3,671	108	3,779	14,186
			b	10,724	2,911	572	3,483	108	3,591	14,315
	Total	...		21,131			7,154		7,370	28,501
	Cost per head	...		12·75					4·87	
1886	...	...	a	9,876	3,187	529	3,716	111	3,827	13,703
			b	10,445	3,199	676	3,875	108	3,983	14,428
	Total	...		20,321			7,591		7,810	28,131
	Cost per head	...		12·07					5·00	
1887	...	...	a	9,762	3,616	657	4,273	106	4,379	14,141
			b	10,363	3,598	680	4,278	110	4,388	14,751
	Total	...		20,125			8,551		8,767	28,892
	Cost per head	...		11·12					5·08	
1888	...	...	a	10,348	3,922	672	4,594	112	4,706	15,054
			b	11,511	3,780	672	4,452	103	4,555	16,066
	Total	...		21,859			9,046		9,261	31,120
	Cost per head	...		11·18					5·42	
1889	...	...	a	10,886	3,784	576	4,360	93	4,453	15,339
			b	13,010	3,840	654	4,494	196	4,690	17,700
	Total	...		23,896			8,854		9,143	33,039
	Cost per head	...		11·41					5·31	
1890	...	...	a	12,441	3,809	534	4,343	213	4,556	16,997
			b	13,569	3,592	646	4,238	209	4,447	18,016
	Total	...		26,010			8,581		9,003	35,013
	Cost per head	...		12·10					5·58	

Table B.

PAUPERISM IN POPLAR AND THE WHOLE METROPOLIS.

(Based on Local Government Board Returns.)

YEAR.	Indoor Paupers on 1st Jan. §	Outdoor Paupers on 1st Jan. *	Total Number of Paupers on 1st Jan. ‡	Ratio per 1,000 of Population on 1st Jan. †	Indoor Paupers on 1st July. §	Outdoor Paupers on 1st July. *	Total Number of Paupers on 1st July. ‡	Ratio per 1,000 of Population on 1st July. †
1890 ...	2,279	1,733	4,012	24.2	2,013	1,547	3,560	21.4
	<i>61,800</i>	<i>41,634</i>	<i>103,434</i>	<i>25.0</i>	<i>55,418</i>	<i>35,186</i>	<i>90,604</i>	<i>21.7</i>
1891 ...	2,304	1,669	3,973	23.8	2,134	1,425	3,559	21.3
	<i>61,545</i>	<i>40,909</i>	<i>102,454</i>	<i>24.5</i>	<i>54,816</i>	<i>33,632</i>	<i>88,438</i>	<i>20.9</i>
1892 ...	2,482	1,493	3,975	23.8	2,308	1,533	3,841	23.0
	<i>61,475</i>	<i>37,332</i>	<i>98,807</i>	<i>23.4</i>	<i>56,329</i>	<i>33,338</i>	<i>89,667</i>	<i>21.0</i>
1893 ...	2,576	1,897	4,473	26.6	2,436	2,050	4,486	26.7
	<i>63,473</i>	<i>40,424</i>	<i>103,897</i>	<i>24.3</i>	<i>59,188</i>	<i>36,128</i>	<i>95,316</i>	<i>22.1</i>
1894 ...	2,811	2,541	5,352	31.9	2,691	2,077	4,768	28.4
	<i>67,715</i>	<i>43,691</i>	<i>111,406</i>	<i>25.8</i>	<i>60,465</i>	<i>56,838</i>	<i>97,303</i>	<i>22.4</i>
1895 ...	2,928	2,080	5,008	29.6	2,864	2,218	5,082	30.1
	<i>68,762</i>	<i>41,659</i>	<i>110,421</i>	<i>25.4</i>	<i>62,554</i>	<i>39,098</i>	<i>101,652</i>	<i>23.2</i>
1896 ...	3,069	2,133	5,202	30.8	2,770	2,187	4,957	29.3
	<i>69,255</i>	<i>41,890</i>	<i>111,145</i>	<i>25.3</i>	<i>62,671</i>	<i>39,098</i>	<i>101,769</i>	<i>23.0</i>
1897 ...	2,996	2,105	5,101	30.2	2,634	2,056	4,690	27.8
	<i>68,302</i>	<i>40,328</i>	<i>108,630</i>	<i>24.6</i>	<i>62,290</i>	<i>38,381</i>	<i>100,671</i>	<i>22.6</i>
1898 ...	2,948	2,113	5,061	29.9	2,804	2,030	4,834	28.6
	<i>69,448</i>	<i>39,929</i>	<i>109,377</i>	<i>24.6</i>	<i>64,331</i>	<i>38,448</i>	<i>102,779</i>	<i>23.0</i>
1899 ...	3,146	2,114	5,260	31.1	2,837	2,102	4,939	29.2
	<i>69,633</i>	<i>39,598</i>	<i>109,231</i>	<i>24.4</i>	<i>64,016</i>	<i>37,831</i>	<i>101,847</i>	<i>22.7</i>
1900 ...	2,948	2,374	5,322	31.5	2,752	2,395	5,147	30.5
	<i>70,105</i>	<i>40,377</i>	<i>110,482</i>	<i>24.6</i>	<i>62,379</i>	<i>37,720</i>	<i>100,099</i>	<i>22.2</i>
1901 ...	3,241	2,588	5,829	34.5	2,864	2,667	5,531	32.7
	<i>68,548</i>	<i>39,930</i>	<i>108,478</i>	<i>24.0</i>	<i>63,326</i>	<i>39,607</i>	<i>102,933</i>	<i>22.6</i>
1902 ...	3,185	2,941	6,126	36.2	3,026	2,993	6,019	35.6
	<i>70,473</i>	<i>42,335</i>	<i>112,808</i>	<i>24.8</i>	<i>64,907</i>	<i>40,953</i>	<i>105,860</i>	<i>23.1</i>
1903 ...	3,424	3,509	6,933	41.0	3,370	3,313	6,683	39.5
	<i>73,254</i>	<i>44,899</i>	<i>118,153</i>	<i>23.8</i>	<i>67,363</i>	<i>40,378</i>	<i>107,741</i>	<i>23.4</i>
1904 ...	3,709	4,069	7,778	46.0	3,568	4,165	7,733	45.8
	<i>75,585</i>	<i>44,311</i>	<i>119,896</i>	<i>26.0</i>	<i>70,079</i>	<i>42,195</i>	<i>112,274</i>	<i>24.2</i>
1905 ...	3,881	7,886	11,767	70.0	3,860	7,197	11,057	65.8
	<i>78,105</i>	<i>52,753</i>	<i>130,858</i>	<i>28.1</i>	<i>73,466</i>	<i>47,348</i>	<i>120,814</i>	<i>25.8</i>
1906 ...	4,035	7,330	11,365	67.6	—	—	—	—
	<i>80,284</i>	<i>50,836</i>	<i>131,120</i>	<i>28.0</i>	—	—	—	—

The figures in italics relate to the Metropolis.

§ Inclusive of Casual Paupers.

* Exclusive of Lunatics in Asylums, &c.

‡ This total includes a few cases of persons who have been counted twice, viz., both as indoor and outdoor paupers.

† Poplar.—The population is estimated on the Census figures of 1881, 1891, 1896, and 1901.

Metropolis.—The estimated population (Registrar-General's) in the middle of each year is taken as the basis for the July of that year and the January following.

Table C.

POPLAR UNION.

COST OF RELIEF—INDOOR AND OUTDOOR.

(Taken from Local Government Board Returns.)

Year. Half-year ended (a) Michaelmas previous. Half-year ended (b) Lady Day.				In maintenance of Paupers in Workhouses, &c. under control of the Guardians and Maintenance of Paupers in Institutions not under control of the Guardians.	Outdoor Relief.				Total of Indoor and Outdoor Relief.	
					To Paupers other than Children Boarded-out.			To Children Boarded- out.		Total Outdoor Relief.
					In Money.	In Kind.	Total.			
				£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1885	...	...	a	10,407	3,023	648	3,671	108	3,779	14,186
			b	10,724	2,911	572	3,483	108	3,591	14,315
			Total	21,131			7,154		7,370	28,501
			Cost per head	12·75					4·87	
1886	...	...	a	9,876	3,187	529	3,716	111	3,827	13,703
			b	10,445	3,199	676	3,875	108	3,983	14,428
			Total	20,321			7,591		7,810	28,131
			Cost per head	12·07					5·00	
1887	...	...	a	9,762	3,616	657	4,273	106	4,379	14,141
			b	10,363	3,598	680	4,278	110	4,388	14,751
			Total	20,125			8,551		8,767	28,892
			Cost per head	11·12					5·08	
1888	...	...	a	10,348	3,922	672	4,594	112	4,706	15,054
			b	11,511	3,780	672	4,452	103	4,555	16,066
			Total	21,859			9,046		9,261	31,120
			Cost per head	11·18					5·42	
1889	...	...	a	10,886	3,784	576	4,360	93	4,453	15,339
			b	13,010	3,840	654	4,494	196	4,690	17,700
			Total	23,896			8,854		9,143	33,039
			Cost per head	11·41					5·31	
1890	...	...	a	12,441	3,809	534	4,343	213	4,556	16,997
			b	13,569	3,592	646	4,238	209	4,447	18,016
			Total	26,010			8,581		9,003	35,013
			Cost per head	12·10					5·58	

Obtained for the most part from the Guardians' Annual

For the Year ended Lady Day.	1896.	1897.	1898.	1899.
Outstanding Loans (Guardians)	£85,306	£82,837	£92,769	£89,022
Rateable Value of Union	£739,484	£742,294	£746,278	£738,840
Amount received from Poor Rates... ..	£88,119 ^a	£103,992 ^a	£88,084 ^a	£95,682 ^a
Amount received from London County Council—Maintenance of Indoor Paupers.	£10,530	£10,559	£10,530	£10,530
Net amount received from Metropolitan Common Poor Fund...	£27,485	£26,084	£27,694	£30,569
Mean Number of Paupers, excluding Lunatics—Indoor ...	2,716	2,656	2,534	2,688
“ “ “ “ “ Outdoor ...	2,175	2,146	2,084	2,072
Cost of In-maintenance§	£21,339†	£21,508†	£27,276†	£35,003
Cost of Outdoor Relief (inclusive of cost of boarding-out children, but exclusive of relief advanced to non-settled poor).	£13,063	£13,005	£13,063	£13,199
Salaries of Officers	£6,706	£6,553	£9,379	£12,163
Cost of Officers' Uniforms	£73	£76	£108	£226
Rations of Officers	£1,600	£1,543	£2,902	£4,597
Superannuations	£705	£780	£806	£968
Poplar Payment in respect of Poplar and Stepney District Sick Asylum.	£23,203	£27,314	£27,070	£23,742
Number Chargeable to Poplar in Sick Asylum at Lady Day ...	566	468	476	524
Workhouse :—				
Cost of Provisions	£10,899	£10,462	£11,544	£13,084
“ Clothing... ..	£2,258	£1,694	£2,056	£2,222
“ Necessaries	£3,846	£3,939	£4,083	£4,124
Total Cost of Maintenance	£17,003	£16,095	£17,683	£19,430
Average Daily Number of Inmates	1,459	1,400	1,405	1,476
Average Weekly Cost	s. d. 4 5½	s. d. 4 5¼	s. d. 4 9¾	s. d. 5 0¾
Rates in the £ :—				
Bow	8 2	8 5	8 1	8 7
Bromley	8 2	8 1	7 8	8 1
Poplar	7 10	8 1	7 4½	8 0½

^a Exclusive of sums levied for County Rate, now paid by the Borough Council.

§ This includes cost of paupers in the Guardians' establishments and of those in Hospitals, Certified Schools, &c., but excludes cost of lunatic paupers and of chargeable paupers in establishments of the Metropolitan Asylum District and Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum District.

TO THE POPLAR UNION.

Table E.

Financial and Statistical Statements and Abstract of Accounts.

1900.	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	Remarks.
£82,303	£88,988	£103,944	£110,740	£104,688	£182,710	
£750,815	£781,540	£789,305	£800,653	£815,507	£818,922	
£108,621*	£113,797*	£118,045	£133,195	£140,948	£152,908	
£13,127	£7,931	£10,530	£10,530	£10,530	£10,559	
£32,181	£35,225	£38,510	£41,778	£41,552	£43,667	
2,599	2,696	2,716	2,896	3,178	3,338	} Based upon figures for the 1st January and the preceding 1st July in each case.
2,238	2,470	2,780	3,232	3,677	6,011	
£33,002	£32,834	£36,249	£37,794	£39,555	£46,301	
£14,739	£16,438	£18,977	£21,207	£24,408	£34,473	
£12,968	£13,317	£14,026	£14,700	£15,340	£16,916	
£154	£183	£168	£122	£234	£201	
£4,478	£4,720	£4,813	£4,995	£5,322	£5,477	
£1,125	£1,209	£1,169	£1,206	£1,250	£1,252	
£31,740	£35,305	£37,849	£37,094	£43,096	£42,390	
533	539	527	595	596	601	
£11,802	£11,682	£13,080	£14,543	£15,795	£15,537	
£2,295	£2,012	£2,079	£2,572	£2,879	£2,927	
£4,535	£4,928	£5,357	£4,552	£4,683	£6,253†	† Water had to be taken from the Water Company this year instead of from the workhouse well. Water rate £1,200.
£18,632	£18,622	£20,516	£21,667	£23,357	£24,717	
1,364	1,268	1,318	1,438	1,513	1,471	
s. d. 5 2	s. d. 5 6 $\frac{3}{4}$	s. d. 5 11 $\frac{3}{4}$	s. d. 5 9 $\frac{1}{2}$	s. d. 5 11 $\frac{1}{4}$	s. d. 6 5 $\frac{1}{2}$	
8 10	9 5	9 1	9 10	9 8	10 1	
8 6	9 0	9 2	9 9	9 8	10 2	
8 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 2	9 9	9 8	10 1	

† Exclusive of { £13,280 (1896) }
{ £15,460 (1897) } paid in respect of Forest Gate School District charges.
{ £9,236 (1898) }

STATEMENT showing in respect of the several Poor Law Unions of the METROPOLIS the NUMBERS of INDOOR and OUTDOOR PAUPERS (*exclusive of the INSANE, VAGRANTS, and PATIENTS in FEVER and SMALL-POX HOSPITALS*) at the beginning of 1895 and 1905, with the PERCENTAGE of PAUPERISM indicated by these NUMBERS in each case, having regard to ESTIMATED POPULATION.

Poor Law Unions.	1st JANUARY, 1895.						1st JANUARY, 1905.							
	Estimated Population (April 6, 1895).	No. of Paupers.			Percentage of Pauperism.			Estimated Population (April 6, 1904).	No. of Paupers.			Percentage of Pauperism.		
		Indoor.	Outdoor.	TOTAL.	Indoor.	Outdoor.	TOTAL.		Indoor.	Outdoor.	TOTAL.	Indoor.	Outdoor.	TOTAL.
WEST DISTRICT.														
Paddington	121,612	942	284	1,226	·77	·23	1·00	150,367	1,323	453	1,776	·88	·30	1·18
Kensington	169,566	2,280	366	2,646	1·34	·22	1·56	179,026	2,473	468	2,941	1·38	·26	1·64
Hammersmith	99,166	1,885	721	2,606	·91	·34	1·25	114,765	964	843	1,807	·84	·73	1·57
Fulham	108,049		1,655	336	1,991	1·70	·34	2·04	149,090	1,247	758	2,005	·83	·51	1·34
Chelsea	97,333	2,733	587	3,320	2·12	·46	2·58	71,332	1,668	669	2,277	2·25	·94	3·19
St. George's	128,661	767	102	869	2·07	·27	2·34	124,526	3,089	881	3,970	2·48	·70	3·18
Westminster	37,020	10,262	2,396	12,658	1·35	·31	1·66	31,905	654	107	761	2·05	·33	2·38
TOTAL, WEST DISTRICT	761,467	10,262	2,396	12,658	1·35	·31	1·66	821,011	11,358	4,179	15,537	1·38	·51	1·89
NORTH DISTRICT.														
St. Marylebone	141,252	3,135	404	3,539	2·22	·28	2·50	130,589	3,398	463	3,861	2·60	·35	2·95
Hampstead	74,603	332	183	515	·44	·25	·69	84,895	440	162	602	·51	·19	·70
St. Pancras	241,634	3,813	2,070	5,883	1·58	·85	2·43	233,099	3,645	1,566	5,211	1·56	·67	2·23
Islington	326,745	2,705	3,865	6,570	·83	1·18	2·01	336,932	4,158	4,986	9,144	1·23	1·48	2·71
Hackney	234,934	2,475	3,657	6,132	1·05	1·56	2·61	272,583	3,339	3,982	7,321	1·22	1·46	2·68
TOTAL, NORTH DISTRICT	1,019,168	12,460	10,179	22,639	1·22	1·00	2·22	1,058,098	14,980	11,159	26,139	1·42	1·05	2·47

25253	St. Giles and St. George	...	...	37,892	926	453	1,379	2,44	1,19	3,63	29,751	730	191	921	2,45	64	3,09
	Strand	...	...	24,557	1,421	462	1,883	5,78	1,88	7,66	17,840	1,329	190	1,519	7,45	1,06	8,51
	Holborn	...	...	137,828	3,374	1,934	5,308	2,45	1,40	3,85	128,886	3,767	2,315	6,082	2,92	1,79	4,71
	City of London	...	...	36,623	1,223	927	2,150	3,34	2,53	5,87	25,757	853	401	1,254	3,31	1,55	4,86
	TOTAL, CENTRAL DISTRICT	...	...	236,900	6,944	3,776	10,720	2,92	1,60	4,52	202,234	6,679	3,097	9,776	3,30	1,53	4,83
	EAST DISTRICT.																
	Shoreditch	...	...	120,379	1,659	750	2,409	1,38	62	2,00	116,608	1,958	971	2,929	1,68	83	2,51
	Bethnal Green	...	...	127,025	2,502	1,413	3,915	1,97	1,11	3,08	129,118	2,475	531	3,006	1,91	41	2,32
	Whitechapel	...	...	74,349	1,521	55	1,576	2,04	67	2,11	75,720	1,551	69	1,620	2,04	69	2,13
	St. George in the East	...	...	44,262	1,076	90	1,166	2,43	20	2,63	48,435	1,205	233	1,438	2,48	48	2,96
	Stepney	...	...	55,832	1,230	165	1,395	2,20	29	2,49	57,241	1,657	439	2,096	2,89	77	3,66
	Mile End Old Town	...	...	108,609	1,467	1,025	2,492	1,35	94	2,29	111,922	1,639	1,508	3,147	1,46	1,35	2,81
	Poplar	...	...	170,296	2,695	2,080	4,775	1,58	1,22	2,80	169,227	3,475	7,869	11,344	2,05	4,65	6,70
	TOTAL, EAST DISTRICT	...	...	700,732	12,150	5,578	17,728	1,73	79	2,52	708,271	13,960	11,620	25,580	1,97	1,64	3,61
	SOUTH DISTRICT.																
	Southwark	...	...	195,692	4,021	1,434	5,455	2,05	73	2,78	202,144	4,268	1,859	6,127	2,11	92	3,03
	Bermondsey	...	...	132,104	2,163	2,780	4,943	1,64	2,10	3,74	129,856	3,093	3,031	6,124	2,38	2,33	4,71
	Lambeth	...	...	283,265	3,070	3,300	6,370	1,08	1,16	2,24	305,029	3,218	2,735	5,953	1,05	90	1,95
	Wandsworth	...	...	339,508	2,180	3,220	5,400	64	95	1,59	444,779	3,650	4,776	8,426	82	1,07	1,89
	Camberwell	...	...	244,307	2,564	3,587	6,151	1,05	1,46	2,51	263,611	3,104	4,936	8,040	1,17	1,87	3,04
	Greenwich	...	...	170,197	2,859	1,726	4,585	1,68	1,01	2,69	188,698	2,875	2,658	5,533	1,52	1,41	2,93
	Lewisham	...	...	102,657	1,052	2,193	3,245	2,78	1,68	4,46	160,531	1,243	2,040	3,283	77	1,27	2,04
	Woolwich	...	...	115,339	1,376	1,261	2,637	1,19	1,09	2,28	141,703	1,380	593	1,973	97	42	1,39
	TOTAL, SOUTH DISTRICT	...	...	1,583,069	19,285	19,501	38,786	1,22	1,23	2,45	1,836,351	22,831	22,628	45,459	1,24	1,23	2,47
	∅ TOTAL FOR WHOLE METROPOLIS	...	...	4,301,356*	61,101	41,430	102,531	1,42	96	2,38	4,625,965	69,808	52,683	122,491	1,51	1,13	2,64

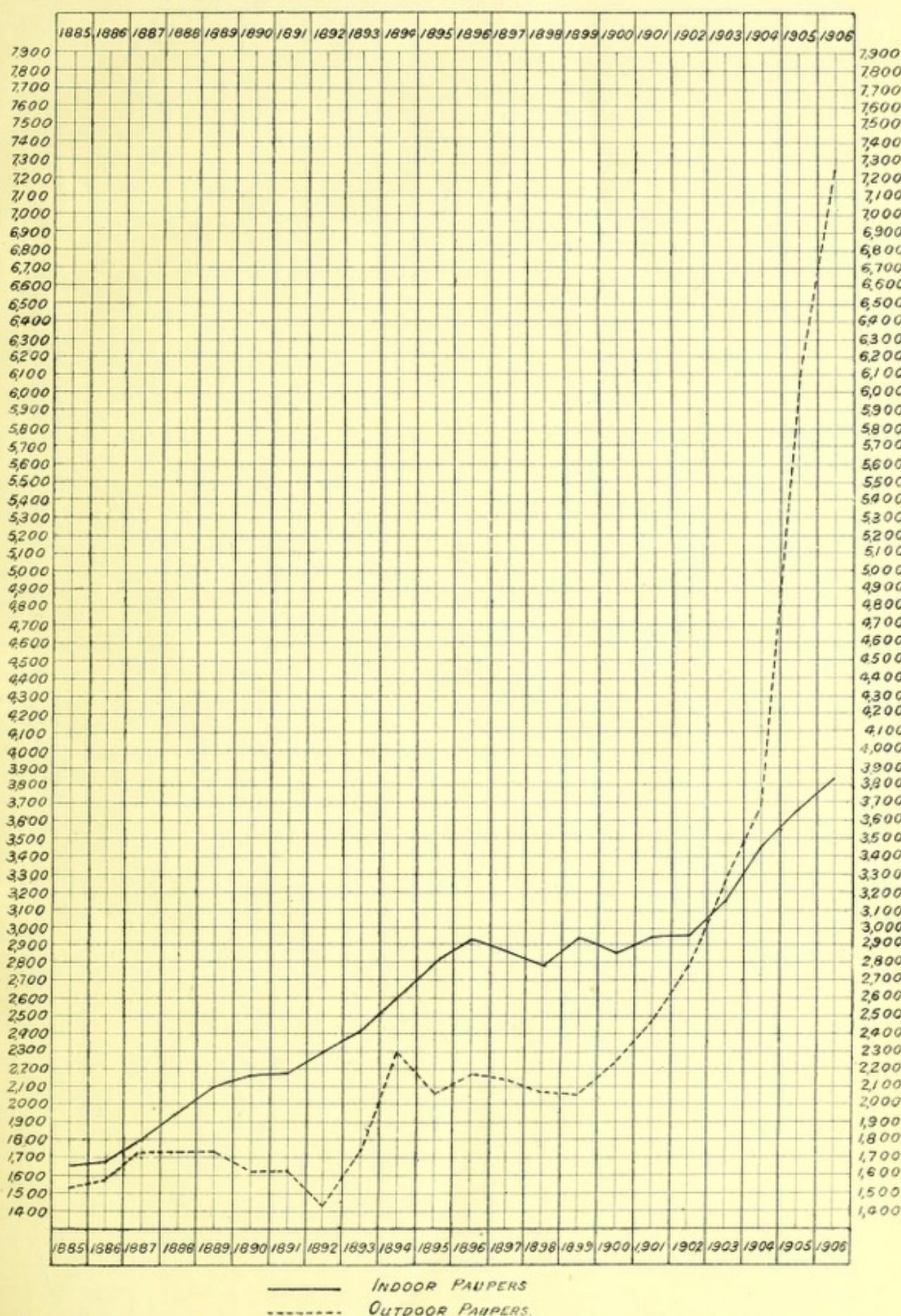
* Pence excluded.

Table H.

RETURN as to OUT-DOOR PAUPERISM in the CANNING TOWN DISTRICT of the WEST HAM UNION showing Number of PERSONS RELIEVED, Number per 1,000 of ESTIMATED POPULATION (120,000) and AMOUNT OF RELIEF on the 1st January and 1st July of the 10 years ended 1905, with the Number of OUT-DOOR PAUPERS in POPLAR UNION per 1,000 of ESTIMATED POPULATION (169,000).

POPLAR UNION.	CANNING TOWN DISTRICT.			
	Date.	Number of Persons relieved.	Number per 1,000 of Estimated Population.	Amount of Relief.
12·8	1st Jan., 1896	2,013	16·8	£ s. d. 186 5 0
13·1	1st July, 1896	1,855	15·5	171 1 5
12·5	1st Jan., 1897	1,807	15·1	172 14 5
12·2	1st July, 1897	1,668	13·9	162 2 10
12·6	1st Jan., 1898	1,713	14·3	259 12 6
12·1	1st July, 1898	1,716	14·3	170 19 7
12·6	1st Jan., 1899	1,830	15·3	184 9 2
12·5	1st July, 1899	1,900	15·8	195 4 5
14·1	1st Jan., 1900	2,009	16·7	213 1 6
14·2	1st July, 1900	1,889	15·7	200 4 9
15·4	1st Jan., 1901	1,973	16·4	209 15 4
15·8	1st July, 1901	1,925	16·0	212 14 2
17·4	1st Jan., 1902	2,000	16·7	229 15 6
17·7	1st July, 1902	2,143	17·9	236 3 9
20·8	1st Jan., 1903	2,657	22·1	323 15 0
19·6	1st July, 1903	2,510	20·9	278 12 4
24·0	1st Jan., 1904	2,598	21·7	272 16 8
24·6	1st July, 1904	2,569	21·4	271 7 9
46·5	1st Jan., 1905	10,697	88·4	611 2 6
42·4	1st July, 1905	2,820	23·5	304 4 4

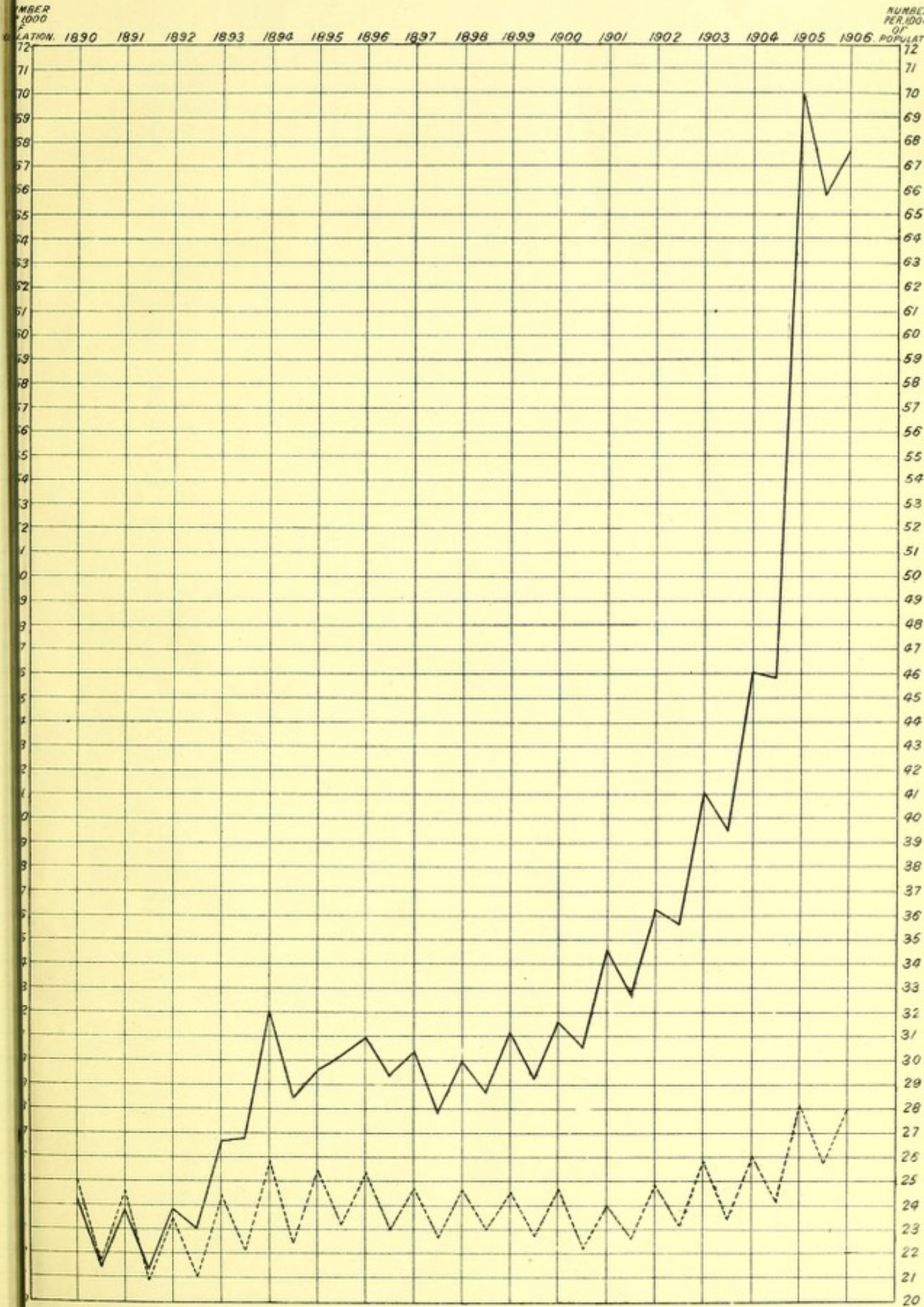
POPLAR UNION: NUMBER OF PAUPERS.



Figures for each year taken on mean of numbers on 1st January of that year and 1st July previous.



PAUPERISM IN POPLAR AND THE WHOLE METROPOLIS.



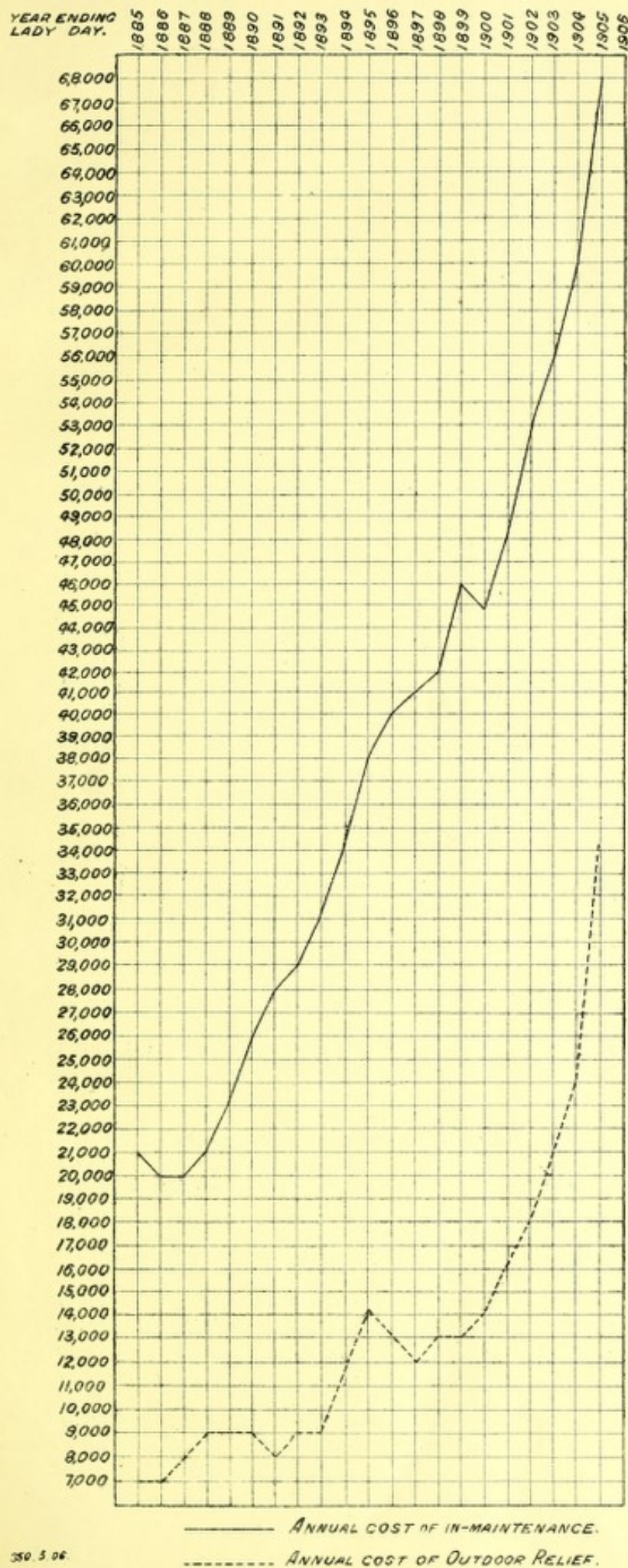
POPLAR



POPLAR UNION.

COST OF RELIEF — INDOOR AND OUTDOOR.

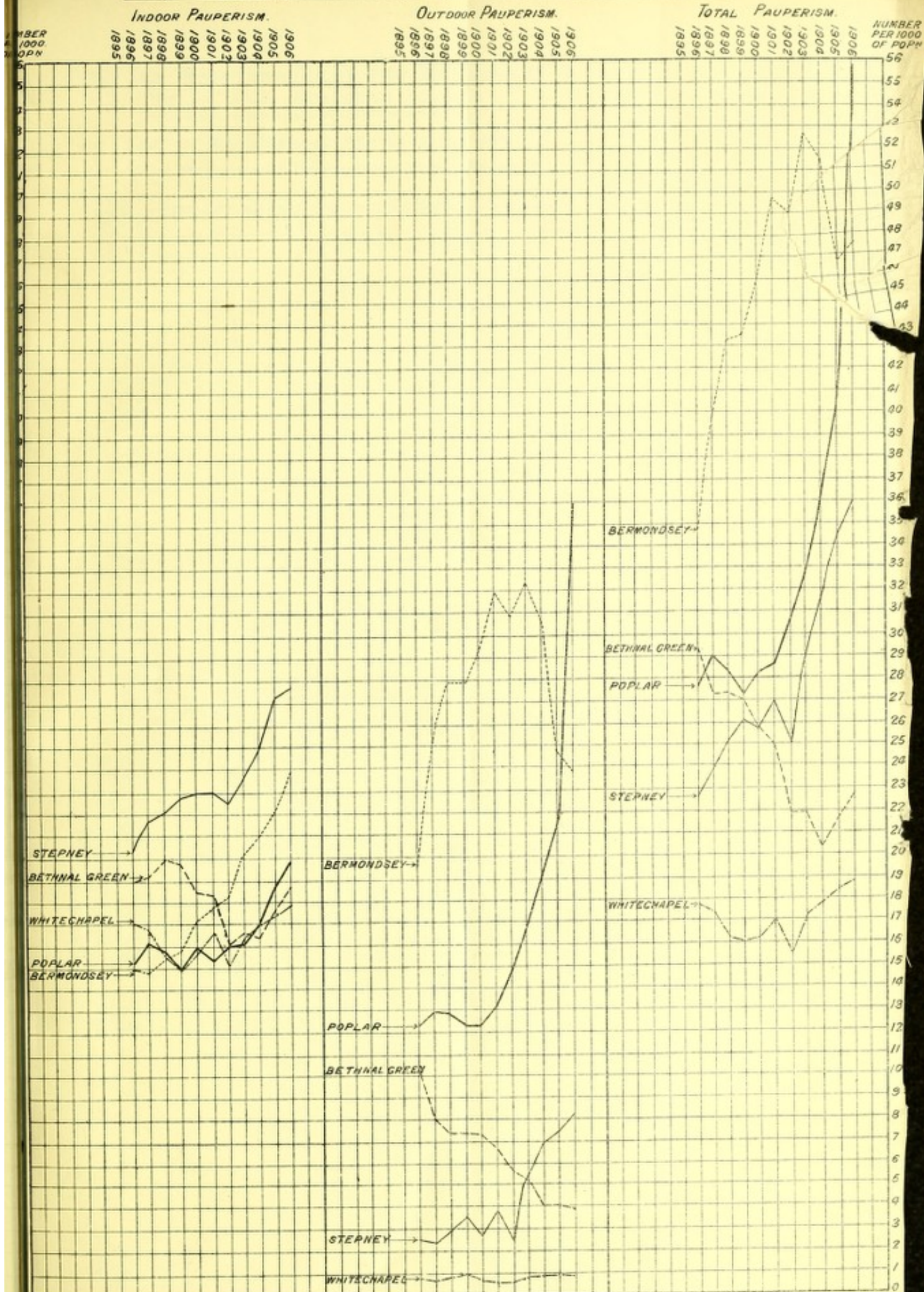
CHART C.





PAUPERISM IN POPLAR AND NEIGHBOURING UNIONS.

CHART D.



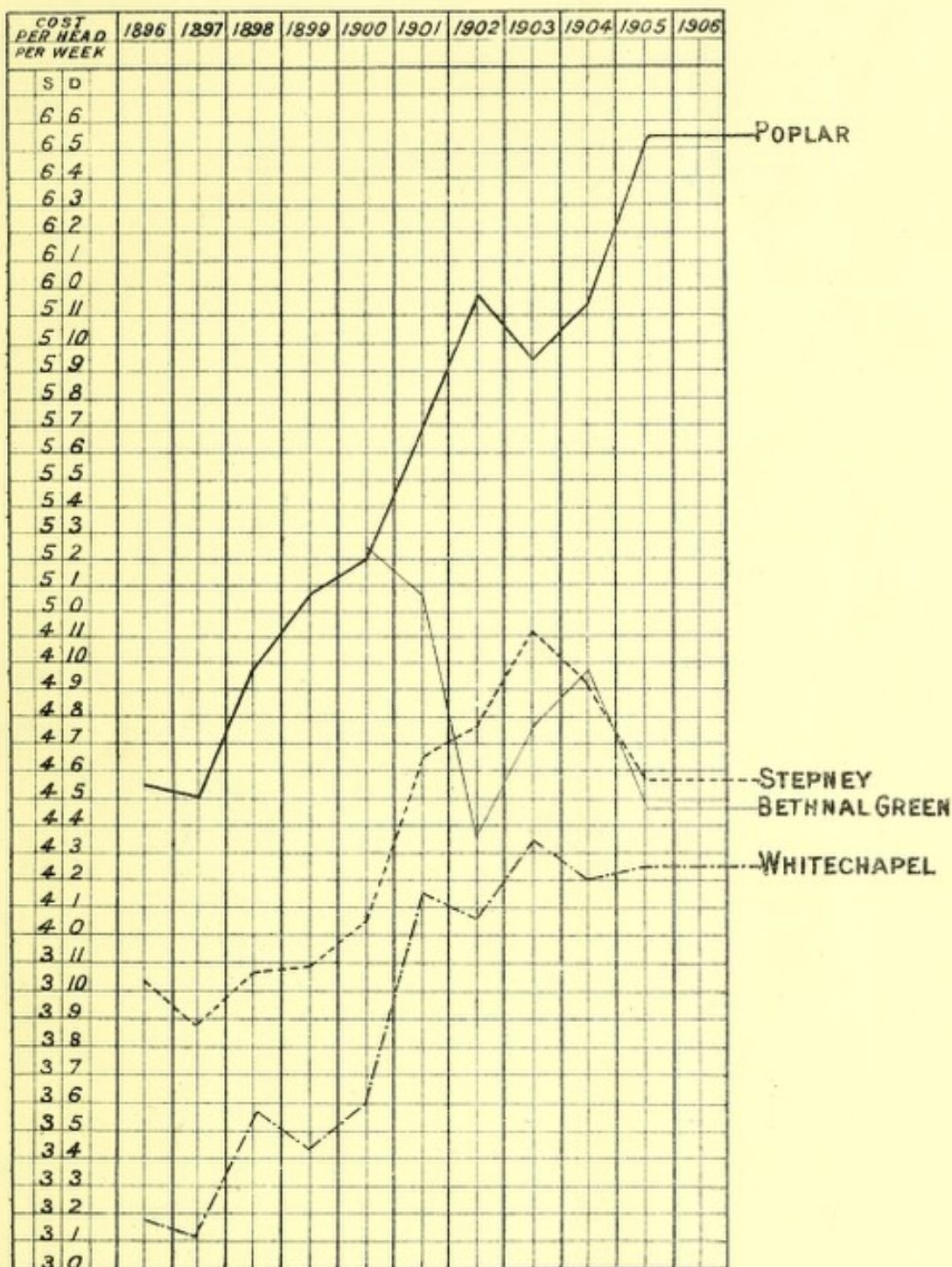
BETHNAL GREEN 129,680. BERMONDSEY 130,760. STEPNEY 57,937. WHITECHAPEL 78,768. POPLAR 168,822.

COST OF MAINTENANCE IN THE WORKHOUSE IN POPLAR AND ADJACENT UNIONS.

CHART F. (1)

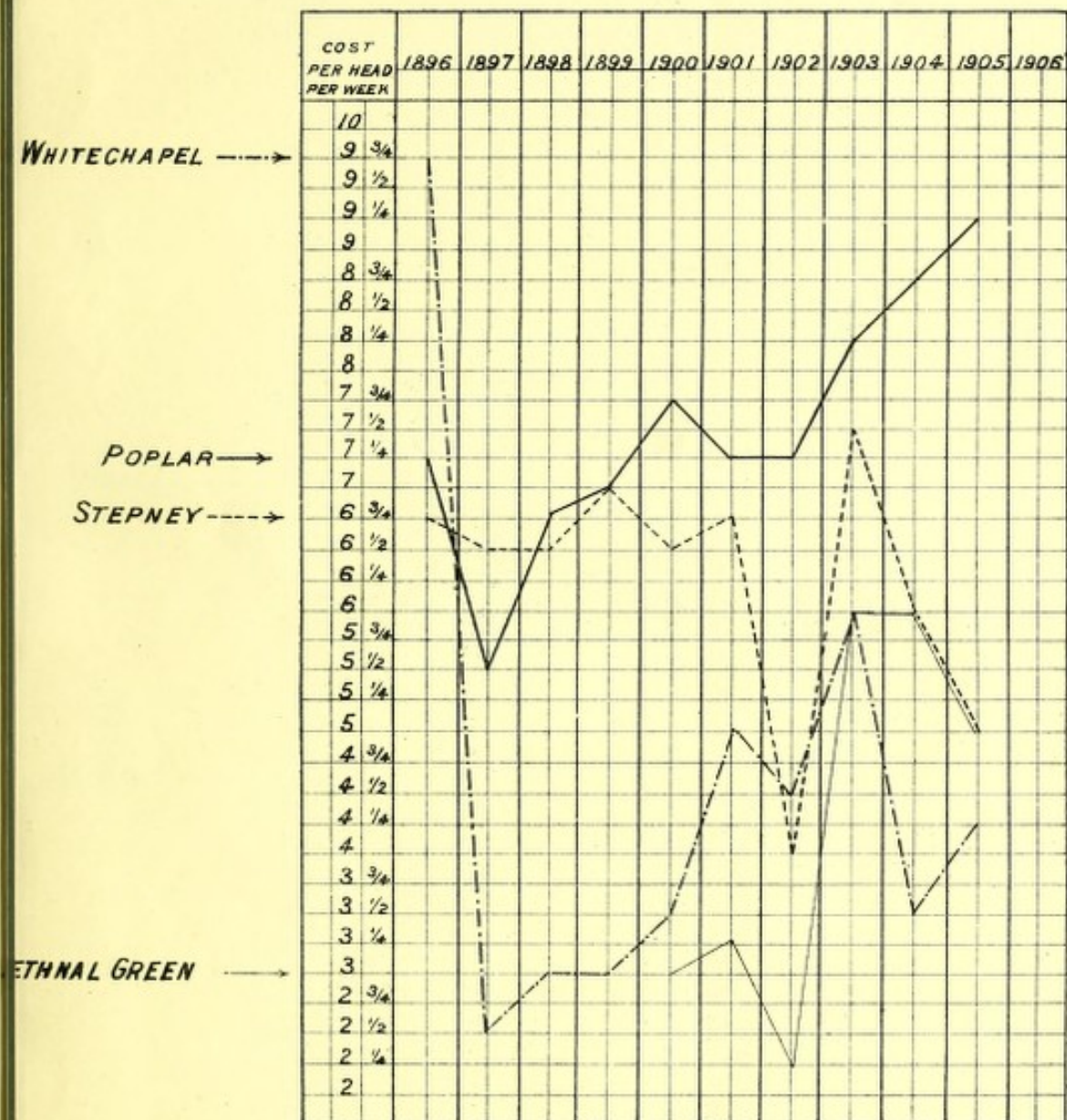
COST OF MAINTENANCE PER HEAD, PER WEEK.

(taken from Financial Statements &c. published by Guardians).





COST OF CLOTHING PER HEAD, PER WEEK.





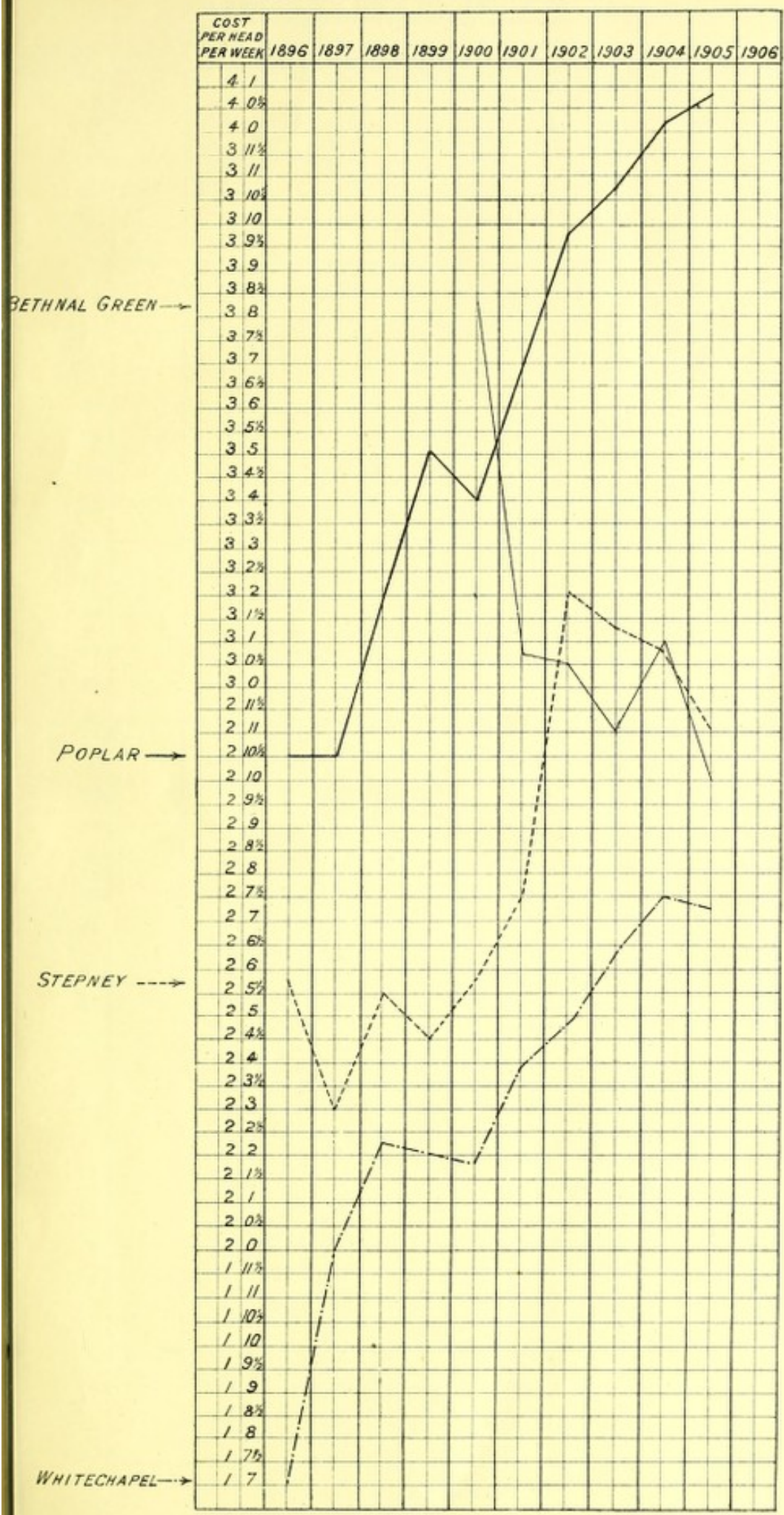
BETH

ST

AN

COST OF PROVISIONS PER HEAD, PER WEEK.

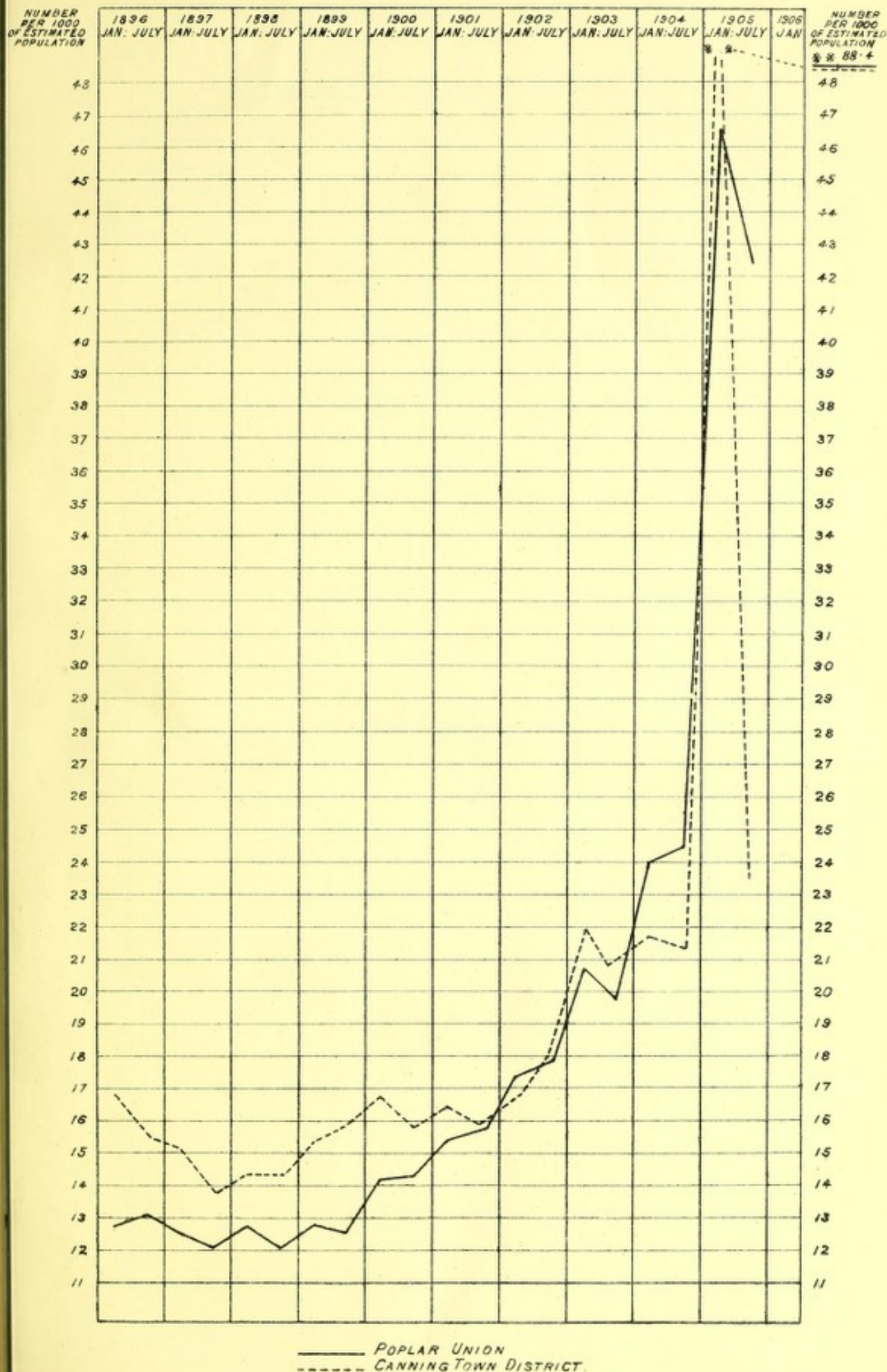
CHART F. (3)





OUT-DOOR PAUPERISM IN POPLAR UNION AND CANNING TOWN DISTRICT OF WEST HAM UNION.

CHART H.





POPLAR UNION.
OUTDOOR PAUPERISM IN 1905 & 1906





POPLAR UNION.

REPORT

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD,

ON THE

POPLAR UNION,

BY

J. S. DAVY, C.B.,

CHIEF GENERAL INSPECTOR OF THE BOARD.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.



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1906.

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district showed that the percentage of unemployed to wage-earners was 24.12. Meetings of the unemployed took place and the Guardians received a deputation from them seeking for assistance.

On November 19th a resolution was passed by the Guardians to the effect that able-bodied men out of work applying for relief were to receive outdoor relief in kind without being set to work. An extraordinary increase in out-relief followed this decision.

The Guardians had, on October 6th, written to Mr. Arthur Balfour, who was then Prime Minister, asking that a special session of Parliament should be summoned to deal with the question of the unemployed, and they renewed their request the following month. The Government, however, considered that no immediate advantage could be obtained from discussion in Parliament, and that it was better to wait the results of the scheme established by the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) for dealing with the unemployed.

In the same month (November) the Guardians made application to the Local Government Board for authority to purchase 150 acres of land for the purpose of setting the poor to work. The Board in reply pointed out that there was no legal authority for the particular proposal, but that the Guardians might effect their object by establishing a separate workhouse with land attached on which the inmates might be set to work.

During the whole of 1905 outdoor relief continued very high, there being practically no reduction from the high figures of the previous year.

In May, 1905, in consequence of the increase of local expenditure, an association of ratepayers was formed called "The Poplar Borough Municipal Alliance." In the following month the Local Government Board received petitions from ratepayers in the Borough of Poplar asking that in view of the existing rate of 12s. in the £ no further loans be granted either to the Guardians or the Borough Council.

On October 17th the Municipal Alliance, whose members were then said to represent 20 per cent. of the total rateable value of the borough, wrote to the President of the Local Government Board calling attention to the heavy rates levied in the borough, and urging the necessity of the most searching investigation into the expenditure of the various bodies concerned, and requesting that no further loans be granted without careful inquiry that they were necessary. On November 2nd the Municipal Alliance informed the Board of a resolution passed at a meeting held that day at which 570 tradesmen of the borough were present. The resolution was as follows:—

"This meeting of tradesmen, ratepayers of the Borough of Poplar, begs to direct the attention of the Prime Minister and the President of the Local Government Board to the alarming condition of affairs in the borough; notwithstanding an increase in assessed value of £104,000 the rates have increased from 6s. 1d. in the £ in 1885 to 12s. in the £ in 1905. The present rates, and prospect of further increases, constitute a very heavy burden upon both large and small ratepayers, and, in the opinion of this meeting, demand the prompt investigation of the Local Government Board, with a view to a reduction in the unprecedentedly high expenditures of the Guardians and Council, which are out of all proportion to the requirements of the borough."

On November 28th the Guardians furnished the Local Government Board with a copy of a correspondence they had with the Municipal Alliance. The Alliance had informed the Guardians of the resolution passed at the meeting of November 2nd, and the Guardians in reply (November 23rd) stated that they had "no objection to the most rigid investigation by the Local Government Board respecting their expenditure or any question affecting their administration, but, on the contrary, would welcome such an inquiry as a means of removing much of the misconception which has arisen."

About this time a deputation from the unemployed, on which Poplar was largely represented, was received by Mr. Arthur Balfour. Other circumstances attracted considerable attention to the condition of Poplar. A series of newspaper articles appeared denouncing what was alleged to be the extravagance

of the local administration both in Poor Law and Municipal matters, and it was freely asserted that the high rates were the cause of Messrs. Yarrow and other firms leaving Poplar.

The winter of 1905-6 was a mild one, but the out-relief showed no signs of diminution.

There were other questions in connection with the Guardians' administration which seemed to call for investigation. Serious charges had been made by the Essex police as to the conduct of inmates of the branch workhouse which the Guardians had established in 1904 at Laindon in Essex for able-bodied men; difficulties had also arisen owing to the desire of the Guardians to give a better dietary there than was allowed for workhouse inmates. Again, a disallowance had been made by the District Auditor of relief granted by one of the Relieving Officers to an able-bodied man, and this was regarded as a test case. And in February, 1906, the Local Government Board received a letter from the Finance Committee of the London County Council in which, referring to an application by the Guardians for an advance of £61,000, they expressed the opinion that the further burden on the rates involved by the borrowing might affect the security on which the loan would be raised, namely, the power of levying rates in the borough.

The Local Government Board considered that the foregoing facts rendered an inquiry of some sort expedient, both as to the special circumstances of Poplar and as to the general administration of the Poor Law in that union. It seemed necessary to ascertain whether the conditions were, in fact, due mainly to the poverty of the union or the policy of the Guardians.

On March 6th, 1906, the Local Government Board wrote to the Guardians as follows:—

SIR,

I AM directed by the Local Government Board to state that attention has been drawn in various quarters to the extent of pauperism in the Poplar Union, to the financial position of the union, and to other matters affecting the administration of the relief of the poor therein.

The President has thought it desirable to instruct Mr. Davy, C.B., the Board's Chief General Inspector, to inquire and report, as early as practicable, with regard to the general industrial and financial conditions of the union, its pauperism, and the administration of the Guardians and their Officers.

The President feels no doubt that the Guardians and their Officers will afford Mr. Davy every assistance in their power in making his investigation.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN LITHIBY,

Assistant Secretary.

The Clerk to the Guardians
of the Poplar Union.

The Guardians replied that they welcomed the decision and that their officers would be instructed to afford every assistance in their power in connection with the investigation; but they thought it essential that the Inquiry should be conducted with the fullest possible publicity, and they asked that "in addition to such investigation as may be considered necessary or desirable at the various establishments of the union, a public Inquiry be held in the Board Room at Upper North Street where the Guardians could be represented, and that all evidence thereat be taken on oath and subject to proper cross-examination."

On March 19th, 1906, the Local Government Board informed the Guardians that they thought a preliminary investigation should be made and that they would reserve the question of a public Inquiry for the present. On March 13th I had attended a specially summoned meeting of the Guardians and discussed the matter with them. At that meeting the Guardians took exception to the action of the Board in selecting me to hold the Inquiry, and Mr. Ford, the Vice-Chairman, who occupied the Chair, explained that their objection was not based on my opinions on economic subjects nor on personal

grounds, but was due to the fact that I had signed a letter which was sent to the Guardians on 1st December, 1905. The letter was as follows:—

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD,
Whitehall, S.W.

1st December, 1905.

SIR,

I AM directed by the Local Government Board to advert to your letter of the 21st ultimo forwarding a plan, &c., of certain alterations and additions proposed to be carried out in connection with the Relief Station at Upper North Street, Poplar, at an estimated cost of £450.

The Board observe from the extract from the report of the General Purposes Committee, which was enclosed with your letter, that "the very great increase during the past two years in the quantities of relief distributed" is stated to be the reason for the provision of the proposed additional storage accommodation. With regard to this, the Board cannot but believe that the present excessive amount of pauperism in the district would diminish under judicious and discriminating administration; and, therefore, while realising that to meet existing pressure additional accommodation may be desirable, the Board consider that the Guardians should endeavour to meet the present difficulty by the provision of accommodation of a temporary character and at a less cost than that contemplated.

The Board request that the matter may be reconsidered by the Guardians from this point of view.

The plan is herewith returned.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

J. S. DAVY,

Assistant Secretary.

The Clerk to the Guardians of the
Poplar Union.

This letter came from one of the departments immediately under my charge, and was, as a matter of fact, approved by me before despatch.

I subsequently investigated the statistics of the union and the methods of administration in force, and for the latter purpose I attended meetings of Relief Committees of the Guardians, inspected books and documents, and interviewed several of the Guardians and their officers. A resolution had been passed by the Guardians that every assistance should be rendered to me in my investigation and that two Guardians should be present when I attended on the Guardians' premises. Finally, I prepared the statistical Memorandum (with Tables and Charts) as to pauperism in Poplar, which has been published and is attached to this Report.

This Memorandum indicated clearly that a great increase in the general expenditure of the Guardians had occurred in the last few years. Since 1900 the figures of out-door pauperism showed a marked continuous increase, but in the last two years the numbers had practically doubled.

The cost of both out-door and in-door relief showed a great increase during the time referred to, but in the case of the latter the increase was altogether out of proportion to the rise in the numbers. The cost per head for maintenance in the Workhouse rose from 4s. 5d. a week in 1897 to 6s. 5d. a week in 1905.

The Local Government Board decided that a public Inquiry should take place, and on May 9th they informed the Guardians that the Inquiry would be held as early as practicable and would deal with the general conditions of the Union, its pauperism, and the administration of the Guardians and their officers.

Meanwhile the Municipal Alliance had written to the Local Government Board stating that they represented nearly 30 per cent. of the rateable value of the borough and asking that they might be represented at the Inquiry and have the right of producing evidence and cross-examining witnesses. To this the Board saw no objection.

On May 24th I sent to the Guardians a type written copy of the Memorandum referred to above, with tables and charts so far as these had been prepared and asked for any corrections or suggestions they might desire to make, and informed them that the Inquiry would open on Thursday, June 7th.

CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT.

The area of the Poplar Union, which is coincident with the Borough of Poplar, is 2,328 acres, of which nearly 192 acres is inland water.

The following statistics taken from the census returns and the County of London valuation lists for 1891 and 1901 show that the growth of population and rateable value in the union has been slow :—

—	1891.	1901.	Average Yearly Increase.
Population	166,880	168,822	194
Inhabited houses	21,982	22,613	63
Rateable value	£692,705	£781,586	£8,888

The rateable value in 1905 had risen to £818,944, showing an average increase of about £9,300 a year from 1901 to the present time. So far as the growth of population and rateable value are concerned, the position of Poplar is much the same as that of the neighbouring unions.

There has been no systematic inquiry into the comparative poverty of the East End since that undertaken by Mr. Charles Booth nearly 20 years ago. At that time, on Mr. Booth's shewing, Poplar was by no means the poorest of the East End unions. It would appear from his census that of the total number of heads of families the following percentages would represent those belonging to classes which might be forced by unfavourable conditions of trade or weather to have recourse to the rates, viz., 48·8 in St. George-in-the-East, 44·7 in Bethnal Green, 44·2 in Shoreditch, 39·2 in Whitechapel, 38·1 in Stepney, and 36·5 in Poplar.

With reference to inquiries of this nature, it must be remembered that the poorest class in any union is not evenly distributed over the whole area, and that there may be patches of extreme poverty in unions which shew, from any statistical test, considerable prosperity as a whole. Difficult as any comparison between the poverty of one union and another must be, in this case comparison is rendered more difficult by the fact that in the East End of London the labouring classes do not all work in the district in which they live, and there is apparently an increasing tendency for men to take advantage of the cheap trains and tramways and to live outside the Metropolitan area.

Other statistics taken from the census and County Council returns have some bearing on the question of the relative poverty of the London unions, but they are not conclusive. For instance, a County Council return shows that in 1904 Poplar had almost the lowest assessable value per head of population in London, namely £4·8, Bethnal Green, St. George-in-the-East and Mile-end Old Town alone being lower. In Stepney it was £5·6, and Whitechapel £6·3, the average for London being £8·9 per head. It must be remembered that a considerable proportion of the rateable value of Poplar is obtained from docks which have no population, and that if this were deducted the rateable value of Poplar per head would be much lower than appears in the return. No great reliance, however, can be placed on these figures as a gauge of relative poverty. The last census returns show that while in Poplar 17·8 per cent. of the population lived in two rooms or less, in Bermondsey the percentage so living was 25·2; in the Borough of Stepney, which includes the Poor Law Unions of Whitechapel, Stepney, St. George-in-the-East and Mile End, it was

33·7, and in Bethnal Green it was 36·1. The question of overcrowding is no doubt an important factor in the consideration of the question of comparative poverty, but it must not be forgotten that overcrowding is much more common in those parts of London which are nearest the centre.

In fact, the question whether the disproportionate pauperism of Poplar can be attributed to the exceptional poverty of the district must be considered mainly with reference to the opinions of witnesses acquainted with the conditions of life in that part of London, and to the statistics of the union itself.

Mr. Martley, who has been the local Secretary of the Charity Organisation Society in Poplar for many years, was of opinion that Poplar is by no means the poorest part of the East End of London. With this view Mr. Mosley, Rector of All Saints, Poplar, agreed. Both these witnesses also said that the condition of the people in Poplar has improved in the last few years.

There is no doubt that there has been within the last twenty years a considerable change in the industrial conditions of the union, and Poplar, in the opinion of Mr. Martley and other witnesses, is becoming less a port than a manufacturing town. The large iron works and shipbuilding trade have moved elsewhere, and the conditions of the shipping trade have changed so as materially to affect the work of the dockers. At the same time numbers of industries, *e.g.*, match-making, jam-making, confectionery, and other trades largely dependent on casual labour, have been started in the union. As Mr. Martley pointed out, the quantity of unskilled labour employed is much less than it was, though it bears a very large proportion to the whole; and Mr. Lansbury, who has been a Guardian for some years, stated that 28 per cent. of the wage-earners in the district were casual labourers. The census returns show that the proportion of unskilled labour in Poplar is very large, but not the highest in London.

On the other hand, Miss Grant, who has been for some years a school teacher in the East of London, and Mr. Crooks, M.P., Chairman of the Board of Guardians, were of opinion that Poplar was getting poorer and poorer. The latter witness, whose experience with regard to this question is very great, said that Poplar is the poorest part of London, and that the main difficulty arose from the amount of unskilled labour employed. It is true, as Mr. Martley pointed out, that the condition of the men's casual labour is in some respects changed for the better, and there are prospects of further improvement. Mr. Crooks thought it was doubtful whether the casual labourer now gets more work than he did, and Mr. Anderson, a Guardian and the secretary of the Stevedores' Union, thought that although more permanent men were employed at the docks than formerly the condition of the remaining casual labourers, who are mostly an inferior class of men, is really worse than it used to be.

As has been indicated, this opinion was not shared by Mr. Martley, and there is nothing to show that riverside casual labour is so concentrated at Poplar as to afford of itself a sufficient explanation of the present financial and social conditions of the district.

A difficulty which Mr. Crooks stated did not exist until recent years is caused by the casual employment of women in the match-making, jam-making, and other local industries. These women are employed to work either at their own homes or in factories at piecework by the day; they do not know from day to day whether they will be employed or not, and their wages are alleged to be deplorably low. Mr. Crooks said: "The employer of labour, if he can take a woman on for three days will not run the risk of paying her a full week's money." Many of these women are either directly or indirectly in receipt of poor law relief. Indeed, the suggestion was made that some would not work more than one or two days a week, trusting to the rates for the rest of their maintenance.

On the other hand, Mr. Lansbury pointed out that if the women were destitute the Guardians were bound to relieve them irrespective of the effect

of the relief so given on the labour market. The following extract from a speech delivered by him at the recent *Daily News* Sweated Industries Exhibition was quoted at the Inquiry :—

"I have numbers of men and women, the majority of whom do not earn more than 5s. or 6s. per week. In the case of illness, or if a slight accident happens, what is to become of them? When people are casually employed they are naturally compelled to supplement their wages out of the rates."

It would appear that the whole system of casual labour is largely based on the out-door relief received by the workers. Mr. Lansbury said at the Inquiry "I strongly hold that we are subsidising casual labour whatever it is, "whether one form or another, not specifically at the Docks."

If no out-door relief were given it seems evident that the employers would have to pay more wages and give more regular work. It might be worth an employer's while to pay the heavy rates exacted in Poplar, because in return there is maintained out of those rates a reserve of cheap and convenient labour upon which he could draw when he pleases.

It seems clear that the giving of relief not only perpetuates the system of casual labour but tends to keep wages down. It must be remembered that relieving officers often experience great difficulty in ascertaining whether applicants for relief are casually employed.

A change which of late years has considerably affected the East End unions has been the immigration of Jews. A census recently taken by the authorities at Toynbee Hall purports to show that the number of Jews now resident in the Borough of Stepney, which, as stated, includes the four Poor Law Unions of Whitechapel, Stepney, Mile-End Old Town and St. George-in-the-East, is 90,000 out of a total population of 298,600. The census was for the whole borough, and the numbers in each union are not separated in the report.

Mr. Lansbury, who has taken much interest in this subject, said that none of these Jews ever came on the poor rate, but were looked after by the Jewish Board of Guardians, and that the pauperism of the Gentile portion of these unions, which were all strictly administered, is but little lower than that of Poplar. His views on this subject are not shared by certain other experts, and there is no question that a considerable number of paupers of the Jewish race are in poor law institutions in the Borough of Stepney.

Comparing the pauperism of Poplar with that of the neighbouring unions, it will be found that on January 1st, 1895, the pauperism of Poplar was 2·80 per cent. of the estimated population, while that of the whole of the Eastern District of London was 2·52 per cent. On January 1st, 1905, the figures were 6·70 for Poplar and 3·61 for the Eastern District. The pauperism of the whole Metropolis was 2·38 and 2·64 per cent. on those dates.

Another allegation which is frequently made is that the method of giving relief at Poplar has a tendency to attract persons from other parts of London. There can be no question that of recent years, and particularly since November, 1904, persons have got relief in Poplar who would have had no chance of getting it elsewhere, but there was no evidence of any immigration into the union, and anyone sitting at the Relief Committees would be struck by the length of time during which the applicants for relief have resided within the union. On the other hand, there was evidence to show that the policy of the Guardians checked migration from the union, and there could be no doubt that the high rates are the main cause of the increasing tendency of the better-class workman, whose labour is in Poplar, to live outside. Several witnesses called attention to the process of deterioration which was going on in the union, and it was stated that for each better class resident that left two poorer ones came in.

Mr. Broodbank, Secretary to the Municipal Alliance, approached the question of the poverty of Poplar from another side. He alleged that owing to the high rates tradesmen are being ruined, and are leaving the borough ;

in illustration of this, he said that out of 4,467 circulars which he had addressed to tradesmen in the borough, no less than 527 had been returned to him, and not forwarded to them as would have been the case if they had left the town in prosperous circumstances. He gave many instances of factories and other commercial undertakings which had been closed, and said that property in Poplar was so depreciated that it was impossible to get an advance of 25 per cent. on mortgage. Many houses are unlet. In his opinion the labour conditions in Poplar itself only affect the population to a very small degree, as thousands who work in Poplar are living in other districts owing to the cheaper houses. Economically speaking, it would seem certain that continued high rating must lead to an increase in rentals.

On the whole, the evidence seems to show that, although Poplar is poor, it is not quite the poorest part of London; that, though the proportion of casual labour is high, it is not quite the highest, and that, therefore, the disproportionate pauperism, and the exceptionally high rates of Poplar are due rather to the administration of the local authorities than to the exceptional poverty of the district. The Guardians of the East End unions have no doubt a difficult task to perform, but there can be no reasonable doubt that if the neighbouring districts had administered their local affairs on the same lines as Poplar their pauperism and their rates would have increased in something like the same proportion; whereas practically the whole increment of pauperism in the East and South districts of London, which has occurred within the last few years, has been in the Poplar district.

The following figures show the increase of the indebtedness of the district between 1900 and 1905. The outstanding loans of the Guardians and of the Borough Council were :—

	March, 1900.	March, 1905.
	£	£
Guardians	82,303	182,710
Borough Council	276,777*	529,301

As already stated, it was found necessary at the beginning of 1905 to issue a Provisional Order increasing the borrowing power of the Guardians.

The General Rate levied in the Borough has increased from 8s. 8d. in the £ in the year 1899-1900 to 12s. in the year 1905-6. The latter amount is made up as follows :—

	s.	d.
Borough Council	3	0½
Guardians	5	3¼
London County Council	3	2¾
Metropolitan Police	0	5½
	12	0

Of the 5s. 3¼d. the Guardians themselves were, in fact, only directly responsible for 3s. 6d. The expenses of the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum represented 1s. 1½d., and of the Metropolitan Asylums Board 7¾d.

Reference was made at the Inquiry to the great increase in the Poplar contribution to the expenditure of the Sick Asylum District. The District is under a Board of Managers elected by the Poplar and Stepney Boards of Guardians from their own bodies. Of 12 Managers eight are appointed by Poplar.

* This figure is for November, 1900, when the Borough Council was constituted.

The following table shows the amounts contributed for a series of years by Poplar to the Sick Asylum, and the number of patients therein from Poplar at Lady Day.

Year.	Number of Patients.	Amount of Contribution.
		£
1896	566	23,203
1897	468	27,314
1898	476	27,070
1899	524	23,742
1900	533	31,740
1901	539	35,305
1902	527	37,849
1903	595	37,094
1904	596	43,096
1905	601	42,390

Although the Poplar Guardians appoint a majority of the Managers it would not be fair to hold them responsible for the expenditure of the latter, as they are bound to make the contribution demanded from them. It did not appear that the expenditure of the Managers was a question that could be gone into at the present Inquiry; but it was considered desirable that a separate investigation should be made into the matter.

WORKHOUSE ADMINISTRATION.

A great deal of evidence was given with regard to the administration of the Workhouse. So far as the Inquiry is concerned, this subject may be divided into the following heads:—

- (1) Cost of maintenance.
- (2) Management of Workhouse.
- (3) Conduct of the Master and certain Guardians.

Considerable prominence was unavoidably given at the commencement of the Inquiry to Workhouse questions. Mr. Madeley, the Master of the Workhouse, had resigned during the preliminary investigation, and the Guardians had accepted his resignation to take effect from the end of June; the public Inquiry commenced on June 7th, and as it was understood that the Master proposed to leave England before the end of the month, it was deemed necessary to take his evidence first of all. The Inquiry thus was at first mainly concerned with workhouse administration, and it was some days before evidence could be taken on other points.

One of the witnesses called at the request of the Municipal Alliance was C. W. Genery, who had been Master's Clerk at Poplar Workhouse for the last four years. Mr. Corrie Grant sought to discredit this witness by references to his previous career. It appears that Genery had held several poor law offices before he came to Poplar, including that of Workhouse Master at Mile End. This latter office he was forced to resign in 1893 owing to a charge of conspiring with a contractor to defraud the Guardians. At the trial Genery pleaded guilty, and sentence was postponed. It was not shown that he

had received any monetary consideration for what he had done, and he was eventually discharged on his own recognisances. It should be stated that the Poplar Guardians were fully aware of his record when they appointed him as Master's Clerk. In March, 1904, they increased his salary, and in 1905 they gave him a gratuity for special work on which he had been employed.

(1.) *Cost of Maintenance.*

The Statistical Memorandum annexed shows that there has been a remarkable rise in the cost of maintenance in the Workhouse since 1896. The average weekly cost per head for maintenance, which includes provisions, clothing and necessaries, for the year ended Lady Day, was as follows:—

						<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
1896	...	...	...	...	...	4	5
1897	...	...	...	...	...	4	5
1898	...	...	...	...	...	4	10
1899	...	...	...	...	...	5	1
1900	...	...	...	...	...	5	2
1901	...	...	...	...	...	5	7
1902	...	...	...	...	...	6	0
1903	...	...	...	...	...	5	9
1904	...	...	...	...	...	5	11
1905	...	...	...	...	...	6	5

In 1906 the cost remained the same. In the adjoining unions of Stepney and Whitechapel steady rises occurred during this period, but the cost in those cases started from 3*s.* 10*d.* and 3*s.* 1*d.* and finished at 4*s.* 5*d.* and 4*s.* 2*d.* On the other hand, in the Bethnal Green Workhouse the cost fell from 5*s.* 2*d.* in 1900 to 4*s.* 4*d.* in 1905 and 1906.

For provisions alone the weekly cost per head in Poplar rose from 2*s.* 10½*d.* in 1896 to 4*s.* in 1905, the rise having been continuous except for a drop of 1*d.* in 1900. In the same period the cost in Stepney rose from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 11*d.*, and in Whitechapel from 1*s.* 7*d.* to 2*s.* 7*d.*, while in Bethnal Green the cost fell from 3*s.* 8*d.* to 2*s.* 10*d.*

At the Inquiry it was stated on behalf of the Poplar Guardians that the increase in the cost of provisions was largely due to the changes caused by the new Dietary Order issued by the Local Government Board in 1900. Other alterations in diet at various times were referred to which had increased the cost—such as the use of butter in the Workhouse instead of margarine, which was stated to have involved an additional charge of £2,000 per annum. Recently margarine has again been introduced. It may be observed that the Medical Officer stated that he did not consider that the new Order had improved the dietary of Poplar, and that there ought not to have been any increase in cost on this account.

A comparison of the actual diets in force in Poplar and the other three unions mentioned does not show sufficient reasons for the relatively excessive cost in Poplar.

On this point it is important to notice that in the tenders for provisions and necessaries the articles quoted are generally described as the "best." It was contended on behalf of the Guardians that they were justified in this as the price actually paid was low; but in many cases a quality inferior to the "best" would have sufficed and could have been obtained more cheaply, unless the description "best" had no real meaning. It is probable that the system of contracts in force is largely responsible for the high cost of maintenance.

In certain respects the Guardians have increased their expenditure by acts contrary to the regulations. The excessive grant of beer to inmates is discussed later. Tobacco also seems to have been given too freely. Again, all inmates over 60 were put on infirm diet; the Medical Officer objected at first to this classification, but appears to have given way on pressure from the Guardians.

In defence of the Guardians, Mr. Crooks urged that their object has been to improve the condition of the indoor pauper. In describing the Poplar Workhouse when he took office in 1893, he said :—

“The condition of things in the House was almost revolting. Dirt, empty stores, inmates without sufficient clothing, many without boots to the feet, food of the worst possible description.”

In 1894 an Inquiry was directed by the Local Government Board with reference to certain charges made against Mr. Deason, who was then Master of the Workhouse. Two of the allegations were that the clothing stores were practically empty and that the inmates were thereby deprived of the necessary weekly changes, and that they were wearing “under-flannels and drawers that were little better than rags, together with stockings and socks that were worn out.” Mr. Lockwood held the Inquiry, and the Board in communicating their views on his report to the Guardians stated, on these points :—

“There seem to have been considerable irregularities in connexion with the clothing stores on the female side, for which Mrs. Deason (the Matron) must be held to have been partly responsible, and also in giving the inmates their weekly changes. The Board do not, however, think that the evidence proves that there was more than some inconvenience from this, and that in some cases women had to wear flannel petticoats and other garments much longer than was right without their being washed; nor do they think that there was evidence to show that inmates were required to wear underclothing that was ‘little better than rags’. . . . The Board consider that in some cases the representations of the Medical Officer as to the need for increased clothing where the question of health was involved did not receive such immediate attention as it should have.”

The Inquiry in 1894 did not touch the question of the food supplied to the inmates of the Workhouse. It appears, however, from the reports of Inspectors visiting the Workhouse that there was a general improvement in the treatment of the inmates about this time. Mr. Crooks mentioned certain improvements introduced by him and claimed that the Workhouse became a model one for “attending to and properly feeding and clothing the poor.”

It is clear that in their efforts to improve the standard of comfort in the Workhouse the Poplar Guardians have spared no expense, and in this as in other matters the present Board of Guardians appear to have shown no proper appreciation of the effect of their expenditure. Indeed, Mr. Crooks in his evidence admitted that the dietary given in the Workhouse was better than could be obtained by the independent labourer in the Borough with a wife and two children to keep who received anything under 30s. a week. The Medical Officer stated that one of the Guardians told him that “the more you spend the more the Guardians will think of you.”

It may be mentioned here as an illustration of the abnormal expenditure of Poplar that the amount of water used in the Workhouse was over 70 gallons per head per day, or more than twice the average daily consumption per head for the whole of London. In the Islington Workhouse the amount used is 30 gallons a head.

(2.) *Management of Workhouse.*

Mr. Crooks stated that a much better state of discipline was now maintained in the Workhouse than when he first became a Guardian in 1893. He alleged that in the early period the male inmates were undisciplined and difficult to control, and he maintained that the improvement is due to the policy of the Guardians. An important feature in this policy is the method of employment of the inmates. The Guardians have done away with task work, such as

stone-breaking and oakum-picking, on the ground that it is not deterrent and does not help discipline, their experience being that the habitual pauper found it easy to do his task in a short time and then was idle for the rest of the day. They maintain that they have substituted constant employment of a useful nature, and that this has had better results and has produced a better state of discipline in the Workhouse. The difficulty, however, is that there is not sufficient work of this nature in an ordinary Workhouse for a large body of men. The occupations found for the Poplar male inmates appear to be chiefly cleaning, wood-cutting, and various odd jobs about the premises. Even less work is available than might be the case owing to the attitude of the Guardians on labour questions; they prefer to employ outside labour for work, such as gardening and painting, which in many workhouses is done by the inmates. It is evident from the reports of the Assistant Inspectors after visits to the Workhouse that insufficient employment was provided.

After a visit on October 23rd, 1903, Mr. Walsh reported :—

“There is now such a superabundance of chopped wood on the Guardians' hands that they have been obliged to stop all wood-chopping until their surplus store is exhausted. Consequently the able-bodied loafer is having an excellent time.”

Again, after a visit on October 24th, 1905, Mr. Walsh reported :—

“With the exception of cleaning, coal carrying, &c., the only occupation given to able-bodied men is wood-chopping. . . . If the Guardians would consent to re-establish task work I reckon that 18 to 20 corn mills could be put up in one of the wood sheds. The old stone-breaking cells are also there, and though the space at the Guardians' disposal is limited, there is still a possibility of making the able-bodied loafer's life disagreeable.”

After a visit on 22nd February, 1906, Mr. Oxley reported :—

“Very little attempt is made to keep the inmates employed (except women in the laundry) . . . no task of wood-chopping was set. Painting and whitewashing, which is much needed in some of the dormitories, is being done by outside labour, as the Guardians will not permit anything in the nature of skilled labour to be done by inmates.”

This conclusion is confirmed by the evidence of the Medical Officer and other officers of the Workhouse to the effect that the male inmates did scarcely any real work. Mr. Martley said that the Workhouse had ceased to be deterrent or to afford a test, and it appeared from the evidence both of Mr. Lansbury and the Superintendent of the Laindon Farm that men preferred life in the Workhouse to being sent to Laindon.

The conditions existing at the Workhouse seem to have resulted in the last few years in the position that, when there was work to be done, it was found desirable to grant beer to the inmates as an inducement to them to perform the duty, and Mr. Oxley in February last reported as follows :—

“Beer is given freely on the Medical Officer's order to inmates engaged in various jobs. The quantity to be consumed on the date of my visit was 110 pints, and 135 men and 29 women were on the list. Among the occupations for which beer was thought necessary I noticed ‘telephone man’ and ‘wardsman’.”

The question of the allowance of beer was the subject of correspondence with the Guardians. The Local Government Board asked for the Guardians' observations on the above report and the reply of the Clerk to the Guardians, dated 5th April, 1906, was as follows :—

“I am to state with regard to the allowance of beer, that in the opinion of the Guardians it is both desirable and reasonable that this should be given in small quantities as a reward for certain classes of work performed by inmates, and particularly for services rendered by inmates out of working hours. Unless work of this kind were carried out by the inmates, the number of paid assistants would have to be considerably increased.”

The Local Government Board replied on the 27th April, pointing out that under Article 8 of the Workhouse Regulation (Dietaries and Accounts) Order, 1900, the Guardians are not to allow to any inmate of the workhouse any fermented or spirituous liquors unless in pursuance of a written recommendation

of the Medical Officer of the Workhouse; and that any such recommendation must be accompanied by a statement of the reasons which in the opinion of the Medical Officer render such allowance requisite for the health of the inmate.

In answer to this the Guardians asked that the regulations might be amended so as to enable them to offer some suitable reward for specially laborious or useful work performed by inmates of the workhouse, to which request the Local Government Board replied on 14th August that they saw no sufficient reason for reconsidering the conditions under which beer may be given on medical grounds to inmates, and pointed out that provision was made for the allowance of tobacco and snuff to inmates employed upon work of a specially disagreeable character.

Dr. Lamont, the Medical Officer of the Workhouse, disagreed with the Guardians as to the propriety of giving an allowance of beer to inmates doing ordinary work. Realising the illegality of such an allowance, except on grounds of health, he hesitated to give the necessary certificate in these cases, and it was only after pressure that he complied. He says:—

"I was simply obliged by the Master of the Workhouse and the Guardians, I really had to put them on, or else undergo a considerable amount of suffering . . . Every time I took some person off the beer there was a considerable amount of friction raised by the Master, who saw the Guardians individually and informed them I took so-and-so off the beer."

As explaining the reason why he, an independent officer, had to yield to the pressure put on him, Dr. Lamont stated that his life would have been rendered miserable by the nagging at him, and that Mr. McCarthy, Chairman of the Workhouse Committee, had told him that the Local Government Board had not the "guts" to fight the Guardians. When asked if he had definite knowledge why the Master or the Guardians objected to his stopping the beer, he said:—

"In the first instance, the Master had no command over the inmates of the Workhouse unless he supplied them with beer. Secondly, he (Madeley) said that he was not able to get a rise in screw unless he supplied the Guardians with beer."

The daily allowance of beer to inmates seems to have reached considerably over 100 pints—at one time it was over 200—but it is remarkable that after the Inquiry started the quantity supplied fell to almost nothing. The Medical Officer stated at the Inquiry that he had ceased to certify for beer in ordinary cases.

Mr. Crooks stated that he was not in sympathy with the allowance of beer to the inmates, but he does not appear to have taken steps to check the practice. In his evidence he rather sought to put the blame for the amount of beer granted on the Medical Officer, but it is clear from the evidence above referred to that Dr. Lamont acted under compulsion.

In another matter the Guardians interfered with the Medical Officer's discretion. They directed that all inmates of the Workhouse over 60 years of age should receive "infirm" diet which is superior to the "able-bodied" diet, in spite of the fact that the Regulations leave the Medical Officer an absolute discretion as to whether any inmate should be classed as able-bodied for the purposes of diet.

It is important to note the evidence of the Chaplain of the Workhouse, the Medical Officer and other officers, as well as of one of the Guardians (Mr. Diamond), to the effect that there was a very great lack of discipline in the institution. How far this state of things was due to the conduct of the Master and certain of the Guardians which is referred to in the following pages cannot be determined, though it is clear that the inmates were aware of what was going on in the Workhouse, and the knowledge could hardly fail to have a bad effect.

It was not only among the inmates that there was lack of discipline. The evidence showed that a great deal of friction existed between the various officers, and it did not appear that the Master and Matron exercised any satisfactory control over their subordinates. Even Mr. McCarthy admitted that the discipline among the senior officers were not good.

Several other matters were referred to at the Inquiry which reflected on the administration of the Workhouse. Among these were the lavish supply of newspapers and periodicals which went to the officers instead of the inmates; and the practice of the Guardians having teas at the Workhouse, the cost being charged to "extraordinary supplies." It appears that the Guardians passed a resolution some years ago to the effect that they should be supplied with tea and bread and butter on committee days. There was no legal authority for this allowance, but the evidence showed that, in addition, pastry, poached eggs, and other luxuries were sometimes supplied on these occasions at the cost of the rates. The cook was allowed to sell sweets and tobacco to inmates in the Workhouse, a practice which the Acting Master endeavoured to defend on the ground that it was for the convenience of the inmates. Another matter mentioned was the fact that the Master's son and daughter continued to reside at the Workhouse after the age sanctioned by the Local Government Board, paying for their maintenance when grown-up the same amount as when children. Complaints were also made as to certain Guardians obtaining cough drops and drugs from the Medical Officer's store, and as to one who is alleged to have received stationery from the Workhouse. Irregularities also appear to have occurred in connection with the ordering and use of mineral waters for the Workhouse.

(3) *Conduct of the Master and certain Guardians.*

Mr. Madeley and his wife were appointed Master and Matron, in June, 1894, and for many years they appear to have administered the Workhouse efficiently and to have given entire satisfaction to the Guardians. On April 12th, 1906, a little over a month after the Inquiry was announced, the Guardians reported to the Local Government Board that the Master had tendered his resignation, which they had accepted, to take effect at the end of June; and they forwarded copies of two medical certificates dated April 10th and 11th advising his retirement from office on grounds of health.

The Board were, however, furnished on May 17th by the Municipal Alliance with a report of proceedings at an extraordinary meeting of the Guardians, which had been held on April 6th to consider Mr. Madeley's resignation. His letter of resignation, dated April 5th, was as follows:—

"Dear Sir,

"I respectfully wish to resign the position of Master of this house on and from the next Quarter Day, 30th June, owing to family matters.

"(Sgd.) WM. A. MADELEY.

"To the Chairman of the Poplar Guardians."

The discussion at this meeting showed that the Guardians were fully aware that the real cause of the resignation was his relations with a woman who had recently been nurse at the workhouse, but they failed to inform the Local Government Board of the fact, and in reporting his resignation left it to be inferred that it was due to the failure of his health. Indeed, at the Inquiry, Mr. Ford, Vice-chairman of the Guardians, cross-examined Madeley with the object of showing that he had resigned solely on grounds of health. The knowledge of Madeley's conduct came to Mr. McCarthy, and certain other Guardians in July, 1905. In spite of this, and of the fact that the Master was constantly absent from the workhouse at week ends and other times, he was allowed to continue in office. Mr. Crooks stated at the Inquiry that he heard of the Master's misconduct in October, 1905, that at the intercession of the Master and Matron he refrained from taking action then and agreed to give the former another chance, but that at last finding he was frequently absent from his duties he told his colleagues that the Master must go and on the following day (6 April) his resignation was received.

On the third day of the Inquiry Madeley admitted that his resignation was due to his relations with the woman in question. I thereupon reported the facts to the Local Government Board, who considered it necessary to issue an

Order immediately dismissing him from office, and thus preventing him from obtaining a superannuation allowance which he might have claimed on the strength of the medical certificates.

In the interests of the Workhouse, the Guardians might well have suspended the Master immediately on learning the facts as to his conduct. Instead of this they continued him in office until the Inquiry commenced, and not only did they fail to report the true facts to the Local Government Board, but even at the Inquiry at first they endeavoured to shield the Master rather than admit known irregularities on his part.

Under the Poor Law Officers Superannuation Act, 1896, the Matron would cease to be entitled to superannuation if her husband lost his office through misconduct, and it was suggested that the Guardians' action was prompted by a desire that she should not lose her pension. This, however, can hardly be accepted as a satisfactory excuse for allowing the mismanagement of the Workhouse to go on for several months, or for rendering it possible that the Master himself might get a pension. In fact, the Guardians seem to have condoned his conduct so far as to apply to the Local Government Board after his resignation for sanction to the payment of a gratuity of £50 to him for "extra services." Although a similar payment had been allowed on one or two previous occasions, the Master's recent conduct and his continued absences from duty should have made such an application impossible.

The attitude of the Guardians towards the Master can hardly be dissociated from the story told at the Inquiry of their friendly relations with him. Mr. McCarthy, the Chairman of the House Committee, in spite of his duties as an official of the General Post Office, was a constant visitor at the Workhouse. There is ample evidence that he often partook of meals in the Master's quarters, and the times of his visits support this view. An examination of the Porter's book shows that during a period of 61 weeks Mr. McCarthy was at the Workhouse nearly every day and often two or three times a day. One week he would visit in the earlier part of the day and the next week in the evenings. His morning visits usually extended to 1.15 or 1.30. His evening visits generally lasted over two hours, ending at times varying from 9 to 11. Another Guardian, Mr. Ford, was at the Workhouse on an average between four and five days a week. Only half of the Guardians visited as often as one day a week.

It appeared also that Mr. McCarthy and many other Guardians were accustomed to drink with the Master in the place where the Workhouse beer supplies were kept. Some of the Guardians admitted the drinking, but contended that the beer was paid for by the Master. It was the practice to make a fixed charge in the Master's accounts of 10 per cent. on all beer supplied to the Workhouse, which it was stated represented loss on serving. On a daily consumption of 100 pints the amount would thus be considerable. It is, however, doubtful whether in serving beer any waste need take place. On the contrary, it is understood that the practice in Army canteens is to require that an "unaccountable profit" of from 5 to 10 per cent. should be shown on malt liquors. It would appear, therefore, that there was a surplus of beer paid for by the ratepayers and not consumed by the inmates, and some of the officers swore that this was drunk by Guardians and other persons whom Madeley entertained. On the other hand it was stated that the Master kept part of his private supply of liquor in the same place as the workhouse beer. He obtained his beer from Messrs. Whitbread, the contractors to the Guardians, and produced receipts from them amounting to £15 for Pale Ale supplied to him during 1904 and 1905.

Whatever the source from which the drink came, the practice of Guardians drinking with their officers is open to much objection, and cannot fail to have a disastrous effect on the discipline of the officers and the inmates of the House. That the practice was notorious is shown by the fact that the place where the drink was supplied was known among the inmates as the "Madeley Arms" or

the "Horn of Plenty." It is to be regretted that one or two of the Guardians who admitted the fact of drinking so far failed to appreciate their position as to contend that they were justified in drinking with the Master. There was evidence that three of the Guardians had been seen on the Workhouse premises the worse for drink, but they strenuously denied this, two of them on oath.

Though Mr. McCarthy was not the only Guardian to take meals with the Master of the Workhouse he was the greatest offender in this respect. He urged, as an excuse, that the food came from the Master's rations; but this is not a contention that can be accepted as the rations are intended for the personal use of the officer. If an officer was limited to his proper allowance of rations there would be no margin for entertaining. It follows that Mr. McCarthy took his meals at the expense either of the Union or of the Master. There is evidence that on some occasions when he was having supper with the Master extra luxuries, such as oysters and salmon, were sent out for by the latter.

Mr. McCarthy explained that he was a personal friend of the Master and Matron, and that when the trouble arose with the Master he endeavoured to act as peacemaker. It seems that his continual attendance at the Workhouse and his practical assumption of the duties of the Master gave rise to some scandal. Mr. Robb, however, stated that in this matter he did not go further than to impute to Mr. McCarthy familiarity not consistent with his position as a Guardian, and Mr. McCarthy and the Matron were allowed to deny on oath that there had been any actual misconduct. It should be mentioned that Mr. McCarthy and the late Master remain on good terms.

The fact that Mr. McCarthy continued to take meals with the Master and the Matron during the period when the former's misconduct was known lays him open to the charge of condoning the offence. He was aware, too, of the Master's constant absences from duty, and the evidence on this and other points showed his unfitness for the responsible office of Chairman of the Workhouse Committee. It may be remarked that three of Mr. McCarthy's relatives hold office at the Workhouse.

It is difficult to excuse any of the Guardians from responsibility for the unfortunate results produced in the Workhouse by the Master's misconduct and the relations which existed between him and some of the Guardians. The evidence of the Chaplain is conclusive as to the ill effects among the inmates. He says:—

"The conduct of the Master in taking the Guardians to the beer cellar got about amongst the inmates, and the conduct of the Master recently has gone abroad. That also has got to be known to the inmates. And we have in the House, of course, I am sorry to say, inmates of a low type of character, and hearing of the conduct of the Master it has made the work of the Chaplain very difficult indeed."

He thought that the example set to the inmates was very bad and subversive to discipline, and added:—

"There is no pressure put on the inmates to go to Chapel, and, of course, their knowledge of the doings of the Master and the Guardians would gradually hinder them from taking instruction from me."

He added that he had heard inmates alluding to the Master's misconduct and the drinking by Guardians, and saying unpleasant things.

The Chaplain appears to have felt the situation so keenly that he brought the matter before the Bishop, and consulted some of his brother clergy as to what steps should be taken. He stated that through one of the clergy the subject was brought to the notice of Mr. Crooks. In reply to a question as to the possibility of further action to call the attention of the Guardians to the matter, he said:

"I am afraid Mr. Crooks knew it. I think everyone knew it. I could not set myself to bring a matter before him which I felt certain must be within his knowledge."

The Master appears to have been frequently in the company of persons who were supplying goods to the Workhouse, and these too drank with him at the Workhouse, sometimes in the company of Guardians. The evidence as to contracts leaves little doubt that certain contractors were assisted in their tenders by someone from inside. One witness swore to having paid a commission to Madeley in cash while he was General Relieving Officer, on work secured for him, and to having supplied Madeley when he was Master with carriages for private purposes, either free or at a reduced rate, in consideration of his assistance. That matter, together with the alleged raising of contract prices with Madeley's connivance, is dealt with fully in another part of the Report. Another witness stated that Madeley had offered him £10 if he would surrender his contract. It is not probable that these were isolated cases.

Though practically little evidence was produced at the Inquiry as to corruption on the part of Guardians in connection with contracts or tenders for the Union, yet familiar intercourse between Guardians and their officers and contractors can hardly fail to lead to corrupt practices in the long run.

OUT-DOOR RELIEF.

Up to 1892 out-door pauperism in Poplar bore about the same proportion to population as in the whole of London. In the following year Mr. Crooks joined the Board of Guardians, and from that point Poplar exceeds the rest of London. The change may best be seen from the following figures, which show the proportion of out-door pauperism in Poplar and London respectively, per 1,000 of population :—

Year.	Poplar.	London.	Year.	Poplar.	London.
January 1st, 1885 ...	9	10	January 1st, 1896 ...	13	9
„ 1886 ...	10	10	„ 1897 ...	12	9
„ 1887 ...	11	11	„ 1898 ...	13	9
„ 1888 ...	10	11	„ 1899 ...	13	9
„ 1889 ...	10	11	„ 1900 ...	14	9
„ 1890 ...	10	10	„ 1901 ...	15	9
„ 1891 ...	10	10	„ 1902 ...	17	9
„ 1892 ...	9	9	„ 1903 ...	21	10
„ 1893 ...	11	9	„ 1904 ...	24	10
„ 1894 ...	15	10	„ 1905 ...	47	11
„ 1895 ...	12	10	„ 1906 ...	43	11

In the year 1895 the number of out-door poor rose to 5,848 on the 9th March. This was due to a severe frost which did not begin until the end of February, and so did not affect the 1st January numbers ; but the numbers had fallen to something like their normal level by the end of April.

During the winter of 1894-5 the able-bodied men were relieved with a labour test, but the Guardians were dissatisfied with this method of relief and

it has never since been in force in the Poplar Union. The following Table shows the numbers of out-door paupers in the first four months of 1895 :—

JANUARY-APRIL, 1895.

Date.	Number of out-door paupers.	Date.	Number of out-door paupers.
5th January	1,759	2nd March	5,730
12th „	1,784	9th „	5,848
19th „	1,766	16th „	5,778
26th „	1,810	23rd „	5,830
		30th „	5,751
2nd February	1,844	6th April	1,974
9th „	1,884	13th „	1,983
16th „	2,009	20th „	1,976
23rd „	5,216	27th „	1,958

It will be observed from the Table on the previous page that the out-door relief has risen very sharply since 1899, until in the years 1905 and 1906 the ratio exceeded 40 per thousand of population. For some time there had been considerable trade depression which had affected the pauperism of the whole Metropolis, and Poplar pauperism was nearly doubled.

The Chart facing this page shows the movements of out-door pauperism in Poplar during the years 1904, 1905 and 1906. It will be seen that a striking rise occurred towards the end of 1904, and that it was not until the middle of February this year that the number of out-door paupers was materially reduced.

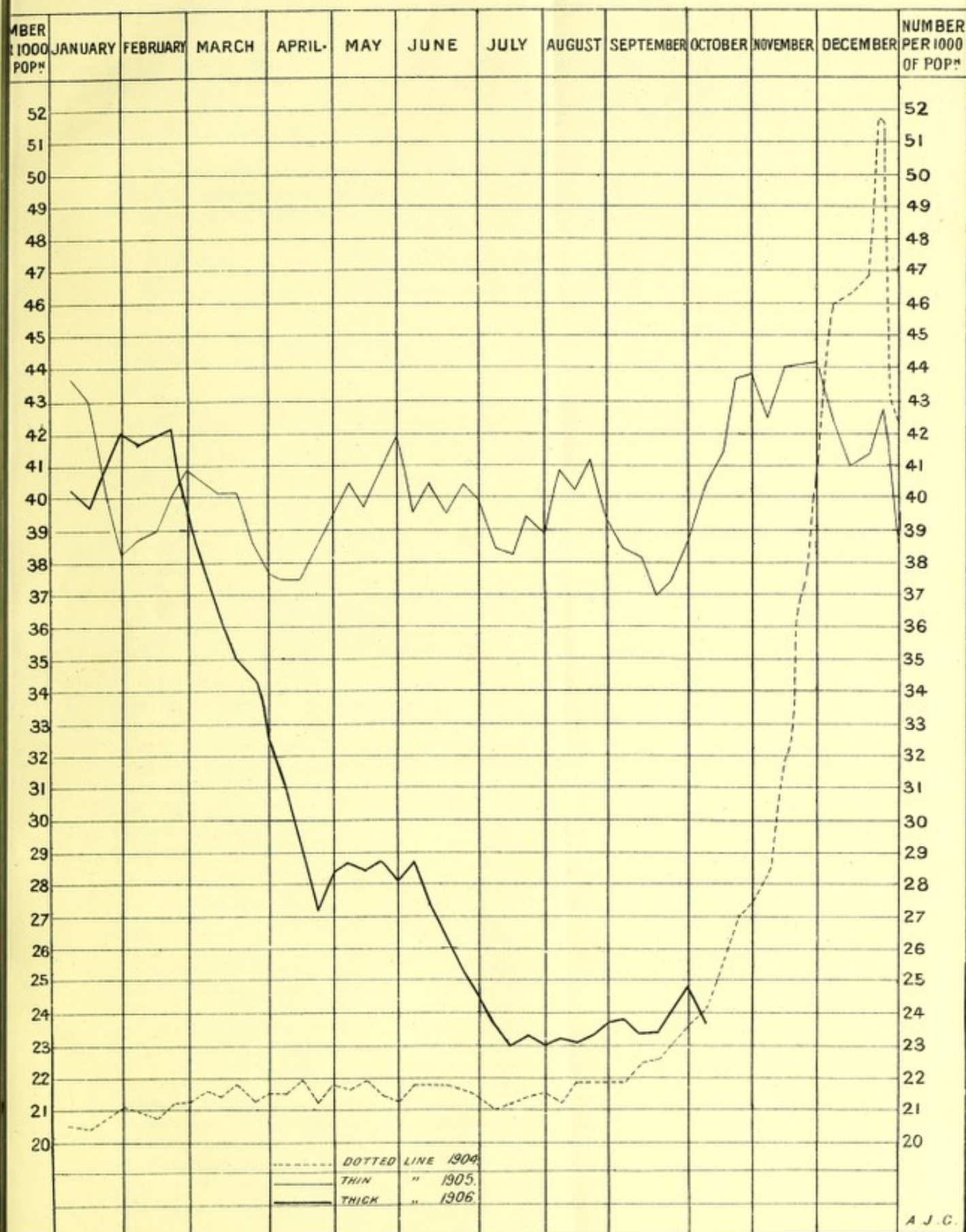
The main increase seems to have sprung from a resolution passed by the Guardians in November, 1904, under which relief in kind was given to able-bodied men without a test of any sort being imposed. Mr. Martley, who was present at the meeting when the resolution was carried, gave a clear account of what actually happened; but, as to the events which led up to the resolution, the accounts given in the evidence are not entirely in harmony.

It appears that, at Mr. Long's invitation, a conference was held on October 14th, 1904, with respect to the prospects of distress in the Metropolis, and a series of proposals was put forward by the Poplar representatives, which included the setting up of a central body on the lines of the Metropolitan Asylums Board to deal with the unemployed and unemployable of London as a whole.

After this meeting a local committee was formed in Poplar and a census taken of the unemployed in twelve streets in each of the Parishes of Poplar, Bromley, and Bow, a copy of which was forwarded to the Local Government Board. This census showed :—

Population of houses canvassed	18,463
Number of wage-earners... ..	6,733
Number of unemployed	1,624
(Percentage of unemployed to wage-earners = 24.12).	
Number on short time	319
Number dependent upon unemployed, exclusive of wage-earners	2,578

OUTDOOR PAUPERISM IN POPLAR IN 1904, 1905 & 1906.





At the end of October a Circular was issued by Mr. Long suggesting the creation of a central committee for the Metropolis. There was no power of obtaining money compulsorily for the purposes of the committee, but the suggestion was made that, if necessary, contributions from borough councils should be made based on the assessable value of the boroughs.

Meanwhile a series of meetings of the unemployed and others were taking place in Poplar, and were addressed by, amongst others, a Mr. Salmon, who was stated by Mr. Martley to have been engaged to organise the unemployed by the Poplar Trade and Labour Council, which body was practically the same as the Poplar Board of Guardians.

On the 16th of November a deputation of the unemployed visited the Guardians' offices under the leadership of Mr. Salmon. At the Inquiry Mr. Crooks, on being asked whether the deputation was organised, said:—

"I suppose it was organised and not organised. I pointed out that when you get an aggregation of men on a given spot, looking for a day's work, while a man comes for the six o'clock call or the eight o'clock, and finds only four or five men taken on, leaving outside over 200 or 300, what is but natural that one will begin talking rather loud."

Mr. Salmon made proposals to the Guardians as to finding work for the unemployed, and Mr. Crooks then addressed the men and promised them relief.

The Guardians subsequently discussed the proposals, and it is noticeable that Mr. Lansbury objected to giving out-relief without a labour test as being demoralising. It was resolved, on the 19th November, that relief should be given under Article 10 of the Out-door Relief Regulation Order of 1852 to all applicants except those whom the Committee thought fit to exclude as habituals; that separate books be kept; that cases be reported fortnightly to the Local Government Board; that relieving officers give interim relief in every case, and that the power of offering the workhouse be taken from them and reserved to the Committee.

At the time this resolution was passed, the Guardians were pointing out to the Government the unfairness of leaving Poplar unaided to bear the strain of supporting all the local unemployed.

The Borough Council at this time were no doubt responsible for some part of the increase in applications for relief. It had been the practice of the Council and their predecessors, the Board of Works, to employ a large number of men on relief works for a few days at a time. But in 1904 they adopted a different system and gave continuous employment for a definite period: as a result the number of men employed was much less than previously, and more men were left to apply to the Guardians. In the winter of 1903-4 the Borough Council gave employment weekly to 700 casual labourers, while in 1904-5 the number so employed was 179.

The whole evidence as to the proceedings of the Poplar Guardians shows that they were in a position of great difficulty, and with their experience of 1895 they were unwilling to adopt the normal method of dealing with such emergencies by opening a labour yard; but it also strongly suggests that their action was deliberately intended to call attention to what they deemed the unfairness of the present system.

In considering the action taken by the Guardians it is necessary to refer to the Regulations bearing on the matter.

Article 215 of the General Consolidated Order of 1847 provides that a Relieving Officer must give relief in cases of sudden *or* urgent necessity, either by an order of admission to the workhouse or by giving out-relief in kind. Article 7 of the Out-door Relief Regulation Order, dated 14th December, 1852, provides that the regulation in that Order that every able-bodied male person shall be set to work if relieved out of the workhouse, need not apply to the case of a person receiving relief on account of sudden *and* urgent necessity.

Article 10 of the latter Order, on which the Guardians at first relied, is as follows :—

If the Guardians shall, upon consideration of the special circumstances of any particular case, deem it expedient to depart from any of the regulations hereinbefore contained . . . and within 21 days after such departure shall report the same and the grounds thereof to the [Local Government] Board, the relief which may have been so given in such case by such Guardians before an answer to such report shall have been returned by the said Board, shall not be deemed to be contrary to the provisions of this Order.

It is evident that the intention of this Article was to enable Guardians to deal with exceptional cases, but its provisions do not apply to the procedure adopted at Poplar, for none of the cases were reported to the Local Government Board. The Guardians at first reported to the Board the amount of relief granted during the week, but they were informed that the intention of the Order was that each case should be reported separately, with the grounds for the departure from the regulations, and that the Article was not of general application. Owing to the large number of cases there would no doubt have been great difficulty in complying with the requirements of the Order, but from this point the Guardians ceased to make any report to the Board of the relief given. Mr. Crooks said at the Inquiry that the names were all kept in a separate book and that the Board could if they pleased have sent an Inspector to examine them.

The question of the legality of the relief given must depend rather on the provisions of the Orders as to the relief of sudden and urgent cases in kind than on the terms of Article 10. The able-bodied applicants were in fact treated throughout as if they had been sudden or urgent cases. If the provision of the General Consolidated Order applies to the cases, the Guardians may contend that the cases were urgent, but if the more recently issued Regulation Order is to be followed, it is quite evident that the cases were not sudden as well as urgent.

Reliance on the provision as to sudden *or* urgent cases as a means of evading the obvious intentions of the Relief Order is by no means unknown in poor law administration, but this method of relief has never been applied on the scale and in the systematic manner adopted by the Poplar Guardians. It is to be observed that the discretion which was given to the relieving officer by the provision in the Order of 1847 was arbitrarily limited by the Guardians, who practically required that relief to able-bodied men should only be in the form of out-relief in kind. The precise procedure was that the applicant for relief was relieved in kind up to the next meeting of the Committee; the Committee confirmed the order of the relieving officer and a fresh application was made by the pauper, to be followed by a fresh order by the relieving officer. The relieving officers were instructed to give out-door relief to every applicant until the next meeting of the Committee; they apparently had misgivings with regard to the expediency of relieving some of these cases, and in several instances they were compelled to do so by the action of the Guardians. In one case an order which entitled the applicant to admission to the workhouse was brought back to the relieving officer by the applicant with a peremptory direction written on it by a Guardian that he should give outdoor relief in kind, and one relieving officer was formally censured for offering the workhouse in one case where, in his opinion, this was the proper method of dealing with the applicant.

The interference of individual guardians with the discretion of the relieving officers evidently gave rise to considerable feeling. It is a practice open to very grave abuse, but some excuse for the policy of the guardians may be found in the fact that many of them actually live among the applicants for relief and know, or think they know, the individual circumstances of each case. The relieving officers, in point of fact, felt that they had no option but to give outdoor relief practically to all applicants, and some of them stated at the Inquiry that they had given relief indiscriminately and against their better judgment. They evidently had great doubts as to the legality of the proceedings. They appear to have approached Mr. Crooks in the matter, and were told that

he would put things right with the Local Government Board, while the Clerk to the Guardians, to whom they also appealed, was stated to have told them "You cannot stem the tide."

After the Inquiry was announced some of the relieving officers held a meeting to discuss what line of action they should take. As a matter of fact the evidence which was given by the relieving officers is very fair and makes it clear that most of them had done their best in very trying circumstances. The Guardians appointed investigators to assist them, but naturally few men of experience could be immediately found to undertake this duty, and in the result most of the work of visiting the homes of applicants, which is by far the most important duty of a relieving officer, was left to temporary and inexperienced assistants.

The District Auditor evidently felt some difficulty in making any disallowance, and when finally he did so it was in one test case only and on the ground that the relief had been given without sufficient inquiry.

As might have been expected, as soon as the decision of the Guardians to grant out-door relief to able-bodied men was known, the relieving officers were flooded by applications, and the weekly value of relief in kind rose in a few weeks from £88 at the beginning of the Christmas quarter, to over £300. It may be mentioned here that the Guardians gave no relief in money to able-bodied applicants, the out-door relief in these cases being wholly in kind.

Charges were made that this relief was much abused, but there was no evidence that there had been abuse on any considerable scale. The dealing with so large a mass of stores and provisions, with the staff which had to be improvised to meet the emergency, caused great difficulty, and it would not have been a matter for surprise if the whole administration had broken down.

The evidence went to show that the cases dealt with in this way by the relieving officers were passed almost as a matter of course when they came before the Relief Committees. Mr. Diamond complained that on the Committee on which he sat some of his colleagues resented questions being put to the applicants, and that he had been insulted in the presence of the paupers when he was endeavouring to elicit facts as to their circumstances. On the other hand, some of the Committees evidently devoted much time and care to their work, their sittings lasting many hours. On one occasion the Committee of which Mr. Watts was chairman refused relief either in or out of the Workhouse to a number of men who had, owing to some dispute as to wages, left a job which had been found for them at Morecambe.

The Guardians made no attempt to check the rush for relief when once started. Throughout the whole year the relief continued high, and in the winter of 1905-6 the figures were nearly up to the maximum of the former year, but from the third week of February, 1906, about which time it was known that an Inquiry would be held, the figures fell rapidly, and at the beginning of the public Inquiry they showed a decrease of nearly 50 per cent. The causes of this remarkable fall were variously stated by the relieving officers, who assigned them to better trade, the effect of the Unemployed Fund, the fact that the relieving officers were no longer interfered with by the Guardians, and lastly to the Inquiry. Miss Grant said that the Guardians were showing a great want of moral courage in being affected by the fact that they were somewhat under a cloud.

Outside Poplar the pauperism of the Metropolis shows no similar decrease this year, and a consideration of the figures seems to prove that the fall at Poplar is due to the cessation of relief to able-bodied men. Most of these men have wives and families, and so counted heavily in the pauper roll. It is only fair to the Guardians to point out that there are many instances, of which one, that of Bermondsey, is referred to in the Memorandum attached to this Report, where the closing of a labour yard has been immediately followed by an immense

reduction in out-door relief, and that a similar decrease was only to be expected at Poplar. So, too, the out-door pauperism in the Canning Town district of West Ham rose in the winter of 1904-5 to 88 per thousand, a figure which was never reached in Poplar. This increase may be attributed to the fact that the West Ham Workhouse was full and applicants knew that test orders could not be given to them; and of course the large sums collected and distributed by charitable agencies had also their effect. But the whole crisis in Canning Town was all over in one year, whereas in Poplar it lasted until the Inquiry was announced.

On the whole it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Inquiry was mainly responsible for the change in the administration of the Guardians, while there appears to be good ground for thinking that the high figures of relief were artificial and in no way represented the real need for relief in the district at the time.

It is true that the position of the Guardians was one of great difficulty, and they were smarting under what they deemed to be the unjust incidence of the rates, but it is difficult to excuse the methods which they took to call attention to their position. In spite of the large reduction of relief this year the relieving officers and Mr. Martley say that although the people are poor there is no distress.

Another aspect of the Guardians' policy was their treatment of applicants over 60 years of age. In these cases relief has been given continuously, and with little regard to the earnings of other members of the family. In fact the Guardians, as Mr. Lansbury admits, have used the poor rates as a means of giving old-age pensions. They shelter themselves behind Mr. Chaplin's Circular of 1900, which pointed out that where out-relief was given to the aged deserving poor, it should be adequate; but the Circular did not recommend the general grant of out-door relief. As Mr. Martley suggests, the Circular was not intended to secure more lavish out-door relief on the part of Guardians who were already generous. It is unfortunate that the Circular referred to should be relied on as an authority for excessive out-door relief.

Evidence was given as to the case of a family named Carey. Mrs. Carey was a member of a deputation of unemployed women which was received by Mr. Arthur Balfour in November, 1905. She stated at the deputation that her husband was a dock labourer, who had only one or two days work a week. They had six little children. She added: "If something is not done we shall soon have to eat one another, or else there will be bloodshed." A representative of the Millwall Dock Company stated that the man Carey was a regular member of a gang of seven in their employ, and that the earnings of the gang per man for the week preceding the date of the deputation averaged £2 15s. 3d., while the average weekly earnings of the gang per head during the years 1904 and 1905 amounted to £1 17s. 8d.

In January 1906 out-door relief was given by the Guardians to Carey for four weeks. On the Guardians' attention being called to the case at the Inquiry they investigated the matter. It appeared that during the four weeks the relief was given the earnings of the gang averaged 23s., 27s., 15s. 3d., and 18s. 4d. per man, but the Guardians were unable to ascertain definitely whether Carey was actually working either when the relief was given or at the time of the deputation. He might have been working in the gang if he had wished or was not prevented by illness. It appeared also that in June, 1906, the Company were paying Carey compensation, under the Workmen's Compensation Act, the payment being based on an average weekly wage of 19s. 5d. for the previous year.

Mr. Crooks and Mr. Lansbury, who took a leading part in organising the deputation above referred to, stated at the Inquiry that they had no reason to doubt the statement by Mrs. Carey at the time she made it. Mr. Crooks added that from information received since he believed it was true, and in fact he had personally assisted the case.

CONTRACTS.

The tender form which is used in Poplar and in most other Metropolitan Unions sets out—

- (1) the name of the article ;
- (2) the estimated quantity required ;
- (3) the rate or price.

The total cost of the estimated quantity required at the rate or price quoted is then entered in another column, and the total amount of these entries is shown and treated as the amount of the tender. In most instances this total, which in this report is spoken of as "the gross value" of a tender, is treated as the proper basis of comparison with other tenders. It is clear, however, that unless the estimate of the quantity required is accurate and approximates to the actual delivery by the contractor, the gross value is useless as a means of forming a judgment as to which tender is the cheapest.

If, as often happens, there is no actual purchase of any particular article which was estimated to be required, the fact that the price set against it in the tender is below its market value is of no advantage to the Guardians, while it reduces the gross value of the tender. It must be remembered that sometimes more than a hundred and fifty different articles are tendered for on one form, and there is consequently a temptation to deal with the prices of these articles as a whole, but usually there is a stipulation that the Guardians reserve the right to contract for one or more articles without contracting for the whole, and this enables them, if they choose to take the trouble, to consider the cost of each article separately, and accept the lowest priced articles from two or more tenders. This practice, which is known technically as splitting the tenders, is adopted in some of the Metropolitan unions and boroughs, but in Poplar the practice has been to consider the gross value alone. It is also the practice there to reject as informal any tender which does not quote a price for every item, although no stipulation as to this is specifically set out on the tender forms, the effect being that manufacturers cannot tender for their own goods only. As an example, the tender of the British Thompson Houston Company may be quoted ; they tendered in the Electrical Supplies tender of 1905 for their own (B.T.H.) lamps only at 8s. 6d. a dozen. This tender was rejected as informal as the other items were not quoted for, and a tender was accepted in which B.T.H. lamps were quoted at 12s. 6d. a dozen.

The Poplar contractors are all subject to Trade Union rates and rules, and this is now the universal practice in the metropolis. The effect of this provision might in some cases be to exclude the direct tender of some firms, perhaps the sole manufacturers of the articles required, but to permit a middle man to purchase from the excluded firm and obtain the advantage which otherwise the ratepayers would have gained. An example of the working of the provision was suggested in the evidence as to the contract of Messrs. Cartwright who, though themselves observing Trade Union rates and rules, appear to contract for work outside at very low rates.

Where the gross values alone are considered, it is evident that the contractor will endeavour to use his judgment as to the accuracy of the quantities estimated as being required. If he thinks that the whole quantity estimated for of a particular article will not be ordered, he will naturally tender as low as he dares, whereas if it seems to him that the quantity will be exceeded he will tender as high as possible. This is technically known as "finesse."

Such a method of contracting of course may be perfectly legitimate, but it is evident that if the contractor can by any means acquire special knowledge as to the quantities remaining in stock he will have a greater advantage over his competitors, and, consequently, it is evident that not only does such a system give a great advantage to the holders of existing contracts, but it may lead to considerable corruption. It may fairly be said that the practice of "finesse" cannot be worked on any considerable scale without the active or

passive co-operation of officials or guardians ; for if the contractor, in order to keep his gross value low, puts in impossibly small prices for articles which he thinks may not be required, he runs the risk of an unfriendly official requisitioning for, and the guardians ordering a large amount of, the low-priced article, at a heavy loss to himself.

Except in one instance there was no direct evidence of such a collusion at Poplar, although some of the figures in the contracts are startling. Mr. Crooks and Mr. Lansbury were well aware of the risks of this system, and the latter stated in his evidence that an ordinary contractor could get all the information he wanted by giving a glass of beer and using his brains when he met an officer. Some years ago the Poplar Guardians requested the Local Government Board to establish a central contract board for the Metropolis, and so remove the responsibility from the local Guardians ; but they do not appear to have done anything to ensure that in the meanwhile a more scientific system of accepting tenders should be carried out in their Union, either by splitting tenders or in any other way. Having made their suggestion to the Board, they apparently considered that they had no further responsibility.

The system of as far as possible only buying by contract leads to the inclusion of a very large number of items on the contract forms on the chance of their being required, and so makes finessing easier, while on the other hand experience shows that, if goods are bought directly by Committees or the Guardians after an estimate is obtained from one or two tradesmen, abuses will from time to time arise.

In all the tender forms there is a stipulation that the Guardians are not bound to accept the lowest or any other tender ; and on many grounds it is expedient that Guardians should have some discretion in the matter. In some Unions the Guardians keep a black list of the names of contractors whose tenders they will not accept under any circumstances. In other Unions the Guardians accept the tenders of contractors who reside in the Union in every possible case with but little regard to the cost. This latter procedure is open to criticism on many grounds and is evidently apt to lead to jobbery, but cannot in itself be called corrupt. Where neither of these causes can be assigned for the rejection of the lowest tender grave suspicions are certain to arise, although the action of the Guardians may be due to petty jobbery or to general slackness rather than to actual corruption. It must also be remembered that an unscrupulous officer can often influence the Guardians without their being aware of it.

The fact that it has not been the general practice in Poplar to accept the tenders showing the lowest gross value is undisputed. Such a practice would have effected a saving, if the estimated quantities were purchased, of £1,682 in 1903-4, £2,143 in 1905-6, and £1,001 in 1906-7, or an average of over £1,600 a year. The figures for 1904-5 were not available.

The total gross value of the contracts is between £40,000 and £50,000 a year ; the saving, therefore, if the lowest tenders had been accepted, would have been about 3 per cent.

It was suggested that the tenderers passed over were firms that would have been placed on a black list and never accepted if such a list had been kept, but a consideration of the names of the rejected though lower tenderers shows that this suggestion can have but little foundation in fact.

The extent to which finesse may be carried is shown by a comparison of two of the Electrical Supplies tenders for 1905-6, the accepted tender of Pyle and the tender of Greaves. As these tenders do not contain many items they are set out in full by way of example ; and for purposes of comparison a column showing the actual quantity purchased under the contract has been placed next to the column giving the estimated quantity required, and next to the total price on the estimated quantity has been placed the total price on the actual purchase. Pyle's quotation for the same articles for the year 1906-7 has been added by way of comparison.

ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES, 1905-6.

Tenders of Messrs. Pyle & Co. and Mr. Greaves.

Descriptions of Goods or Materials.	Estimated quantity required.	Actual quantity purchased.	Pyle & Co., 1905-6, Accepted Tender.			Pyle's prices in 1905-7 tender.	Greaves, 1905-6, Rejected Tender.		
			Rate or price.	Total on estimated quantity.	Total on actual purchases.		Rate or Price.	Total on estimated quantity.	Total on actual purchases.
1. Incandescent glow lamps, B.T.H. Edison, at per doz.	16 dozen	36 dozen	s. d. 12 6	£ s. d. 10 0 0	£ s. d. 22 10 0	s. d. 6 0	£ s. d. 0 10 0	£ s. d. 8 0 0	£ s. d. 18 0 0
2. Incandescent glow lamps, Royal Ediswan, at per doz.	16 dozen	108 dozen	18 0	14 8 0	97 4 0	16 0	0 14 6	11 12 0	78 6 0
3. Incandescent glow lamps, Electra, at per doz.	16 dozen	Nil	11 6	9 4 0	—	4 0	0 7 6	6 0 0	—
The lamps to be tested within 15 per cent. of declared candle power and have efficiency as follows :—									
Efficiency, 16 c.p., $3\frac{1}{4}$ – $3\frac{3}{4}$ Watts per c.p.									
Efficiency, 8 c.p., $3\frac{3}{4}$ –4 Watts per c.p.									
4. Carbon dynamo brushes, No. 1, at per doz.	12 dozen	Nil	3 6	2 2 0	—	10 0	3 0 0	36 0 0	—
5. Carbon dynamo brushes, No. 2, at per doz.	12 dozen	Nil	4 0	2 8 0	—	10 0	2 2 0	25 4 0	—
6. Motor brushes carbon, No. 1, at per doz.	6 dozen	Nil	3 0	0 18 0	—	5 0	0 9 0	2 14 0	—
7. Motor brushes carbon, No. 2, at per doz.	6 dozen	Nil	4 0	1 4 0	—		0 5 0	1 10 0	—
8. Arc lamp carbon, at per foot	1,000 feet	Nil	0 0 $\frac{3}{4}$	3 2 6	—	0 0 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 0 1 $\frac{1}{4}$	5 4 2	—
			43 6 6		119 14 0	96 4 2 96 6 0			

It will be seen from a comparison of these tenders that the gross value of Pyle's tender was less than half that of Greaves, yet if the goods actually ordered had been purchased at the prices in Greaves' tender, the amount paid would have been much less than the amount actually paid. As regards the B.T.H. lamps it is fair to suppose the price of 8s. 6d. a dozen which was quoted by the makers in another tender is a fair indication of their real value, and as that price was 4s. a dozen less than the price quoted by Pyle and 1s. 6d. a dozen less than that quoted by Greaves, both tenderers, as to these articles at all events, were well above the market price.

Greaves when giving evidence on this subject stated that his tender for dynamo brushes would give him a profit of about 10 per cent., that they were proprietary articles and could not possibly be obtained at the price quoted by Pyle, that he knew the brushes would not be required, but that as he was not on particularly good terms with the engineer he was afraid to put 2d. or 3d. each for these brushes because he would have got an order for a gross right away; he added that if he had been on good terms he would have risked it.

This witness was cross-examined by the representative of the Guardians, but no suggestion was made that these statements were not true. The engineer was not called nor was any other evidence given as to the market value of the brushes. When Pyle was recalled for re-examination he did not contradict these statements.

These facts have a significant bearing on the evidence of Greaves that he was offered £10 by Madeley during the previous year to surrender the contract he then held for electrical fittings.

It is only fair to the Guardians to point out that they can hardly be expected to have sufficient technical knowledge to form a judgment on the prices of such articles as electrical fittings unless advised on the subject by their engineer.

Perhaps the most bewildering of all the tenders were those for ironmongery, which contained about 150 items, many of them for small amounts. A Table has been prepared and is appended to this Report showing in respect of each item the estimated quantity required in 1905-6 and 1906-7; the actual quantity supplied in 1905-6; the prices quoted in the accepted tender of Pyle for 1905-6 and for 1906-7; the amounts quoted in the lowest tender (Pryke, Palmer, & Co.) for each of these years; the amount paid for the goods actually purchased, and the amounts that would have been paid if the same goods had been purchased under Pryke, Palmer, & Co.'s tender. On gross value Pyle's tender for 1905-6 was only £187 more than that of Pryke, Palmer, & Co., yet on the actual purchases Pyle received £266 more than Pryke, Palmer, & Co. would have received had their tender been accepted.

An examination of the items shows that not only was there an extraordinary difference between the prices quoted by the two firms for many of the articles, but that the prices quoted by Pyle for articles of the same description in two successive years were even more divergent. To some extent this was explained by the fact that some of the samples were changed, as in the case of the coffee pots and carving knives, but this by no means explains the whole of the variations. The explanations given by Pyle were not satisfactory, and it is difficult to believe that he took the risks he admitted taking without having very good reason to know what orders would be given.

Pyle quoted in 1905 30s. a dozen for item No. 14 (coal scuttles) and Pryke, Palmer, & Co. 34s. a dozen, the estimated quantity required was six dozen, and the actual quantity supplied three dozen. Pyle, in his evidence, stated that they cost him 33s. a dozen, and when asked why he quoted 20s. a dozen the next year he said it was because he had a lot in stock.

Pyle's quotation in 1905 for inmates' table knives (item No. 32) was 3s. a dozen and Pryke, Palmer's 6s. a dozen, the estimated quantity required was six dozen, and the actual quantity supplied 18 dozen. Pyle said he lost

considerably on that item, yet in 1906 he quoted for the same articles at 1s. a dozen, and gave as a reason that he had a considerable number in stock.

Pyle's quotation for item No. 52 (scissors) was 9s. a dozen in 1905, Pryke, Palmer's 6s. a dozen, the estimated quantity required was 18 dozen, and the actual quantity supplied 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ dozen. Pyle said the scissors he supplied were worth quite 9d. each, and when asked why he quoted 4s. 6d. a dozen in 1906 he said he had a considerable stock and could please himself in regard to prices.

Another portion of the ironmongery tenders which shows curious figures is that part where a firm's list is named and the estimated value of goods expected to be ordered from that list given, the tenderer being asked to say what discount he will allow off the list prices. Item No. 139 was for brass work in 1905 from the list of J. Warner & Son and in 1906 from the lists of J. Warner & Son or the Lambeth Brass and Iron Company, the estimated quantity required in each year was £50 worth. In 1905 Pyle allowed a discount of 5 per cent. and Pryke, Palmer a discount of 25 per cent. off the list price. The actual quantity ordered during 1905-6 was £279 worth. In 1906 Pyle offered a discount of no less than 77 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and Pryke, Palmer a discount of 30 per cent. Pyle said he could give no explanation of that extraordinary difference, that he took it as a fair business risk, and that if the Guardians ordered a supply of brass work he would have to supply it.

The figures quoted are only a few of the most striking. Pyle, however, avers that he has not had "business relations with officers and guardians improper to a contractor."

The evidence of Mr. Oxley and the Tables C. to L. which he handed in deal with the remaining contracts, and it is unnecessary to comment on them in any great detail.

The meat contract for 1906-7 shows the advantage that may sometimes be gained by splitting the tender between two contractors, for though the gross value of the accepted tender of Blott was less than £50 above the lowest, yet, if the contract for beef had been given to Blott and for mutton and pork to the British New Zealand Meat Company, the saving would have been well over £400.

In the butchers' tender forms in use at Poplar it is specified that the mutton is to be delivered without "heads or shanks." If the heads and shanks were included, it would be much easier to detect whether the meat supplied was foreign or home killed. But it appears that this particular provision has been in force in Poplar for many years, and though it might well be abolished no blame attaches to the present administration in the matter.

In the milk contract a saving of over £200 would have been made if the lowest tender had been accepted, and though Mr. Ford was asked he did not appear to know of any good reason for the lower tender being passed over. The standard of milk asked for by the Poplar Guardians is higher than that required by many other Boards of Guardians.

In groceries, in 1906-7, the lowest tender was that of Messrs. Whiteley, of Westbourne Grove, and it was rejected in favour of Mr. Lewsey, of Bow Road, at a loss to the ratepayers on the gross value of over £170.

Mazawattee tea was included in this contract at 2s. 4d. per lb., an extravagant price for tea even though it was used solely for the teas that were provided for the Guardians when they visited the workhouse, and for some of the senior officers. Mazawattee tea at 2s. 3d. per lb. was also included in the Laindon grocery tender.

The highest tender out of those of seven firms was accepted for beer.

In the cheesemonger's contract the best butter was asked for, and an extra price charged because it was put up in 2-lb. rolls, though the Acting Master stated that no advantage was gained by it being so packed, as it was divided up into small pats before issue. A good deal of evidence was taken as to margarine. It appeared that the Guardians pay 72s. a cwt. for a certain brand of margarine,

a price which is considerably higher than that paid by other authorities for the same article. The fact that it is supplied in 2-lb. rolls accounts for a portion of the excess in price, but, as in the case of butter, there is no need for this form of delivery. Denny's full-branded bacon is specified; it seems unnecessary to require this quality; it was asked for "in rashers back and streaky (boned)," the price was 11½*d.* per lb.

No reason was given for accepting the tender of Mr. Paton, of Poplar, for oilman's goods in preference to that of Messrs. Pryke, Palmer & Company. Taken generally the prices in the accepted tender were with few exceptions higher than in the rejected tender.

In the leather sellers' tenders there were many extraordinary variations in the prices quoted for the same articles, differences so great that if the attention of the Guardians had been called to the matter they must have investigated it.

In connection with the Coachowners' contract direct charges of improper conduct were made by Mr. Jacobs, who had the contract jointly with a Mr. Clarke up to 1905.

Jacobs stated that he used to pay Madeley when he was General Relieving Officer a shilling in the £ commission on all orders for conveyances given by him, and he produced two cheques payable to and endorsed by Madeley, one dated February 12th, 1894, for £6 and one dated April 21st, 1894, for £5 5*s.*, stating that the £6 cheque was repayment of a loan of £3 and £3 commission, and that the £5 5*s.* cheque was all commission. The counterfoils of the two cheques were in the following form:—

(Cheque of 12th February, 1894.)		(Cheque of 21st April, 1894.)	
1894.		21.4.1894.	
To Madeley		To Madeley	
for bd. and com.		£5 5 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i>	
£6 0 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i>	£3 0 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i> bd.		
	£1 0 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i> bd.		
	£1 0 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i> com.		
	£1 0 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i> com.		

From the counterfoil of the cheque of February 12th, 1894, it would seem that the loan was £4 and the commission £2.

Jacobs stated that after Madeley was appointed Master of the Workhouse in 1894, no commission in money was paid, but if Madeley wanted a brougham or something of that sort he used to have one. The account for these carriages seems to have been settled up to 1898, but Jacobs alleged that since that date he had received nothing, and Madeley had been supplied with carriages to the value of nearly £50. For this amount Jacobs issued a writ when he heard that Madeley was leaving.

Jacobs also stated that about three years ago when the contract time was coming on, at the suggestion of Madeley he had a meeting with Clarke in Madeley's office in the Workhouse in Madeley's presence; that he and Clarke went through the different items on a blank tender form, and the prices were inserted, that Madeley said he was certainly under the impression they should have more money but that it was no good trying to get more money unless Clarke and he (Jacobs) could arrange it; the object being that they should both agree to the prices charged so that one should not cut the other out. There were three interviews in all, and the last was about 15 months ago. Madeley admitted that meetings between Jacobs and Clarke took place in his office, but denied being present.

In order to test this evidence a detailed statement of the accepted tenders for conveyances for each year from 1902-3 to 1906-7 has been prepared and is appended to this Report.

If the evidence is correct, the three meetings took place before contract time in 1903, 1904, and 1905, and it is a very significant fact that there was

a marked and general rise in prices in 1903 compared with 1902, and that, as stated by Jacobs, there is only a few shillings difference in the amounts of the two tenders ; sometimes Clarke would be higher than Jacobs and sometimes Jacobs higher than Clarke. In 1904, though the prices did not go up much, there was the same correspondence between the prices of the two contractors' accounts. In 1905 Jacobs did not get the contract, but it was divided between Clarke and Clover. Jacobs stated the reason he lost the contract was that Clover was "going out" with the daughter of one of the Guardians. In 1906 the prices tendered were lower, Clarke and Clover being generally the same as one another. Jacobs was about $7\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. lower, yet Clarke and Clover were again accepted.

Neither Clarke, Clover nor the Guardian were called to contradict this statement ; and it appears that having regard to the corroboration afforded by the figures Jacobs' statement must be accepted as correct.

During the course of Jacobs' evidence, Mr. Crooks read the sections in the Public Bodies Corrupt Practices Act, 1889, referring to prosecution of persons engaged in the giving or taking of bribes, and asked that Jacobs' evidence should be communicated to the Attorney-General with a view to the prosecution of the witness. Mr. Robb suggested that this was done to intimidate other contractors from giving evidence. However this may be, the action of Mr. Crooks at that particular juncture is greatly to be regretted. Subsequently to this, Greaves, another contractor, asked, before giving evidence, that he might be protected.

The work of opening some 40 sets of tenders, voting on them and deciding which were to be accepted, was got through by the Guardians in a sitting of about three hours, and it must have been impossible to do more in such a limited time than deal with the gross totals. It may be that the Guardians, with every honest intention, have been led by their officials, but the result has been that tenders have been accepted which a very slight examination would have shown should not have been passed without explanation.

Although the Guardians may have been ignorant of the state of things disclosed by the examination of the contracts, it is impossible to exonerate them from responsibility for not having looked into the prices and quantities supplied with more care. The Clerk, too, does not appear to have realised that it was his plain duty to have brought these matters to the notice of the Guardians after the tenders had been accepted, if he was unable to do so before.

LAINDON BRANCH WORKHOUSE.

There is now in the Metropolis no workhouse at which able-bodied men from all the London unions can be admitted. Formerly at different periods the Poplar Workhouse and the Mary Place Workhouse, Kensington, were used for this purpose ; but at present each union has to maintain its own able-bodied paupers in its own workhouse, with the result that the discipline of the whole workhouse is often injuriously affected and that the able-bodied themselves are not effectively treated.

The difficulties of dealing with this class were no doubt accentuated in Poplar by the condition of the Workhouse and the abolition of labour tests, and in 1904 the Guardians established, with the assent of the Local Government Board, a branch workhouse at Laindon, in Essex, for the reception of the male able-bodied inmates of the Workhouse. For this purpose they hired a farm with about 100 acres of land, and provided rough accommodation for 100 (afterwards increased to 150) inmates, utilising the existing buildings as far as possible.

The men were to be employed on the land, the intention of the Guardians being, as they stated, to reform the able-bodied inmates as far as possible, to improve their physical condition, to train them to habits of industry and so to fit them to earn their own living.

The original intention was to use Laindon merely as a branch workhouse for able-bodied male paupers, but after it had been opened some months the Guardians resolved to send a certain number of unemployed men there. This they could only do under the arrangement known as the Modified Workhouse Test, under which the Guardians take a man into the workhouse and give out-door relief to his family, for they had no authority to use Laindon other than as a Workhouse, or to receive there other than pauper cases.

From the first there were difficulties in managing the institution. Many of the men sent from the Workhouse were of bad character and had been inmates for many years. There was no wall round the establishment by which the men could be kept in at night, and they were allowed to go out after working hours. The staff too was not perhaps sufficient for the supervision of this class of inmates. And finally, some well-meaning but mistaken person allowed pocket money of 6*d.* per week to each inmate.

It could not be expected that men who had passed a great part of their lives in a London workhouse should not misuse their new liberty, and there was great difficulty in maintaining proper discipline. The Local Government Board received a strong complaint from the Chief Constable of Essex, which was brought to the notice of the Guardians, who took some steps to remedy the matters complained of. Superintendent Marden at the Inquiry said that at one time Laindon was a nuisance and a menace to that part of the district. The men slept out, begged and frequented public-houses. He showed that many of the inmates had a list of convictions against their names.

The cause for these complaints has been to a great extent removed, and the present constable at Laindon said the inmates were now a very decent class, although they were formerly "a rowdy lot."

There are still, however, many difficult problems to be solved. Such a farm as that at Laindon would normally be worked by about four agricultural labourers. The use of the spade instead of the plough is wasteful, and therefore the whole experiment is based upon labour which is really, economically speaking, as useless as oakum-picking. To find even a pretence of employment the land must be dug over oftener than is necessary, and if the first digging may be in a sense elevating work, the last is in effect penal labour. When the institution was first opened, some work subsidiary to the cultivation of the land was found in the direction of making reservoirs and other works, but when these were completed there was very little to do besides spade labour, which is not possible in all weathers or at all seasons of the year, especially in the heavy clay of Essex.

Mr. Lansbury admitted that agricultural labour alone cannot provide sufficient employment for an institution of this character, but, as he said, people had got the notion into their heads that anybody could get on on the land. This is an opinion to which no practical farmer would agree, but it is held by a great many people besides the Poplar Guardians.

Another point of difficulty was the classification of the men. Some of the unemployed who were sent to Laindon were quite decent people, and it could have done them no good to be mixed up with some of the worst of the pauper class. The tendency of the Guardians was to treat the inmates as if they were all persons who were suffering from some temporary misfortune; and, consequently, the ordinary able-bodied man from the workhouse was not subject to appropriate discipline. In several respects the regulations of the Local Government Board were not adhered to. In spite of continued remonstrances from the Board a dietary was given far in excess of that allowed by the Dietary Order; and at one time no less than three meat meals a day were given. Certain changes have been made, but the dietary is still superior to that which is allowed under the Order, and costs, it is stated, 5*s.* 9*d.* per head per week. Again, an allowance of tobacco is made to each inmate, the regulations permitting this only in the case of persons who are not able-bodied or are engaged in disagreeable tasks. Inmates are allowed to

go out every evening, and 48 hours' leave was given every month to the men, the Guardians paying their return fares to London. The Modified Workhouse Test Order allows not more than 12 hours' leave in any one week. During the winter of 1904-5 the Guardians allowed some 30 or 40 of the unemployed class to attend an unemployed procession in London, their fares being paid from some outside source. Later, they actually paid the fares of seven inmates to attend a second demonstration.

It was alleged that the cost of the experiment was altogether excessive. So far as the unemployed section were concerned, their wives and families were in receipt of out-door relief; there was no fixed scale and the amount paid varied with the different Committees. It was pointed out that if, as was often the case, the wife and family received 10s. a week and putting the cost of the maintenance of the husband in Laindon at 7s. a week, the family were costing the rates at least 17s., or just about the whole pay of an independent Essex labourer. This way of putting the matter evidently does not cover the whole ground, but the fact remains that experiments of this sort must inevitably be very costly, and perhaps heavily burdened unions should be the last to try them.

The Superintendent of Laindon, who gave very interesting evidence, said that in one case he had intercepted a letter from a colonist threatening to beat his wife unless she found him some money at the end of the week.

One of the evident difficulties of working the Modified Workhouse Test Order, where the branch workhouse is a farm colony, is to keep sufficient check on money coming to the men. The possession of money by the inmates of Laindon was often the source of trouble.

The Superintendent spoke well of some of the colonists, and it is clear that the physical condition of some of the men has much improved by residence at the farm. Whether they get any other permanent good is more doubtful.

It appears from a return made by the Guardians that from the date of the opening of the Laindon workhouse to 31st March, 1906, there were 821 admissions which represented 563 individuals. Of these, 25 emigrated to Canada and 9 others left to take up employment which they obtained. 314 were discharged, 26 absconded, 91 were chargeable in other institutions, while 98 remained in the Colony. Of the number who were discharged, it was stated that 118 had not since been relieved by the Guardians.

The results of Laindon can hardly be said to be encouraging, and it does not appear that the experiment is likely to have more success than other attempts of a similar character which have been made to reform men and enable them to earn their own living. Laindon may have its use as a test workhouse for a special class of men, but in that case its management must be much more strict than at present.

Reference was made at the Inquiry to the purchase by the Guardians of a motor wagon for Laindon. The buildings are a considerable distance from a railway station, and as it was impracticable to get a siding made, the Guardians decided to obtain a motor wagon for the conveyance of goods to and from the farm. Unfortunately the wagon was found, mainly owing to the nature of the roads, to be unsuitable for the purpose, and the £800 paid for it was wasted. There is no reason whatever for supposing that the Guardians did not act in perfect good faith, and the mistake they made was one which might have been expected from a body of men experimenting on a kind of business with which they were not familiar. But the incident is another example of the way in which the Guardians expended public money.

SHENFIELD SCHOOLS.

Poplar and Whitechapel were formerly combined in one School District, with joint schools at Forest Gate. In 1897 this district was dissolved and the

existing schools were taken over by Poplar for their exclusive use, Whitechapel being paid £15,586 for their share.

Unfortunately for Poplar, Dr. Stephenson, the expert who made a special examination in 1897 of the Poor Law Schools in London with reference to ophthalmia, reported adversely on the Forest Gate schools, pointing out that if they were to be continued extensive alterations and improvements were needed. In view of the probable cost of these alterations (£40,000), the difficulty of carrying on the schools during their progress, and the fact that much of the building would "not be of modern construction," the Guardians decided that it would be better to build entirely new schools. In this decision the Local Government Board concurred, and in 1900 they sanctioned the purchase of land for the purpose at Shenfield (Hutton) at a cost of £11,820.

The settlement of the plans of the schools involved prolonged negotiations, and it was not until the 8th June, 1905, that the Local Government Board gave their final approval. The total estimated cost of the new buildings was £162,427 for the accommodation of 624 children, or over £260 per head.

The Guardians desired to provide for 800 children on the site, but the Board refused to assent to this. Mr. Lansbury, in his evidence, stated that the Schools had in fact been planned on a basis of 800, and that only a slight additional expenditure would be necessary to render them suitable for that number, and that in this way the cost per head would be greatly reduced.

On the 31st December, 1901, the Guardians submitted plans of buildings which were estimated to cost £156,000. To these plans the Local Government Board objected on account of cost and in other respects, and in May of the following year the Guardians sent in revised plans, the cost being reduced to £137,000. The Board still pressed for a reduction of the cost, but it was found on completion of the plans that the total cost had risen to £144,725. After further correspondence, the Board, in June, 1903, approved of the plans, but pointed out that they would "expect the Guardians to adhere as nearly as possible to the estimated cost." On 12th April, 1904, the Guardians reported that after advertising for tenders they had decided to accept one for £165,820, an increase of over £20,000 on the last estimate.

To this the Board replied as follows:—

Local Government Board,

Whitehall, S.W.,

2nd May, 1904.

SIR,

I am directed by the Local Government Board to advert to your letter of the 12th ultimo, stating that the Guardians of the Poplar Union had decided to accept the tender of Messrs. McCormick & Sons, of Northampton Square, Essex Road, for the erection of the proposed new schools at Hutton, at a cost of £165,820.

I am directed to refer to the Board's letter of the 29th May, 1902, and to the Guardians' reply of the 6th June, 1902, and to point out that the revised estimate forwarded on the 18th February, 1903, gave the cost of the works as £144,725. The Board must express their surprise and regret that that estimate should be so greatly exceeded.

The Board request that, in view of the financial position of the Union, the scheme may be carefully reconsidered by the Guardians, with a view to effecting a reduction in its cost. A further detailed estimate under the hand of the Guardians' Architect should then be submitted to the Board, which should include all professional fees, contingencies, &c. A form for the purpose is enclosed.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) W. E. KNOLLYS,

Assistant Secretary.

The Clerk to the Guardians
of the Poplar Union.

To this letter the Guardians replied on 1st July, 1904, that they had "given the matter their careful consideration, and while regretting that the

amount of the Architect's former estimate should be so far exceeded, they are unable to suggest any modification of the plans which would reduce the cost without seriously impairing the efficiency of the scheme." At the same time they forwarded a statement by their architect as to the increase in the cost, and a further detailed estimate showing a total cost of £175,258, or £290 per child.

A conference then took place between officers of the Local Government Board and the Guardians, and finally the Guardians agreed to certain modifications, reducing the cost from £175,258 to £162,427.

Other Metropolitan unions have shown a like extravagance in the erection of new buildings for children, as, for instance, Bermondsey, Woolwich, and Greenwich. After the report of the Poor Law Schools Committee, many of the London Boards found themselves compelled to provide fresh accommodation for their children, and the tendency, which the Local Government Board were unable to check, was in the direction of a lavish expenditure.

It may be stated that the Shenfield schools are now completed and ready for occupation. On a recent examination of them, the Board's Architect was satisfied that the amount sanctioned had been expended on them, but that in many respects they were unnecessarily elaborate for the purpose for which they were intended. It is difficult to find adequate justification for the use of costly materials, such as teak for the banisters and encaustic tiles for the walls. The children derive no practical benefit from them, and they materially increase the cost.

Although the Local Government Board sanctioned the expenditure and approved the plans, the Guardians cannot be freed from responsibility for the heavy expenditure involved. In order to enable the Guardians to raise the loan to pay for these buildings, it was necessary to extend the borrowing power of the Union; yet the Guardians were in no way deterred by this fact from building on the most costly scale.

It has not been decided what use shall be made of the buildings at Forest Gate, but in them the Guardians possess an asset which should prove an advantage to the rates in the future.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Increase in Number of Officers.

Questions were raised at the Inquiry as to the number of officers under the Guardians, and it was suggested that there had been an excessive increase of late years. The present number, in fact, is four times as great as 10 years ago. It must, however, be remembered that since 1896 the Separate Schools have come under the control of the Guardians, while other Institutions separate from the workhouse have been established. The schools are responsible for most of the increase in the number of officers.

The number of officers at the workhouse has risen from 37 to 56, four of the latter being temporary officers. It is difficult to say that the increase is not justified; but an excessive number of nurses appears to be employed at the workhouse lunacy wards owing to the Guardians' application of Trade Union principles. The number of lunatics in the wards during the twelve months ended July, 1906, does not seem to have exceeded 16, and the average number was about 7 or 8. For the care of these the Guardians employ no less than six nurses, three male and three female, their work being limited to eight hours a day each. Mr. Crooks contended that the proper remedy for this wasteful expenditure was the establishment of central receiving houses for the whole Metropolis. This would probably be in every way an improvement on the present system.

Increase in Travelling Expenses.

Travelling expenses and conveyances for the Guardians, officers, and paupers have increased from £540 in 1901 to £1,545 in 1905. The increase in cost is largely due to the increase in the number of officers, the opening of new institutions, and the sending of paupers to establishments at a distance from the workhouse, but it is doubtful whether the Guardians have made any attempt to limit their expenditure on this head. The visits to institutions by individual Guardians were expensive to the ratepayers.

Cost of Officers' Rations.

The rations for officers show a very large increase in cost. In 1896 the cost was £1,600 and in 1905 £5,477. It appears from details of the expenditure furnished by the Guardians that the increase in cost is to a large extent accounted for by the increase in the number of officers.

Electric Lighting.

Questions were raised at the Inquiry as to the cost of electric lighting at the Workhouse. Mr. Ross Hooper, one of the Engineering Inspectors of the Local Government Board, kindly consented to investigate the matter. He found that although the capital cost of the entire scheme was about £25,000, only £8,620 could be fairly allocated to electric lighting. The scheme included, in addition to the generating plant for the electricity, engineering works for laundry and for hot and cold water supply as well as for cooking and heating.

Mr. Hooper was of opinion that, although it might have been cheaper to have obtained the supply of electricity from an outside source, yet looking to the question of the necessity for steam power for other purposes, it was not unreasonable at the time for the Guardians to decide to generate their own supply of electricity, and he did not think that the works which had been carried out were excessive in cost. He adds that "in criticising an installation put in some few years ago due regard should be given to the rapid deterioration of electrical apparatus and to the antiquation of plant, which causes the necessity for continual additions to capital expenditure, which would have been difficult to foresee when the installation was determined upon."

CONCLUSION.

The following table shows the main features of what may be termed the financial electoral conditions of Poplar :—

Class of Hereditament.	Number.	Rateable Value.
		£
Docks	3	67,640
Railways	20	69,805
Gas, water, and other public companies	29	54,921
Government property	9	1,617
Municipal buildings... ..	71	52,559
Factories	447	163,899
Licensed houses :		
Publichouses	178	} 46,496
Beerhouses	138	
Off-licenses	35	
Houses rated at over £20	3,259	105,906
Houses rated at under £20	19,866	259,140
Sheds, stables, workshops, &c.	612	17,753
Total	24,667	839,736

It will be seen from this Table that out of the total rateable value of the Union £410,000 is derived from railways, docks, the premises of limited liability companies and other hereditaments which pay rates but are practically not represented on the electorate. A further sum of £259,000 is assessed on houses under £20 rateable value and of which consequently the rates are paid by the landlord under the provisions of the Poor Rate Assessment and Collection Act, 1869. It appears from London County Council returns that no less than 80 per cent. of the Poplar electors are "compound householders," that is persons who can vote, but who do not pay rates directly. Less than £170,000 out of a total rateable value of £839,000, or only about one-fifth of the whole, represents the rating of the electors who both pay their own rates and vote. Of the present Guardians themselves only half of the number pay their own rates.

Some of the witnesses, including Mr. Martley, said that Poplar suffered from absenteeism, for the shareholders and owners of the factories did not live in the district, and never gave the benefit of their business experience to local affairs. Both Mr. Martley and Mr. Mosley said that if these magnates (as they termed them) would stand, they would probably be elected. Mr. Lansbury, however, while agreeing that some representation of these classes was desirable, pointed out that before they could be elected they would have to live in the district and adopt the policy of the Guardians, especially with regard to outdoor relief. In fact, as it was put, they would have to toe the line. And here it may be remarked that a most unpleasant feature of the Inquiry was the account of the treatment which Mr. Diamond, a Guardian who more or less represented the views of the Municipal Alliance, received at the hands of his colleagues.

As to what the policy of the Guardians was, there has been no concealment whatever. Mr. Lansbury, in a letter which appeared in the *Daily Chronicle* of the 21st March, 1906, put the matter quite clearly. He said:—

"What I am concerned about is that the fundamental question is being overlooked. It is this: are the poor to be encouraged to look for a pension in old age from the community at present in the shape of out-door relief, and are those aged and infirm, sick, and children who become chargeable in the workhouse, infirmary, and schools to be made comfortable and receive good treatment? If all this is to be done it costs money, and rates will go up as in Poplar, where that policy prevails, a policy, Mr. Editor, recommended partially by the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, by the House of Commons Committee on Cottage Homes, and by the Committee on the Aged Deserving Poor (1899). Those latter recommendations were all embodied in a circular issued by Mr. Chaplin in 1900, which circular told the various Boards of Guardians in England and Wales to do just what Poplar has done.

Let the fight be fought out on this question of policy. All the other matters are quite small and do not in the end make much difference, but when the cost of all out-relief in Poplar falls on Poplar alone, and when the in-door grant robs her, as I have shown, it is quite evident that Poplar's burden is too heavy. Mr. Crooks and I have asked for the past ten years that it should be Metropolitan. Perhaps now that we have a really Liberal Progressive and Labour Government in power this will be done."

It was contended that this policy was endorsed by the electors at every recent election, though it may be pointed out that the abstentions from voting were a very large proportion of the whole. At the election in 1904 in 8 wards out of the 14 there was no contest, and in the remainder, out of a total number of 13,573 electors on the register, only 5,523 recorded their votes.

It was put to Mr. Lansbury that the fact that the bulk of the rates were paid by persons who were not represented in the administration laid a very special obligation on the Guardians to act as thrifty trustees of public money. Mr. Lansbury agreed, but said:—

"I think we do want economy. My complaint is people come here and manage businesses, make a good deal of money out of the place, and then clear off and spend it somewhere else. That is bad for the workpeople, bad for the social life of the district, and bad altogether."

Mr. Lansbury's point of view may be fairly represented by saying that he considered himself as an advocate of a policy first and a representative of the ratepayers afterwards. The Guardians were not to confine themselves, in administering the funds derived from the ratepayers, to merely carrying out the obligations enforced by law on every board of guardians, but they were to be pioneers of the movements advocated by the school of thought to which they belonged. But, surely the social action required from the Guardians is wisely and justly to administer the Poor Law, and not to use the money of the ratepayers to "redress social inequalities" or "to redeem the victims of an unfair social system." Mr. Crooks claimed that the action of the Guardians had in fact brought about the many important changes which have taken place in recent years in the direction of giving greater comforts to the inmates of workhouses and greater authority to the individual Guardians. The issue of Mr. Chaplin's circular of 1900, as he thinks, largely justifies the conduct of the Guardians. And here it must be said that in the matter of improving the condition of the aged and infirm workhouse inmates the Poplar Guardians have done no more than many other boards of guardians who of recent years have made their workhouses more comfortable and bettered the accommodation for the children. Excellent as the Poplar Schools are, it can scarcely be claimed that the children are better cared for than in many other institutions, both in the Metropolis and elsewhere.

The general policy of the Guardians also includes a strong view as to the equalisation of rates in the Metropolis. Mr. Crooks and Mr. Lansbury claim, as a matter of justice, that the whole rates of London should pay for the whole of London pauperism, and they frankly accepted Mr. Arthur Balfour's dictum that any further extension of the principle of equalisation of the rates must be accompanied by what he termed "a curtailment of local autonomy." In fact, the evidence suggests that in later years the Guardians deliberately increased their expenditure with a view of making it evident that additional contributions from the rates of the whole Metropolis were an absolute necessity for the Poplar District.

It was contended on behalf of the Guardians that they were more economical than certain other London Unions, since their expenditure raised from rates was less than that of other unions in comparison to their rateable value, but they appear not to pay sufficient regard to the fact that a very large part of the poor-law expenditure in London is charged on the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, and the contributions to that Fund are based not on the expenditure but the rateable value of the district. Owing to the lower rateable value of Poplar in proportion to its expenditure no payment is made by the Guardians to the Fund; on the balance they simply receive. Poplar may thus be said generally to expend all the money raised in its union from rates for poor-law purposes *plus* the sum received from other unions, but it is charged only with the money it raises; while a union with a proportionately higher rateable value contributes to the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, and is charged with, and has to raise rates for, the expenditure of other unions in addition to its own.

Mr. Crooks and Mr. Lansbury came on the Board of Guardians as representatives of the Labour Party in the year 1893, and since then they appear to have had the support both of the ratepayers and of the Guardians. It is true that only 10 of the 24 Guardians are what is termed "labour men," but the views of the leaders have dominated the whole Board. Mr. Lansbury explains this by saying that he and Mr. Crooks "overawed the other Guardians by their sweet reasonableness."

In 1891 the rate of pauperism of Poplar was the same as that of London, but from that point Poplar went ahead, the difference being very marked from 1893 and onwards. Last year, while the rate of London pauperism had only slightly increased, that of Poplar had nearly trebled.

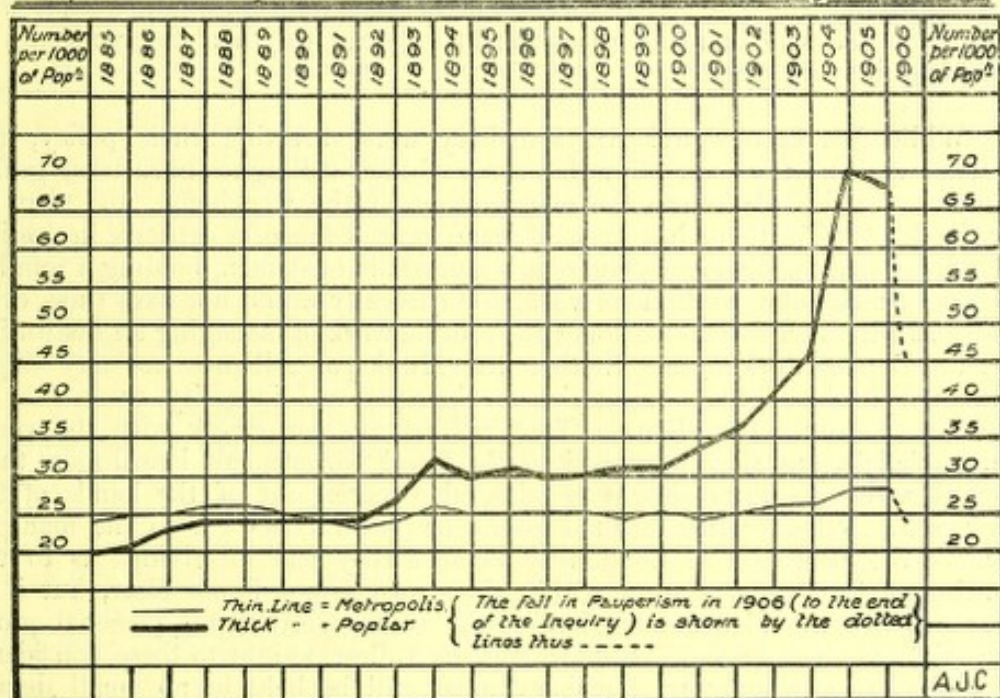
The following Table shows the ratio of pauperism for Poplar and the whole of London respectively on the 1st January per thousand of population in each year :—

RATIO OF PAUPERISM PER 1,000 OF POPULATION.

Year.	Poplar.	London.	Year.	Poplar.	London.
1885	20	24	1896	31	25
1886	21	25	1897... ..	30	25
1887	23	25	1898... ..	30	25
1888	24	26	1899... ..	31	24
1889	24	26	1900... ..	31	25
1890	24	25	1901... ..	34	24
1891	24	24	1902... ..	36	25
1892	24	23	1903... ..	41	26
1893	27	24	1904... ..	46	26
1894	32	26	1905... ..	70	28
1895	30	25	1906... ..	68	28

The movements of Poplar pauperism as compared with London are shown perhaps more clearly in the Chart which follows :—

Pauperism in Poplar and the whole Metropolis 1st January of each Year



The practical question for the Local Government Board to consider is how far the increase in pauperism and its accompanying growth of the poor rates is likely to go. Mr. Lansbury says that in a district like Poplar pauperism is bound to grow and that the only real permanent remedy is Socialism, but he also thinks that old age pensions, which have to a certain extent been anticipated in the Union by out-door relief, will be given by the present Parliament,

and that the rates of London will be equalised, suggesting that in this way the burden of Poplar would be lightened.

The general pauperisation of the inhabitants of the Union must mainly be attributed to the policy of the Guardians, for the evidence shows that there is no change in the economic conditions of the district which would otherwise account for it. And yet the effects of this policy, in the view of one of the persons mainly responsible, can only be remedied by general changes in the law of the country.

It seems clear that the Local Government Board, who are more immediately responsible for the control of the administration, could not accept this view. As has already been shown, since the Inquiry began the pauperism of Poplar has diminished very rapidly; the total number of paupers in the Union on June 30th, 1906, amounted to only 46 per thousand of population as against 68 per thousand on 1st January, 1906. Out-door pauperism has fallen during the first six months of the year from 43 to 24 per thousand, though in the first six months of 1905 out-door pauperism had remained steady at about 40 per thousand. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that both the rise and the decrease in pauperism were mainly due to the deliberate action of the Guardians; and that the absence of thrift and economy which characterised their general administration was also in a great measure deliberate. Under the electoral conditions which prevail at Poplar neither the individual Guardians nor their chances of re-election were materially affected by an increase of rates, and they were free to pursue their ulterior aims without much personal loss. Those aims were no doubt to produce a situation which would compel the Government to interfere, so as to bring about an equalisation of the rates within the metropolitan area, and legislation with regard to unemployment in accordance with the political views of the leaders. The Guardians appeared some time ago to have realized that their demonstration had not been successful; but, though the factitious pauperism disappeared as soon as the relieving officers reverted to their ordinary practice in dealing with able-bodied applicants, it is to be feared that the demoralisation which must accompany lavish grants of relief will long be felt in the district. The helpless position of the people who pay rates, and who in many cases are little better off than the recipients of relief, is quite pathetic.

While Mr. Crooks and Mr. Lansbury were directing their policy, the evidence shows only too clearly that some of their colleagues have been guilty of misconduct in relation to the management of the workhouse, and that, to say the least of it, there has been a great want of business capacity in dealing with the contracts. The two Guardians named are busy men, holding a number of offices which entail continuous work, and naturally would not have time, even if they had the inclination, for doing the routine work of managing an institution like the Poplar workhouse. Neither the Municipal Alliance nor any single witness made the slightest imputation on their personal integrity or on that of some of the other Guardians. They neither ate nor drank with the workhouse officials, and they suggested to the Local Government Board more than once that the contracts should be altogether taken out of the hands of the Guardians. Whether this resulted from their general views as to the management of the poor law in London or because they had misgivings as to the working of the tender system within their own Union is not clear, but it is most conclusive evidence that they at all events derived no personal profit from the existing system. But, giving the fullest weight to these considerations, Mr. Crooks and Mr. Lansbury must still be held in no small degree responsible for the effects of a policy which has led to the pauperisation of great numbers of the inhabitants of the district, to a subsidising of women's casual labour with the inevitable growth of sweating and of starvation wages, and to an increase of the expenditure which has inflicted much hardship upon struggling tradesmen and others. They have done much public work in Poplar, but they cannot be wholly exonerated from a certain responsibility for the sordid misdoings of some of their colleagues. It is quite clear that all the Guardians were aware of the misconduct of the Master and that they were all

parties to the action of the Board of Guardians in so far condoning his offence as to make it possible for him to retire on a pension to which he was not properly entitled. No doubt the action of many of them was influenced by a feeling of pity for the Matron, but this is no real defence, since their feelings of personal benevolence could only have been gratified by injustice to the ratepayers.

The general question of the control of the action of the Guardians is but little affected by the diminution of pauperism this year, and so far as the Local Government Board are concerned, the real point of importance to be considered is how in future Guardians of the Poor are to be checked from carrying out a general policy which is not in accordance with the intention of the Poor Law, and how far the ratepayers and taxpayers can be protected. The total expenditure of the Guardians for the year ended Lady Day, 1905, was £228,147, and of this amount only a little over two-thirds was charged on the Poplar rates. In the Metropolis practically the whole cost of in-maintenance and a large proportion of the cost of officers are defrayed either out of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund or from Imperial grants paid through the County Council. The Poplar Guardians claim that the basis on which the latter contribution is distributed is not now fair, and that they are in equity entitled to a considerably larger sum than they receive at present. However this may be, the fact that so large a proportion of the expenditure controlled by the Guardians is not defrayed from the rates of their own district raises important questions of general policy.

The actual rateable value of that portion of the community which both votes and pays rates directly was only about one-fifth of the whole, yet except for the provisions of the general law there is no representation on the Guardians or protection either for the Imperial taxpayer, for the London ratepayer, or for those persons who cannot vote in respect of the hereditaments on which they pay rates. Up to 1894 some attempt to ensure this representation was made by the system of nominated Guardians and property qualifications, but this system has been swept away and it would be impossible now to revert to it. It is probable that the only remedy now possible would be the extension of central control in the Metropolitan district.

Mr. Crooks and Mr. Lansbury advocated the transfer of the whole of the poor law work in the Metropolis to some central body, such as a Committee of the County Council. It would be unfair to suggest that their advocacy of this scheme is due to their mistrust of local administration, for it apparently results from their strong views as to the equalisation of the rates for the Metropolitan area. Whatever the merits of this scheme may be, it is obviously out of the question as an immediate measure of administrative reform, if only for the reason that it will no doubt be considered by the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws, and that Parliament could hardly act upon it until that body has reported.

Another proposal is that contracting should be taken out of the hands of the Guardians, and this has much more to recommend it. The Local Government Board have already wide powers with respect to tenders, but it would probably be held that the cost of any Department which would examine tenders and accept contracts for the whole of the Metropolitan Unions should be paid out of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, although it might be managed by the Central Department, and for this legislation would be necessary. The suggestion is one which will no doubt be carefully considered by the Board.

The complaint was made that the Guardians had not received help from the Local Government Board or their officers in the way of information which would enable them to compare the cost of their union with that of other unions in a similar position, and it was stated that if it had been known that the Poplar Guardians were paying 4s. a week for provisions as against sums of 2s. 11d., 2s. 10d., and 2s. 7d. in neighbouring unions, some steps would have been taken by them to find out the cause.

If careful returns of cost were published and brought to the knowledge of the Guardians, it would be a great help to them and would at the same time enable the Local Government Board to check their expenditure in a way which is now impossible. The Guardians might be compelled to issue half-yearly returns of expenditure for the various articles consumed in the workhouse in the form that was recommended some years ago by the Departmental Committee on Workhouse Accounts, and these returns might be published in such a form that the expenditure in one union could be easily compared with that in another. These comparisons of cost would be made much more valuable and much more simple if the Local Government Board were to prescribe a uniform dietary for all the London Workhouses and to insist that the main articles of clothing and necessities were all of the same quality and standard. The whole Metropolis now practically pays for the maintenance of the indoor poor of London, and it would appear to be only equitable that the indoor administration of the Metropolitan Unions should be uniform.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

J. S. DAVY.

30th October, 1906.

APPENDIX.

MEMORANDUM AS TO PAUPERISM IN POPLAR.

(Note.—The Tables and Charts marked with the same letter correspond.)

1. Indoor pauperism in England and Wales grew steadily with the population up to the year 1900, since which date it has risen sharply. This rise is more marked in London than elsewhere, and is greater in Poplar than in the rest of London (*see* Table and Chart A and Table B). The following table gives a summary of the figures and the percentage of increase, both of pauperism and expenditure. The figures up to Lady-Day, 1906, as to expenditure are not yet available, and, therefore, the figures for 1906 have been estimated by doubling those for the half-year ending Michaelmas, 1905, an estimate which for obvious reasons is a good deal too low. It will be observed that in the second period the increase of indoor expenditure is quite out of proportion to the increase of numbers.

Indoor and
Outdoor
Pauperism.

INDOOR PAUPERISM IN POPLAR.

(*See Tables A and C.*)

Year.	Number of Indoor Paupers.		Cost.	
	Mean Number.	Increase.	Total Cost.	Increase.
1885	1,656	} 1,153 or 70 per cent.	£ 21,131	} £ 16,921 or 80 per cent.
1895	2,809		38,052	
1895	2,809	} 1,024 or 36 per cent.	38,052	} 32,594 or 86 per cent.
1906	3,833		70,646	

2. The next table gives a summary of the figures with regard to outdoor pauperism :—

OUTDOOR PAUPERISM IN POPLAR.

(*See Tables A and C.*)

Year.	Number of Outdoor Paupers.		Cost.	
	Mean Number.	Increase.	Total Cost.	Increase.
1885	1,513	} 565 or 37 per cent.	£ 7,370	} £ 6,801 or 92 per cent.
1895	2,078		14,171	
1895	2,078	} 5,169 or 249 per cent.	14,171	} 31,459 or 222 per cent.
1906	7,247		45,630	

3. A more detailed examination of the Table and Chart (A) shows that, with the exception of the period from 1896 to 1902 when the indoor numbers remained fairly constant, the rise in the numbers of indoor paupers has been steady and regular since 1886, but that the marked increase in the numbers receiving out relief only began in the latter part of the year 1899 and became more acute in the latter part of the year 1904.

The increase of the cost of outdoor relief is not disproportionate to the increase of the number of paupers; but during the last 11 years the cost of indoor relief has increased 86 per cent. while the increase in numbers has been only 36 per cent. The annual cost of in-maintenance per head has increased from £13.55 in 1895 to £18.73 in 1905. (Table and Chart C.)

Increase in
out relief
in Poplar.

4. The mean numbers on out relief in Poplar rose sharply from 2,238 in 1900 to 7,247 in 1906, while the number of able-bodied paupers and their children rose from 683 to 4,392 in the same period. As contrasted with the figures in the neighbouring Unions this increase is remarkable (see Table and Chart D).

It is contended that this increase may to some extent be accounted for by the fact that the Borough Council resolved to employ fewer men on the Unemployed relief works in order that they might be able to give more continuous employment to the selected men. The increase, however, began some time before the Borough Council took this step.

The Town Clerk writes—

"I find there is no definite resolution of the Council abandoning the system of three days' employment on relief works in favour of continuous employment for definite periods.

"The circumstances are that on the 20th October, 1904, the Council appointed its quota to a Joint Committee for the Borough as suggested by Mr. Long, President of the Local Government Board, at the Islington Conference on the 18th October, 1904. Arrangements were made by the Chairman of the Works Committee with the Borough Surveyor that all extra men employed should, as far as possible, be selected by the Joint Committee, subject to the absolute discretion of the Borough Surveyor as to the continuance of their employment.

"In accordance with Clause 9 (d) of Mr. Long's Scheme of 29th October, 1904, the employment given was made, as far as possible, continuous for a definite time, and the three day system abandoned."

On November 19th, 1904, the Guardians passed a resolution in the following terms:—

"That applications for relief from able-bodied men out of work be dealt with under Article 10 of the Out Relief Regulation Order, 1852, and that the Clerk be instructed to obtain special relief lists and application books for the relieving officers to enter cases dealt with under this Article and to report such cases fortnightly to the Local Government Board."

The Local Government Board informed the Guardians (December 9th, 1904), that each case must be reported separately, but the Guardians reported none of them and continued to give relief in kind to able-bodied men without work as being cases of sudden and urgent necessity.

The mean number of able-bodied with their dependents increased from 1,482 in the year ending Lady-Day, 1904, to 3,475 in 1905, and went up nearly another 1,000 in the following year.

Increase in
cost of
Indoor
Pauperism.

5. The cost of the indoor pauperism shows a startling increase since 1899, since which year the Guardians have had schools of their own. The mean number of indoor paupers has increased from 2,688 to 3,338 in 1905, and the cost of in-maintenance has increased from £35,003 to £46,301. The weekly average cost of the workhouse inmates has increased from 5s. 0 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. to 6s. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. During the same period the amount received from the Common Poor Fund has increased from £30,569 to £43,667; the salaries of officers from £12,163 to £16,916; and the amount received from Poplar rates from £95,682 to £152,908. The contribution to the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum, which is managed by a Joint Board, has risen from £23,742 to £42,390, the increase in the numbers chargeable to Poplar at Lady-Day being from 524 in 1899 to 601 in 1905. (See Table E.)

6. For the purpose of comparison a Table and Chart (D) have been prepared showing certain facts with reference to the four neighbouring Unions of Bethnal Green, Bermondsey, Stepney, and Whitechapel. This Table and Chart show the numbers of paupers (indoor and outdoor) in Poplar and the other four Unions reduced to a percentage of population. It will be noticed that while indoor numbers show no very marked divergence the curves for outrelief do not correspond in any respect.

Pauperism of Poplar compared with that of other districts in London.

In connexion with the Bermondsey out-relief curve, the fall in the early part of 1903 is accounted for by the fact that the Guardians discontinued outdoor relief to able-bodied persons in distress from want of employment at that time.

7. A series of Charts (F) compare Poplar with Bethnal Green, Stepney, and Whitechapel in the total weekly cost per head of maintenance, of clothing, and of provisions for inmates of the workhouse. The increase in the cost of provisions in Poplar is marked.

8. The numbers in receipt of relief in the several Metropolitan Unions at the beginning of the years 1895 and 1905 are shown in Table G. The following summary of that Table shows that the pauperism of Poplar is now something like twice as great as that of the Eastern District, and is 20 per 1,000 greater than that of Bermondsey, which is the next most pauperised Union; whereas in 1895 it was 10 per 1,000 less than that of Bermondsey, and only slightly greater than that of the Metropolis or that of the Eastern District. The expenditure per head of population is shown.

		1st January, 1895.				1st January, 1905.			
		Percentage of Pauperism.			Expenditure on relief per head of population. (In-maintenance and out-relief for year ended March, 1895.)	Percentage of Pauperism.			Expenditure on relief per head of population. (In-maintenance and out-relief for year ended March, 1905.)
		Indoor.	Outdoor.	Total.		Indoor.	Outdoor.	Total.	
Metropolis	...	1.42	.96	2.38	s. d. 5 3	1.51	1.13	2.64	s. d. 6 5½
Poplar	...	1.58	1.22	2.80	6 3¼	2.05	4.65	6.70	12 2
East District	...	1.73	.79	2.52	5 7½	1.97	1.64	3.61	8 2½
Bermondsey	...	1.64	2.10	3.74	8 3¾	2.38	2.33	4.71	11 6½

9. A comparative Table and Chart (H) are annexed showing the numbers in receipt of out-relief in the Poplar Union and in the Canning Town District of the West Ham Union during the period 1st January, 1896, to 1st July, 1905.

10. Tenders are taken in bulk, and at the last quarter day, in seventeen cases out of between thirty and forty tenders the lowest was not accepted. If the lowest tender had been accepted in every case apparently a saving of £1,507* would have been effected. Some of the tenders may have been for a year.

Contracts for Workhouse, &c.

J. S. DAVY.

May, 1906.

* NOTE.—The sum of £1,507 was calculated on figures supplied by the Clerk to the Guardians and included the amount of an alternative tender. The saving should be given as £1,001.

POPLAR

NUMBERS

(Taken from Local

YEAR.				INDOOR PAUPERS (excluding Vagrants).									
				Able-bodied and their Children.				Not Able-bodied.				Lunatics, Insane Persons and Idiots.	Total of Indoor Paupers.
				Adults.		Children under 16.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Total.		
				Males.	Females.								
(a) 1st January.													
(b) 1st July previous.													
1885	...	...	b	76	133	285	494	417	363	206	986	134	1,614
			a	129	149	271	549	454	339	218	1,011	138	1,698
Mean	...						521				998	136	1,656
1886	...	...	b	98	140	247	485	394	313	246	953	134	1,572
			a	165	158	314	637	427	370	207	1,004	153	1,794
Mean	...						561				978	143	1,683
1887	...	...	b	111	117	323	551	389	345	226	960	156	1,667
			a	184	143	415	742	500	382	173	1,055	155	1,952
Mean	...						646				1,007	155	1,809
1888	...	...	b	68	135	410	613	428	353	185	966	157	1,736
			a	361	230	465	1,056	352	401	194	947	171	2,174
Mean	...						834				956	164	1,955
1889	...	...	b	151	135	479	765	448	408	192	1,048	170	1,983
			a	316	193	500	1,009	493	364	169	1,026	173	2,208
Mean	...						887				1,037	171	2,095
1890	...	...	b	197	144	534	875	448	345	168	961	185	2,021
			a	305	194	486	985	514	367	231	1,112	182	2,279
Mean	...						930				1,036	183	2,150
1891	...	...	b	212	157	454	823	442	358	223	1,023	167	2,013
			a	310	210	492	1,012	510	386	224	1,120	172	2,304
Mean	...						917				1,071	169	2,158
1892	...	...	b	194	145	536	875	473	386	212	1,071	188	2,134
			a	348	177	580	1,105	583	401	195	1,179	198	2,482
Mean	...						990				1,125	193	2,308

Table A.

UNION.

OF PAUPERS.

(Government Board Returns.)

OUTDOOR PAUPERS (excluding Lunatics, Insane Persons and Idiots).										
Able-bodied and their Children.					Not Able-bodied.				Total of Outdoor Paupers.	YEAR (a) 1st January. (b) 1st July previous.
Adult Males.		Adult Females.	Children under 16.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Total.		
Relieved on account of their own Sickness, Accident, or Infirmary.	Relieved for other causes.									
27	4	170	509	710	162	586	33	781	1,491	b 1885.
27	4	162	525	718	160	625	32	817	1,535	a
				714				799	1,513	Mean.
19	5	149	522	695	150	634	36	820	1,515	b 1886.
20	22	167	522	731	168	676	36	880	1,611	a
				713				850	1,563	Mean.
18	8	160	546	732	183	722	34	939	1,671	b 1887.
19	13	176	569	777	196	784	27	1,007	1,784	a
				754				973	1,727	Mean.
16	6	153	491	666	202	812	28	1,042	1,708	b 1888.
31	9	148	470	658	204	825	25	1,054	1,712	a
				662				1,048	1,710	Mean.
26	4	151	450	631	207	842	31	1,080	1,711	b 1889.
32	14	143	433	622	229	833	51	1,113	1,735	a
				626				1,096	1,723	Mean.
10	7	95	272	384	206	836	69	1,111	1,495	b 1890.
55	7	151	417	630	200	842	61	1,103	1,733	a
				507				1,107	1,614	Mean.
20	6	109	305	440	182	850	75	1,107	1,547	b 1891.
33	9	133	380	555	202	843	69	1,114	1,669	a
				497				1,110	1,608	Mean.
15	4	64	204	287	205	846	87	1,138	1,425	b 1892
35	6	88	249	378	189	840	86	1,115	1,493	a
				332				1,126	1,459	Mean.

POPLAR

NUMBERS

(Taken from Local

YEAR.				INDOOR PAUPERS (excluding Vagrants).									
				Able-bodied and their Children.				Not Able-bodied.				Lunatics, Insane Persons and Idiots.	Total of Indoor Paupers.
				Adults.		Children under 16.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Total.		
				Males.	Females.								
(a) 1st January.	(b) 1st July previous.			Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Total.		
1893	b	226	183	639	1,048	504	355	202	1,061	199	2,308
			a	345	218	279	842	562	397	563	1,522	212	2,576
			Mean				945				1,291	205	2,442
1894	b	277	165	329	771	520	375	555	1,450	215	2,436
			a	366	228	276	870	640	430	646	1,716	225	2,811
			Mean				820				1,583	220	2,623
1895	b	193	150	270	613	702	459	694	1,855	223	2,691
			a	294	170	63	527	786	524	858	2,168	233	2,928
			Mean				570				2,011	228	2,809
1896	b	215	129	48	392	778	509	949	2,236	236	2,864
			a	269	142	51	462	912	547	883	2,342	242	3,046
			Mean				427				2,289	239	2,955
1897	b	179	144	30	353	827	536	847	2,210	200	2,763
			a	236	176	41	453	861	554	881	2,296	239	2,988
			Mean				403				2,253	219	2,875
1898	b	182	129	23	334	763	525	755	2,043	248	2,625
			a	246	197	39	482	866	527	816	2,209	248	2,939
			Mean				408				2,126	248	2,782
1899	b	188	162	40	390	813	522	819	2,154	251	2,795
			a	238	190	34	462	918	561	891	2,370	255	3,087
			Mean				426				2,262	253	2,941
1900	b	195	112	48	355	802	520	871	2,193	266	2,814
			a	221	135	21	377	885	540	848	2,273	245	2,895
			Mean				366				2,233	255	2,854

Table A—continued.

UNION.

OF PAUPERS.

(Government Board Returns.)

OUTDOOR PAUPERS (excluding Lunatics, Insane Persons and Idiots).										YEAR.
Able-bodied and their Children.					Not Able-bodied.				Total of Outdoor Paupers.	
Adult Males.		Adult Females.	Children under 16.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Total.		
Relieved on account of their own Sickness, Accident, or Infirmary.	Relieved for other causes.									
39	33	125	236	433	197	813	90	1,100	1,533	b 1893.
59	34	339	317	749	221	823	104	1,148	1,897	a
				591				1,124	1,715	Mean.
33	52	321	382	788	257	894	111	1,262	2,050	b 1894.
78	49	454	626	1,207	283	955	96	1,334	2,541	a
				997				1,298	2,295	Mean.
41	46	383	302	772	268	939	98	1,305	2,077	b 1895.
52	42	347	349	790	259	936	95	1,290	2,080	a
				781				1,297	2,078	Mean.
62	43	360	353	818	324	974	102	1,400	2,218	b 1896.
53	41	297	313	704	317	1,001	111	1,429	2,133	a
				761				1,414	2,175	Mean.
44	46	328	319	737	308	1,045	97	1,450	2,187	b 1897.
53	29	281	319	682	297	1,039	87	1,423	2,105	a
				709				1,436	2,146	Mean.
52	28	299	299	678	277	1,011	90	1,378	2,056	b 1898.
44	40	302	291	677	299	1,037	100	1,436	2,113	a
				677				1,407	2,084	Mean.
35	44	282	221	582	283	1,058	107	1,448	2,030	b 1899.
46	35	269	267	637	300	1,092	85	1,477	2,114	a
				609				1,462	2,072	Mean.
49	31	287	212	579	329	1,116	78	1,523	2,102	b 1900.
69	33	345	340	787	350	1,162	75	1,587	2,374	a
				683				1,555	2,238	Mean.

POPLAR

NUMBERS

(Taken from Local

YEAR.				INDOOR PAUPERS (excluding Vagrants).									
				Able-bodied and their Children.				Not Able-bodied.				Lunatics, Insane Persons, and Idiots.	Total of Indoor Paupers.
				Adults.		Children under 16.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Total.		
				Males.	Females.								
(a) 1st January.													
(b) 1st July previous.													
1901	...	...	b	143	133	18	294	799	483	897	2,179	244	2,717
			a	200	147	29	376	959	624	960	2,543	236	3,155
Mean	...						335				2,361	240	2,936
1902	...	...	b	173	159	17	349	798	489	956	2,243	235	2,827
			a	237	140	10	387	945	513	996	2,454	239	3,080
Mean	...						368				2,348	237	2,953
1903	...	...	b	184	158	28	370	845	482	1,022	2,349	249	2,968
			a	286	168	39	493	980	513	1,086	2,579	252	3,324
Mean	...						431				2,464	250	3,146
1904	...		b	213	176	32	421	932	516	1,165	2,613	280	3,314
			a	280	173	45	498	1,104	553	1,168	2,825	294	3,617
Mean	...						459				2,719	287	3,465
1905	...	...	b	254	175	77	506	994	515	1,186	2,695	292	3,493
			a	367	138	43	548	1,159	593	1,175	2,927	322	3,797
Mean	...						527				2,811	307	3,645
1906	..	.	b	375	137	27	539	1,093	601	1,199	2,893	314	3,746
			a	442	172	23	637	1,195	655	1,133	2,983	300	3,920
Mean	...						588				2,938	307	3,833

UNION.

OF PAUPERS.

Government Board Returns.)

OUTDOOR PAUPERS (excluding Lunatics, Insane Persons and Idiots).										YEAR
Able-bodied and their Children.					Not Able-bodied.				Total of Outdoor Paupers.	
Adult Males.		Adult Females.	Children under 16.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Total.		
Relieved on account of their own Sickness, Accident, or Infirmary.	Relieved for other causes.									
41	28	345	373	787	351	1,190	46	1,587	2,374	b 1901.
72	26	387	461	946	353	1,223	45	1,621	2,567	a
				866				1,604	2,470	Mean.
72	32	369	464	937	367	1,264	76	1,707	2,644	b 1902.
95	24	394	454	967	449	1,404	97	1,950	2,917	a
				952				1,828	2,780	Mean.
79	41	404	486	1,010	455	1,424	84	1,963	2,973	b 1903.
140	74	487	672	1,373	519	1,513	87	2,119	3,492	a
				1,191				2,041	3,232	Mean.
77	64	469	576	1,186	512	1,537	64	2,113	3,299	b 1904.
150	107	624	897	1,778	578	1,620	79	2,277	4,055	a
				1,482				2,195	3,677	Mean.
124	101	610	930	1,765	620	1,688	80	2,388	4,153	b 1905.
189	772	1,415	2,809	5,185	745	1,847	92	2,684	7,869	a
				3,475				2,536	6,011	Mean.
165	473	1,238	2,514	4,390	788	1,924	81	2,793	7,183	b 1906.
177	528	1,220	2,470	4,395	832	2,010	74	2,916	7,311	a
				4,392				2,854	7,247	Mean.

Table B.

PAUPERISM IN POPLAR AND THE WHOLE METROPOLIS.

(Based on Local Government Board Returns.)

YEAR.	Indoor Paupers on 1st Jan. §	Outdoor Paupers on 1st Jan. *	Total Number of Paupers on 1st Jan. †	Ratio per 1,000 of Population on 1st Jan. †	Indoor Paupers on 1st July. §	Outdoor Paupers on 1st July. *	Total Number of Paupers on 1st July. †	Ratio per 1,000 of Population on 1st July. †
1890 ...	2,279	1,733	4,012	21·2	2,013	1,547	3,560	21·4
	<i>61,800</i>	<i>41,634</i>	<i>103,434</i>	<i>25·0</i>	<i>55,418</i>	<i>35,186</i>	<i>90,604</i>	<i>21·7</i>
1891 ...	2,304	1,669	3,973	23·8	2,134	1,425	3,559	21·3
	<i>61,545</i>	<i>40,909</i>	<i>102,454</i>	<i>24·5</i>	<i>54,816</i>	<i>33,622</i>	<i>88,438</i>	<i>20·9</i>
1892 ...	2,482	1,493	3,975	23·8	2,308	1,533	3,841	23·0
	<i>61,475</i>	<i>37,332</i>	<i>98,807</i>	<i>23·4</i>	<i>56,329</i>	<i>33,338</i>	<i>89,667</i>	<i>21·0</i>
1893 ...	2,576	1,897	4,473	26·6	2,436	2,050	4,486	26·7
	<i>63,473</i>	<i>40,424</i>	<i>103,897</i>	<i>24·3</i>	<i>59,188</i>	<i>36,128</i>	<i>95,316</i>	<i>22·1</i>
1894 ...	2,811	2,541	5,352	31·9	2,691	2,077	4,768	28·4
	<i>67,715</i>	<i>43,691</i>	<i>111,406</i>	<i>25·8</i>	<i>60,465</i>	<i>36,838</i>	<i>97,303</i>	<i>22·4</i>
1895 ...	2,928	2,080	5,008	29·6	2,864	2,218	5,082	30·1
	<i>68,762</i>	<i>41,659</i>	<i>110,421</i>	<i>25·4</i>	<i>62,554</i>	<i>39,098</i>	<i>101,652</i>	<i>23·2</i>
1896 ...	3,069	2,133	5,202	30·8	2,770	2,187	4,957	29·3
	<i>69,255</i>	<i>41,890</i>	<i>111,145</i>	<i>25·3</i>	<i>62,671</i>	<i>39,098</i>	<i>101,769</i>	<i>23·0</i>
1897 ...	2,996	2,105	5,101	30·2	2,634	2,056	4,690	27·8
	<i>68,305</i>	<i>40,328</i>	<i>108,630</i>	<i>24·6</i>	<i>62,290</i>	<i>38,381</i>	<i>100,671</i>	<i>22·6</i>
1898 ...	2,948	2,113	5,061	29·9	2,804	2,030	4,834	28·6
	<i>69,448</i>	<i>39,929</i>	<i>109,377</i>	<i>24·6</i>	<i>64,331</i>	<i>38,448</i>	<i>102,779</i>	<i>23·0</i>
1899 ...	3,146	2,114	5,260	31·1	2,837	2,102	4,939	29·2
	<i>69,633</i>	<i>39,598</i>	<i>109,231</i>	<i>24·4</i>	<i>64,016</i>	<i>37,831</i>	<i>101,847</i>	<i>22·7</i>
1900 ...	2,948	2,374	5,322	31·5	2,752	2,395	5,147	30·5
	<i>70,105</i>	<i>40,377</i>	<i>110,482</i>	<i>24·6</i>	<i>62,379</i>	<i>37,720</i>	<i>100,099</i>	<i>22·2</i>
1901 ...	3,241	2,588	5,829	34·5	2,864	2,667	5,531	32·7
	<i>68,548</i>	<i>39,930</i>	<i>108,478</i>	<i>24·0</i>	<i>63,326</i>	<i>39,607</i>	<i>102,933</i>	<i>22·6</i>
1902 ..	3,185	2,941	6,126	36·2	3,026	2,993	6,019	35·6
	<i>70,473</i>	<i>42,335</i>	<i>112,808</i>	<i>24·8</i>	<i>64,907</i>	<i>40,953</i>	<i>105,860</i>	<i>23·1</i>
1903 ...	3,424	3,509	6,933	41·0	3,370	3,313	6,683	39·5
	<i>73,254</i>	<i>44,899</i>	<i>118,153</i>	<i>25·8</i>	<i>67,363</i>	<i>40,378</i>	<i>107,741</i>	<i>23·4</i>
1904 ...	3,709	4,069	7,778	46·0	3,568	4,165	7,733	45·8
	<i>75,585</i>	<i>44,311</i>	<i>119,896</i>	<i>26·0</i>	<i>70,079</i>	<i>42,195</i>	<i>112,274</i>	<i>24·2</i>
1905 ...	3,881	7,886	11,767	70·0	3,860	7,197	11,057	65·8
	<i>78,105</i>	<i>52,753</i>	<i>130,858</i>	<i>28·1</i>	<i>73,466</i>	<i>47,348</i>	<i>120,814</i>	<i>25·8</i>
1906 ...	4,035	7,330	11,365	67·6	—	—	—	—
	<i>80,284</i>	<i>50,836</i>	<i>131,120</i>	<i>28·0</i>	—	—	—	—

The figures in italics relate to the Metropolis.

§ Inclusive of Casual Paupers.

* Exclusive of Lunatics in Asylums, &c.

† This total includes a few cases of persons who have been counted twice, viz., both as indoor and outdoor paupers.

† Poplar.—The population is estimated on the Census figures of 1881, 1891, 1896, and 1901.

Metropolis.—The estimated population (Registrar-General's) in the middle of each year is taken as the basis for the July of that year and the January following.

Table C.

POPLAR UNION.

COST OF RELIEF—INDOOR AND OUTDOOR.

(Taken from Local Government Board Returns.)

Year. Half-year ended (a) Michaelmas previous. Half-year ended (b) Lady Day.				In maintenance of Paupers in Workhouses, &c., under control of the Guardians and Maintenance of Paupers in Institutions not under control of the Guardians.	Outdoor Relief.				Total of Indoor and Outdoor Relief.	
					To Paupers other than Children Boarded-out.			To Children Boarded- out.		Total Outdoor Relief.
					In Money.	In Kind.	Total.			
				£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1885	...	...	a	10,407	3,023	648	3,671	108	3,779	14,186
			b	10,724	2,911	572	3,483	108	3,591	14,315
	Total	...		21,131			7,154		7,370	28,501
	Cost per head	...		12.75					4.87	
1886	...	...	a	9,876	3,187	529	3,716	111	3,827	13,703
			b	10,445	3,199	676	3,875	108	3,983	14,428
	Total	...		20,321			7,591		7,810	28,131
	Cost per head	...		12.07					5.00	
1887	...	...	a	9,762	3,616	657	4,273	106	4,379	14,141
			b	10,363	3,598	680	4,278	110	4,388	14,751
	Total	...		20,125			8,551		8,767	28,892
	Cost per head	...		11.12					5.08	
1888	...	...	a	10,348	3,922	672	4,594	112	4,706	15,054
			b	11,511	3,780	672	4,452	103	4,555	16,066
	Total	..		21,859			9,046		9,261	31,120
	Cost per head	...		11.18					5.42	
1889	...	...	a	10,886	3,784	576	4,360	93	4,453	15,339
			b	13,010	3,840	654	4,494	196	4,690	17,700
	Total	...		23,896			8,854		9,143	33,039
	Cost per head	...		11.41					5.31	
1890	...	...	a	12,441	3,809	534	4,343	213	4,556	16,997
			b	13,569	3,592	646	4,238	209	4,447	18,016
	Total	...		26,010			8,581		9,003	35,013
	Cost per head	...		12.10					5.58	

Table C—continued.

POPLAR UNION.

COST OF RELIEF—INDOOR AND OUTDOOR.

(Taken from Local Government Board Returns.)

Year. Half-year ended (a) Michaelmas previous. Half-year ended (b) Lady Day.				In maintenance of Paupers in Workhouses, &c. under control of the Guardians, and Maintenance of Paupers in Institutions not under control of the Guardians.	Outdoor Relief.				Total of Indoor and Outdoor Relief.	
					To Paupers other than Children Boarded out.			To Children Boarded- out.		Total Outdoor Relief.
					In Money.	In Kind.	Total.			
				£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1891	...	...	a	13,198	3,819	554	4,373	194	4,567	17,765
			b	15,039	3,321	508	3,829	226	4,055	19,094
	Total	...		28,237			8,202		8,622	36,859
	Cost per head	...		13.08					5.36	
1892	...	...	a	14,210	3,910	466	4,376	418	4,794	19,004
			b	14,820	3,597	543	4,140	453	4,593	19,413
	Total	...		29,030			8,516		9,387	38,417
	Cost per head	...		12.58					6.43	
1893	...	...	a	15,407	3,790	681	4,471	481	4,952	20,353
			b	16,294	3,754	672	4,426	514	4,940	21,234
	Total	...		31,701			8,897		9,892	41,593
	Cost per head	...		12.98					5.77	
1894	...	...	a	15,683	4,474	768	5,242	638	5,880	21,563
			b	19,015	4,682	1,127	5,809	706	6,515	25,530
	Total	...		34,698			11,051		12,395	47,093
	Cost per head	...		13.23					5.40	
1895	...	...	a	17,086	4,571	615	5,186	642	5,828	22,914
			b	20,966	5,861	1,917	7,778	565	8,343	29,309
	Total	...		38,052			12,964		14,171	52,223
	Cost per head	...		13.55					6.82	
1896	...	...	a	19,916	5,414	681	6,095	537	6,632	26,548
			b	21,014	5,270	650	5,920	516	6,436	27,450
	Total	...		40,930			12,015		13,068	53,998
	Cost per head	...		13.85					6.01	

Table C—continued.

POPLAR UNION.

COST OF RELIEF—INDOOR AND OUTDOOR.

(Taken from Local Government Board Returns.)

Year. Half-year ended (a) Michaelmas previous. Half-year ended (b) Lady Day.				In maintenance of Paupers in Workhouses, &c. under control of the Guardians, and Maintenance of Paupers in Institutions not under control of the Guardians.	Outdoor Relief.				Total of Indoor and Outdoor Relief.	
					To Paupers other than Children Boarded-out.			To Children Boarded- out.		Total Outdoor Relief.
					In Money.	In Kind.	Total.			
				£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1897	...	...	a	20,389	5,589	683	6,272	521	6,793	27,182
			b	21,089	5,146	582	5,728	462	6,190	27,279
	Total	...		41,478			12,000		12,983	54,461
	Cost per head	...		14.43					6.05	
1898	...	...	a	19,968	5,565	628	6,193	570	6,763	26,731
			b	22,493	5,057	672	5,729	557	6,286	28,779
	Total	...		42,461			11,922		13,049	55,510
	Cost per head	...		15.26					6.26	
1899	...	...	a	22,642	5,430	634	6,064	501	6,565	29,207
			b	23,745	5,566	618	6,184	447	6,631	30,376
	Total	...		46,387			12,248		13,196	59,583
	Cost per head	...		15.77					6.37	
1900	...	...	a	22,661	6,029	663	6,692	340	7,032	29,693
			b	23,042	6,621	773	7,394	309	7,703	30,745
	Total	...		45,703			14,086		14,735	60,438
	Cost per head	...		16.01					6.58	
1901	...	...	a	22,382	6,741	837	7,578	225	7,803	30,185
			b	25,716	7,440	983	8,423	218	8,641	34,357
	Total	...		48,098			16,001		16,444	64,542
	Cost per head	...		16.38					6.66	
1902	...	...	a	25,405	8,123	979	9,102	136	9,238	34,643
			b	28,438	8,365	1,167	9,532	197	9,729	38,167
	Total	...		53,843			18,634		18,967	72,810
	Cost per head	...		18.23					6.82	

Table C—continued.

POPLAR UNION.

COST OF RELIEF—INDOOR AND OUTDOOR.

(Taken from Local Government Board Returns.)

Year.				In maintenance of Paupers in Workhouses, &c. under control of the Guardians and Maintenance of Paupers in Institutions not under control of the Guardians.	Outdoor Relief.					Total of Indoor and Outdoor Relief.
					To Paupers other than Children Boarded-out.			To Children Boarded-out.	Total Out-door Relief.	
					In Money.	In Kind.	Total.			
Half-year ended (a) Michaelmas previous.	Half-year ended (b) Lady Day.			£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1903	...	...	a	27,857	9,131	1,119	10,250	128	10,378	38,235
			b	29,131	9,194	1,521	10,715	106	10,821	39,952
	Total	...		56,988			20,965		21,199	78,187
	Cost per head	...		18.11					6.56	
1904	...	...	a	29,113	9,929	1,711	11,640	76	11,716	40,829
			b	31,029	10,381	2,246	12,627	56	12,683	43,712
	Total	...		60,142			24,267		24,399	84,541
	Cost per head	...		17.36					6.64	
1905	...	...	a	32,483	11,824	2,408	14,232	57	14,289	46,772
			b	35,796	13,155	6,978	20,133	34	20,167	55,963
	Total	...		68,279			34,365		34,456	102,735
	Cost per head	...		18.73					5.73	
1906	...	...	a	35,323	15,581	7,213	22,794	21	22,815	58,138
	Cost per head for half-year ended Michaelmas, 1905, based on the mean of the number of paupers on the 1st July, 1905, and 1st January, 1906.			9.22	...	...	...	...	3.15	

NOTE.—Under the head of "In-maintenance" is included the amount expended on the maintenance of paupers relieved in the Workhouses and other establishments belonging to the Guardians, of chargeable paupers in the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum and of persons in the Metropolitan Asylum District institutions, other than fever and small-pox hospitals, and on the maintenance of paupers relieved in Hospitals, &c., not under the direct control of Guardians, *e.g.*, institutions for the blind, deaf or dumb, and idiots.

Table D.

PAUPERISM IN POPLAR AND NEIGHBOURING UNIONS.

(Based on figures taken from London County Council Statistical Abstract.)

Parish or Union.		1895.	1896.	1897.	1898.	1899.	1900.	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.
<i>Population in thousands.</i>												
Bethnal Green ...		129	129	129	129	129	130	130	130	130	130	130
Bermondsey ...		137	138	136	135	133	132	131	129	128	127	125
Stepney ...		58	58	58	58	58	58	58	58	58	57	57
Whitechapel ...		78	79	79	79	79	79	79	79	79	79	79
Poplar... ..		169	169	169	169	169	169	169	169	169	169	168
<i>Paupers</i> <div> A=Indoor, excluding Imbeciles. B=Outdoor, excluding Vagrants and Lunatics. C=Total of A and B. </div>												
Bethnal Green ...	A	2,452	2,505	2,580	2,538	2,382	2,377	2,101	2,177	2,133	2,308	2,436
	B	1,318	1,035	954	958	939	867	744	671	520	517	506
	C	3,770	3,540	3,534	3,496	3,321	3,244	2,845	2,848	2,653	2,825	2,942
Bermondsey ...	A	2,054	2,060	2,102	2,118	2,251	2,358	2,387	2,604	2,677	2,807	2,980
	B	2,716	3,473	3,793	3,764	3,886	4,206	4,031	4,179	3,908	3,118	2,960
	C	4,770	5,533	5,895	5,882	6,137	6,564	6,418	6,783	6,585	5,925	5,940
Stepney ...	A	1,172	1,252	1,281	1,324	1,334	1,340	1,310	1,368	1,437	1,551	1,571
	B	145	131	166	197	150	221	146	310	403	414	475
	C	1,317	1,383	1,447	1,521	1,484	1,561	1,456	1,678	1,840	1,965	2,046
Whitechapel ...	A	1,328	1,330	1,232	1,188	1,231	1,308	1,185	1,301	1,340	1,373	1,416
	B	57	45	56	77	46	37	43	54	63	69	66
	C	1,385	1,375	1,288	1,265	1,277	1,345	1,228	1,355	1,403	1,442	1,482
Poplar ...	A	2,581	2,716	2,656	2,534	2,688	2,599	2,696	2,717	2,896	3,179	3,338
	B	2,079	2,176	2,146	2,084	2,072	2,238	2,492	2,804	3,251	3,691	4,021
	C	4,660	4,892	4,802	4,618	4,760	4,837	5,188	5,521	6,147	6,870	7,359
<i>Number of Paupers per thousand of population.</i>												
Bethnal Green ...	A	19.0	19.4	20.0	19.7	18.4	18.3	16.2	16.7	16.4	17.7	18.7
	B	10.2	8.0	7.4	7.4	7.3	6.7	5.7	5.2	4.0	4.0	3.9
	C	29.2	27.4	27.4	27.1	25.7	25.0	21.9	21.9	20.4	21.7	22.6
Bermondsey ...	A	15.0	14.9	15.4	15.7	16.9	17.8	18.2	20.2	20.9	22.1	23.8
	B	19.8	25.2	27.9	27.9	29.2	31.9	30.8	32.4	30.5	24.6	23.7
	C	34.8	40.1	43.3	43.6	46.1	49.7	49.0	52.6	51.4	46.7	47.5
Stepney ...	A	20.2	21.6	22.1	22.8	23.0	23.1	22.6	23.6	24.8	27.2	27.6
	B	2.5	2.3	2.9	3.4	2.6	3.8	2.5	5.3	6.9	7.3	8.3
	C	22.7	23.9	25.0	26.2	25.6	26.9	25.1	28.9	31.7	34.5	35.9
Whitechapel ...	A	17.0	16.8	15.6	15.0	15.6	16.5	15.0	16.5	17.0	17.4	17.9
	B	.7	.6	.7	1.0	.6	.5	.5	.7	.8	.9	.8
	C	17.7	17.4	16.3	16.0	16.2	17.0	15.5	17.2	17.8	18.3	18.7
Poplar ...	A	15.3	16.1	15.7	15.0	15.9	15.4	16.0	16.1	17.1	18.8	19.8
	B	12.3	12.8	12.7	12.3	12.3	13.2	14.7	16.6	19.2	21.8	23.9
	C	27.6	28.9	28.4	27.3	28.2	28.6	30.7	32.7	36.3	40.6	43.7

Obtained for the most part from the Guardians' Annual

For the Year ended Lady Day.	1896.	1897.	1898.	1899.
Outstanding Loans (Guardians)	£85,306	£82,837	£92,769	£89,022
Rateable Value of Union	£739,484	£742,294	£746,278	£738,840
Amount received from Poor Rates... ..	£88,119*	£103,992*	£88,084*	£95,682*
Amount received from London County Council—Maintenance of Indoor Paupers.	£10,530	£10,559	£10,530	£10,530
Net amount received from Metropolitan Common Poor Fund...	£27,485	£26,084	£27,694	£30,569
Mean Number of Paupers, excluding Lunatics—Indoor ...	2,716	2,656	2,534	2,688
" " " " " Outdoor ...	2,175	2,146	2,084	2,072
Cost of In-maintenance§	£21,339†	£21,508†	£27,276†	£35,003
Cost of Outdoor Relief (inclusive of cost of boarding-out children, but exclusive of relief advanced to non-settled poor).	£13,063	£13,005	£13,063	£13,199
Salaries of Officers	£6,706	£6,553	£9,379	£12,163
Cost of Officers' Uniforms	£73	£76	£108	£226
Rations of Officers	£1,600	£1,543	£2,902	£4,597
Superannuations	£705	£780	£806	£968
Poplar Payment in respect of Poplar and Stepney District Sick Asylum.	£23,203	£27,314	£27,070	£23,742
Number Chargeable to Poplar in Sick Asylum at Lady Day ...	566	468	476	524
Workhouse :—				
Cost of Provisions	£10,899	£10,462	£11,544	£13,084
" Clothing... ..	£2,258	£1,694	£2,056	£2,222
" Necessaries	£3,846	£3,939	£4,083	£4,124
Total Cost of Maintenance	£17,003	£16,095	£17,683	£19,430
Average Daily Number of Inmates	1,459	1,400	1,405	1,476
Average Weekly Cost	s. d. 4 5½	s. d. 4 5¼	s. d. 4 9¼	s. d. 5 0¼
Rates in the £ :—				
Bow	8 2	8 5	8 1	8 7
Bromley	8 2	8 1	7 8	8 1
Poplar	7 10	8 1	7 4½	8 0½

* Exclusive of sums levied for County Rate, now paid by the Borough Council.

§ This includes cost of paupers in the Guardians' establishments and of those in Hospitals, Certified Schools, &c., but excludes cost of lunatic paupers and of chargeable paupers in establishments of the Metropolitan Asylum District and Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum District.

Financial and Statistical Statements and Abstract of Accounts.

1900.	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	Remarks.
£82,303	£88,988	£103,944	£110,740	£104,688	£182,710	
£750,815	£781,540	£789,305	£800,653	£815,507	£818,922	
£108,621*	£113,797*	£118,045	£133,195	£140,948	£152,908	
£13,127	£7,934	£10,530	£10,530	£10,530	£10,559	
£32,181	£35,225	£38,510	£41,778	£41,552	£43,667	
2,599	2,696	2,716	2,896	3,178	3,338	Based upon figures for the 1st January and the preceding 1st July in each case.
2,238	2,470	2,780	3,232	3,677	6,011	
£33,002	£32,834	£36,249	£37,794	£39,555	£46,301	
£14,739	£16,438	£18,977	£21,207	£24,408	£34,473	
£12,968	£13,317	£14,026	£14,700	£15,340	£16,916	
£154	£183	£168	£122	£234	£201	
£4,478	£4,720	£4,813	£4,995	£5,322	£5,477	
£1,125	£1,209	£1,169	£1,206	£1,250	£1,252	
£31,740	£35,305	£37,849	£37,094	£43,096	£42,390	
533	539	527	595	596	601	
£11,802	£11,682	£13,080	£14,543	£15,795	£15,537	
£2,295	£2,012	£2,079	£2,572	£2,879	£2,927	
£4,535	£4,928	£5,357	£4,552	£4,683	£6,253†	† Water had to be taken from the Water Company this year instead of from the workhouse well. Water rate £1.200.
£18,632	£18,622	£20,516	£21,667	£23,357	£24,717	
1,364	1,268	1,318	1,438	1,513	1,471	
s. d. 5 2	s. d. 5 6½	s. d. 5 11¼	s. d. 5 9½	s. d. 5 11¼	s. d. 6 5½	
8 10	9 5	9 1	9 10	9 8	10 1	
8 6	9 0	9 2	9 9	9 8	10 2	
8 8½	9 4½	9 2	9 9	9 8	10 1	

† Exclusive of { £13,280 (1896) } paid in respect of Forest Gate School District charges. *
{ £15,460 (1897) }
{ £9,236 (1898) }

Table G.

STATEMENT showing in respect of the several Poor Law Unions of the METROPOLIS the NUMBERS of INDOOR and OUTDOOR PAUPERS (*exclusive of the INSANE, VAGRANTS, and PATIENTS in FEVER and SMALL-POX HOSPITALS*) at the beginning of 1895 and 1905, with the PERCENTAGE of PAUPERISM indicated by these NUMBERS in each case, having regard to ESTIMATED POPULATION.

Poor Law Unions.	1st January, 1895.						1st January, 1905.							
	Estimated Population (April 6, 1895).	No. of Paupers.			Percentage of Pauperism.			Estimated Population (April 6, 1904).	No. of Paupers.			Percentage of Pauperism.		
		Indoor.	Outdoor.	Total.	Indoor.	Outdoor.	Total.		Indoor.	Outdoor.	Total.	Indoor.	Outdoor.	Total.
WEST DISTRICT.														
Paddington	121,612	942	284	1,226	77	23	100	150,367	1,323	453	1,776	88	30	118
Kensington	169,566	2,280	366	2,646	134	22	156	179,026	2,473	468	2,941	138	26	164
Hammersmith	99,166	1,885	721	2,606	91	34	125	114,765	964	843	1,807	84	73	157
Fulham	108,049		1,655	336	1,991	170	34	204	149,090	1,247	758	2,005	83	51	134
Chelsea	97,393	2,733	587	3,320	212	46	258	71,332	1,608	669	2,277	225	94	319
St. George's	128,661	767	102	869	207	27	234	124,526	3,089	881	3,970	248	70	318
Westminster	37,020	10,262	2,396	12,658	135	31	166	31,905	654	107	761	205	33	238
TOTAL, WEST DISTRICT	761,467	10,262	2,396	12,658	135	31	166	821,011	11,358	4,179	15,537	138	51	189
NORTH DISTRICT.														
St. Marylebone	141,252	3,135	404	3,539	222	28	250	130,589	3,398	463	3,861	260	35	295
Hampstead	74,603	332	183	515	44	25	69	84,895	440	162	602	51	19	70
St. Pancras	241,634	3,813	2,070	5,883	158	85	243	233,099	3,645	1,566	5,211	156	67	223
Islington	326,745	2,705	3,865	6,570	83	118	201	336,932	4,158	4,986	9,144	123	148	271
Hackney	234,934	2,475	3,657	6,132	105	156	261	272,583	3,339	3,982	7,321	122	146	268
TOTAL, NORTH DISTRICT	1,019,168	12,460	10,179	22,639	122	100	222	1,058,098	14,980	11,159	26,139	142	105	247

CENTRAL DISTRICT.

St. Giles and St. George	...	37,892	926	453	1,379	2,44	1,19	3,63	29,751	730	191	921	2,45	64	309
Strand	...	24,557	1,421	462	1,883	5,78	1,88	7,66	17,840	1,329	190	1,519	7,45	1,06	8,51
Holborn	...	137,828	3,374	1,934	5,308	2,45	1,40	3,85	123,886	3,767	2,315	6,082	2,92	1,79	4,71
City of London	...	36,623	1,223	927	2,150	3,34	2,53	5,87	25,757	853	401	1,254	3,31	1,55	4,86
TOTAL, CENTRAL DISTRICT	...	236,900	6,944	3,776	10,720	2,92	1,40	4,52	202,234	6,079	3,097	9,776	3,30	1,53	4,83

EAST DISTRICT.

Shoreditch	...	120,379	1,659	750	2,409	1,38	62	2,00	116,608	1,958	9,1	2,929	1,68	83	2,51
Bethnal Green	...	127,025	2,502	1,413	3,915	1,97	1,11	3,08	129,118	2,475	531	3,006	1,91	41	2,32
Whitechapel	...	74,349	1,521	55	1,576	2,04	07	2,11	75,720	1,551	69	1,620	2,04	09	2,13
St. George in the East	...	44,262	1,076	90	1,166	2,43	20	2,63	48,435	1,205	233	1,438	2,48	48	2,96
Stepney	...	55,832	1,230	165	1,395	2,20	29	2,49	57,241	1,657	439	2,096	2,89	77	3,66
Mile End Old Town	...	108,609	1,467	1,025	2,492	1,35	94	2,29	111,922	1,639	1,508	3,147	1,46	1,35	2,81
Poplar	...	170,296	2,695	2,080	4,775	1,58	1,22	2,80	169,227	3,475	7,869	11,344	2,05	4,65	6,70
TOTAL, EAST DISTRICT	...	700,752	12,150	5,578	17,728	1,73	79	2,52	708,271	13,900	11,620	25,580	1,97	1,64	3,61

SOUTH DISTRICT.

Southwark	...	195,692	4,021	1,434	5,455	2,05	73	2,78	202,144	4,268	1,859	6,127	2,11	92	3,03
Bernondsey	...	132,104	2,163	2,780	4,943	1,64	2,10	3,74	129,856	3,093	3,031	6,124	2,38	2,33	4,71
Lambeth	...	283,265	3,070	3,300	6,370	1,08	1,16	2,24	305,029	3,218	2,735	5,953	1,05	90	1,95
Wandsworth	...	339,508	2,180	3,220	5,400	64	95	1,59	444,779	3,650	4,776	8,426	82	1,07	1,89
Camberwell	...	244,307	2,564	3,587	6,151	1,05	1,46	2,51	263,611	3,104	4,936	8,040	1,17	1,87	3,04
Greenwich	...	170,197	2,859	1,726	4,585	1,68	1,01	2,69	188,698	2,875	2,658	5,533	1,52	1,41	2,93
Lewisham	...	102,657	1,052	2,193	3,245	2,78	1,68	4,46	160,531	1,243	2,040	3,283	77	1,27	2,04
Woolwich	...	115,339	1,376	1,261	2,637	1,19	1,09	2,28	141,703	1,380	593	1,973	97	42	1,39
TOTAL, SOUTH DISTRICT	...	1,583,069	19,285	19,501	38,786	1,22	1,23	2,45	1,836,351	22,831	22,628	45,459	1,24	1,23	2,47
TOTAL FOR WHOLE METROPOLIS	...	4,301,356*	61,101	41,430	102,531	1,42	96	2,38	4,625,965	69,808	52,683	122,491	1,51	1,13	2,64

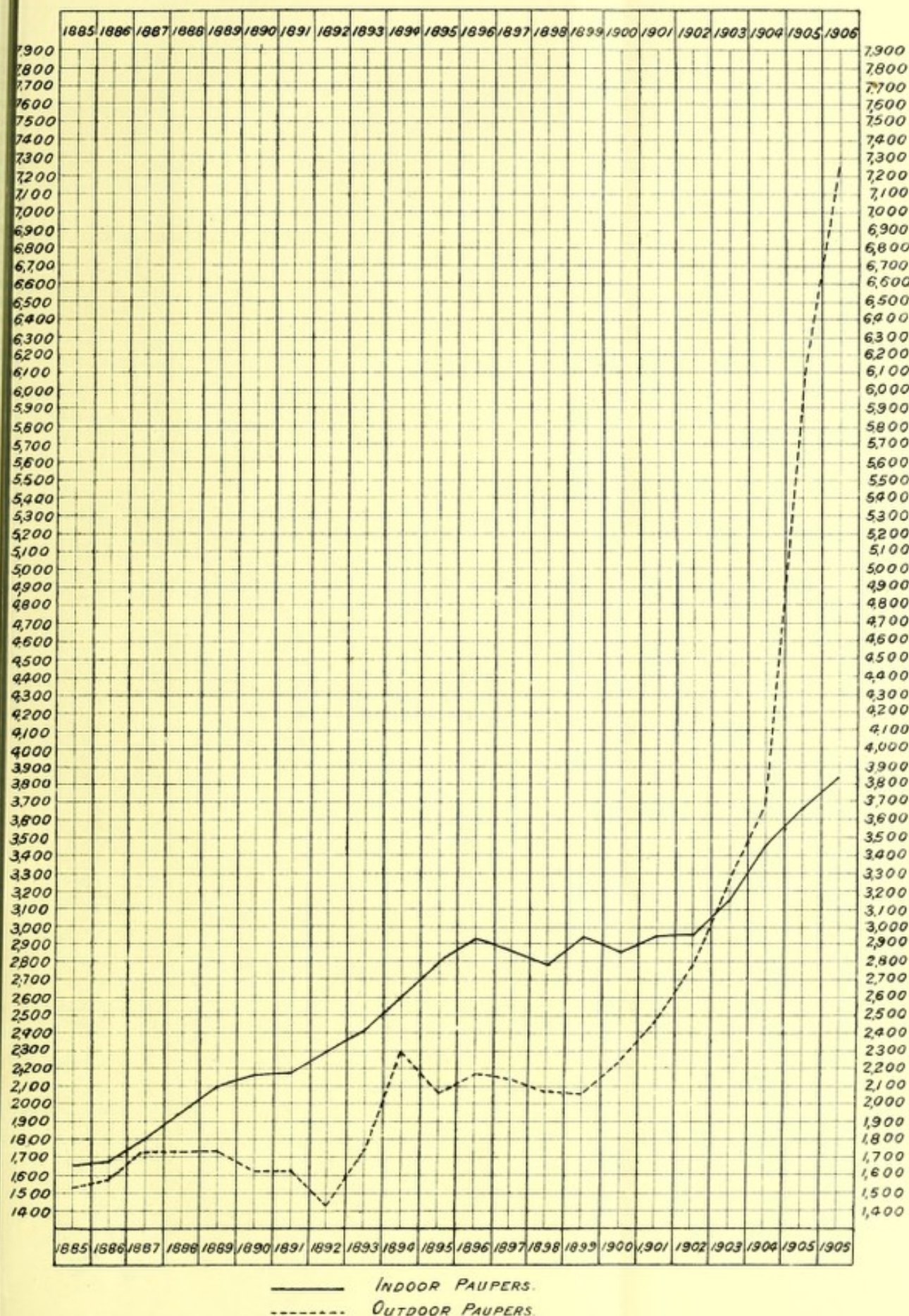
* Penge excluded.

Table H.

RETURN as to OUT-DOOR PAUPERISM in the CANNING TOWN DISTRICT of the WEST HAM UNION showing Number of PERSONS RELIEVED, Number per 1,000 of ESTIMATED POPULATION (120,000) and AMOUNT OF RELIEF on the 1st January and 1st July of the 10 years ended 1905, with the Number of OUT-DOOR PAUPERS in POPLAR UNION per 1,000 of ESTIMATED POPULATION (169,000).

POPLAR UNION.		CANNING TOWN DISTRICT.		
Number per 1,000 of Estimated Population.	Date.	Number of Persons relieved.	Number per 1,000 of Estimated Population.	Amount of Relief.
				£ s. d.
12·8	1st Jan., 1896	2,013	16·8	186 5 0
13·1	1st July, 1896	1,855	15·5	171 1 5
12·5	1st Jan., 1897	1,807	15·1	172 14 5
12·2	1st July, 1897	1,668	13·9	162 2 10
12·6	1st Jan., 1898	1,713	14·3	259 12 6
12·1	1st July, 1898	1,716	14·3	170 19 7
12·6	1st Jan., 1899	1,830	15·3	184 9 2
12·5	1st July, 1899	1,900	15·8	195 4 5
14·1	1st Jan., 1900	2,009	16·7	213 1 6
14·2	1st July, 1900	1,889	15·7	200 4 9
15·4	1st Jan., 1901	1,973	16·4	209 15 4
15·8	1st July, 1901	1,925	16·0	212 14 2
17·4	1st Jan., 1902	2,000	16·7	229 15 6
17·7	1st July, 1902	2,143	17·9	236 3 9
20·8	1st Jan., 1903	2,657	22·1	323 15 0
19·6	1st July, 1903	2,510	20·9	278 12 4
24·0	1st Jan., 1904	2,598	21·7	272 16 8
24·6	1st July, 1904	2,569	21·4	271 7 9
46·5	1st Jan., 1905	10,607	88·4	611 2 6
42·4	1st July, 1905	2,820	23·5	304 4 4

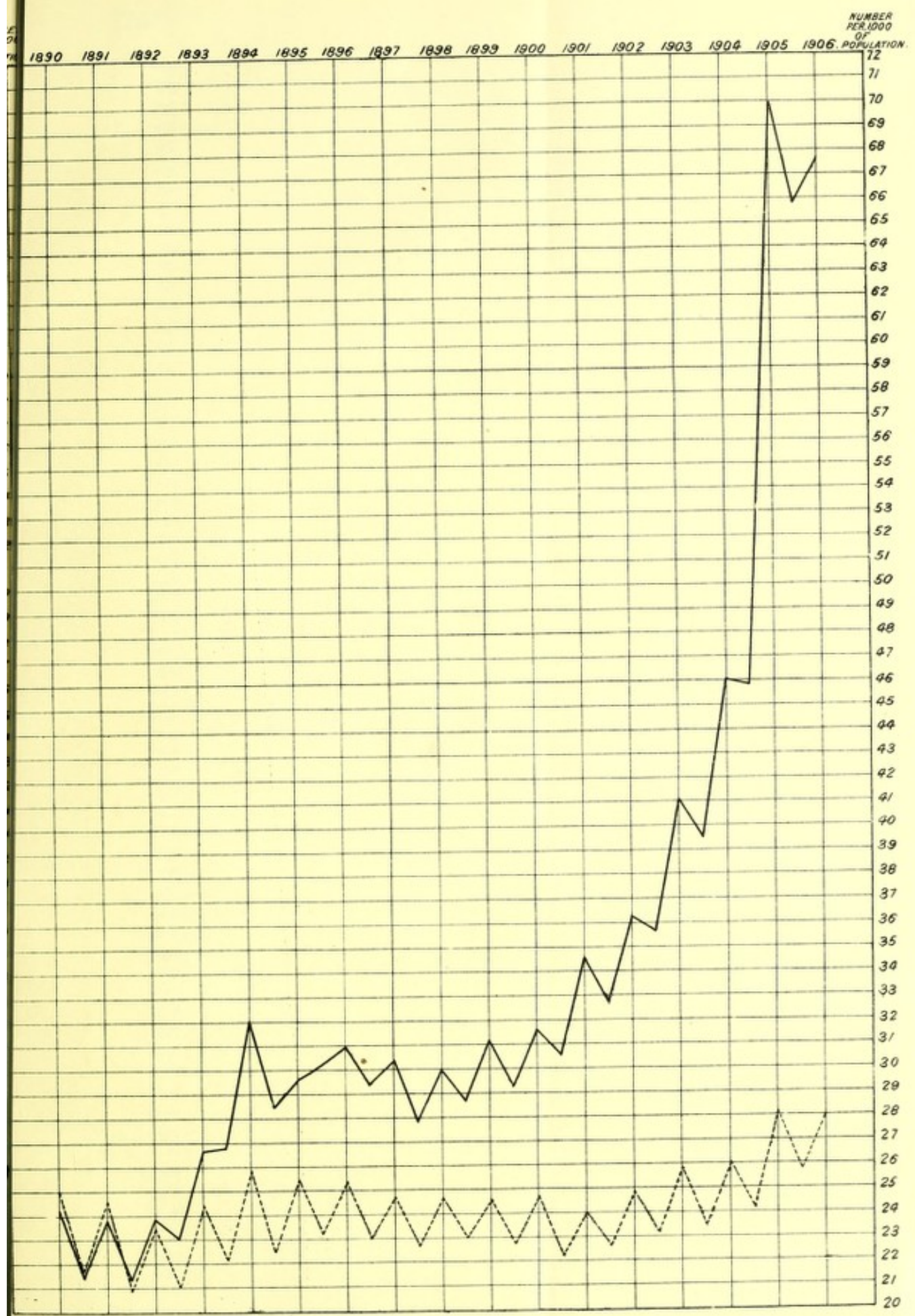
POPLAR UNION:
NUMBER OF PAUPERS.



Figures for each year taken on mean of numbers on 1st January of that year and 1st July previous.



PAUPERISM IN POPLAR AND THE WHOLE METROPOLIS.



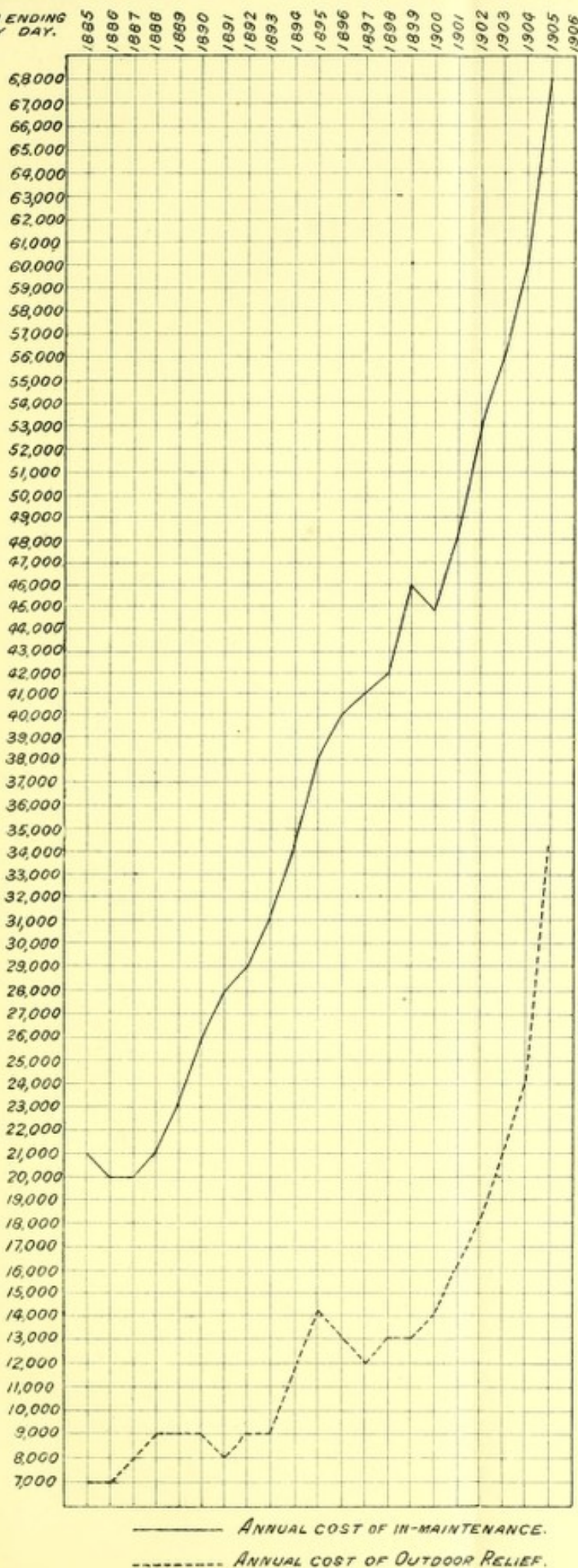
POPLAR —————
METROPOLIS - - - - -



POPLAR UNION.

COST OF RELIEF — INDOOR AND OUTDOOR.

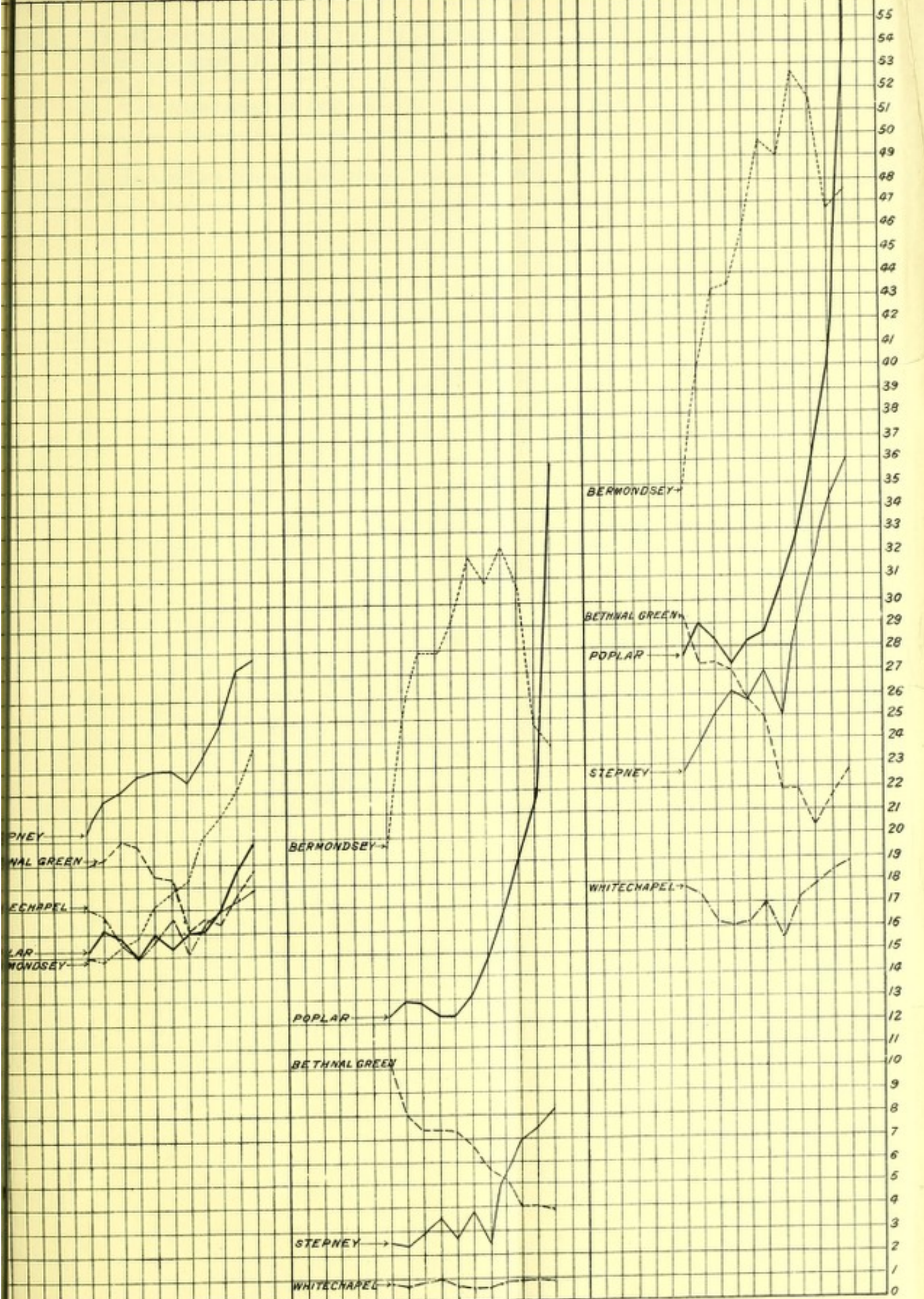
YEAR ENDING
LADY DAY.





PAUPERISM IN LONDON AND NEIGHBOURING DISTRICTS

INDOOR PAUPERISM.						OUTDOOR PAUPERISM.						TOTAL PAUPERISM.						NUMBER PER 1000 OF POPN
1895	1896	1897	1898	1899	1900	1895	1896	1897	1898	1899	1900	1895	1896	1897	1898	1899	1900	
1901	1902	1903	1904	1905	1906	1901	1902	1903	1904	1905	1906	1901	1902	1903	1904	1905	1906	



POPULATION-1901.

BETHNAL GREEN 129,680. BERMONDSEY 130,760. STEPNEY 57,937. WHITECHAPEL 78,768. POPLAR 168,822.

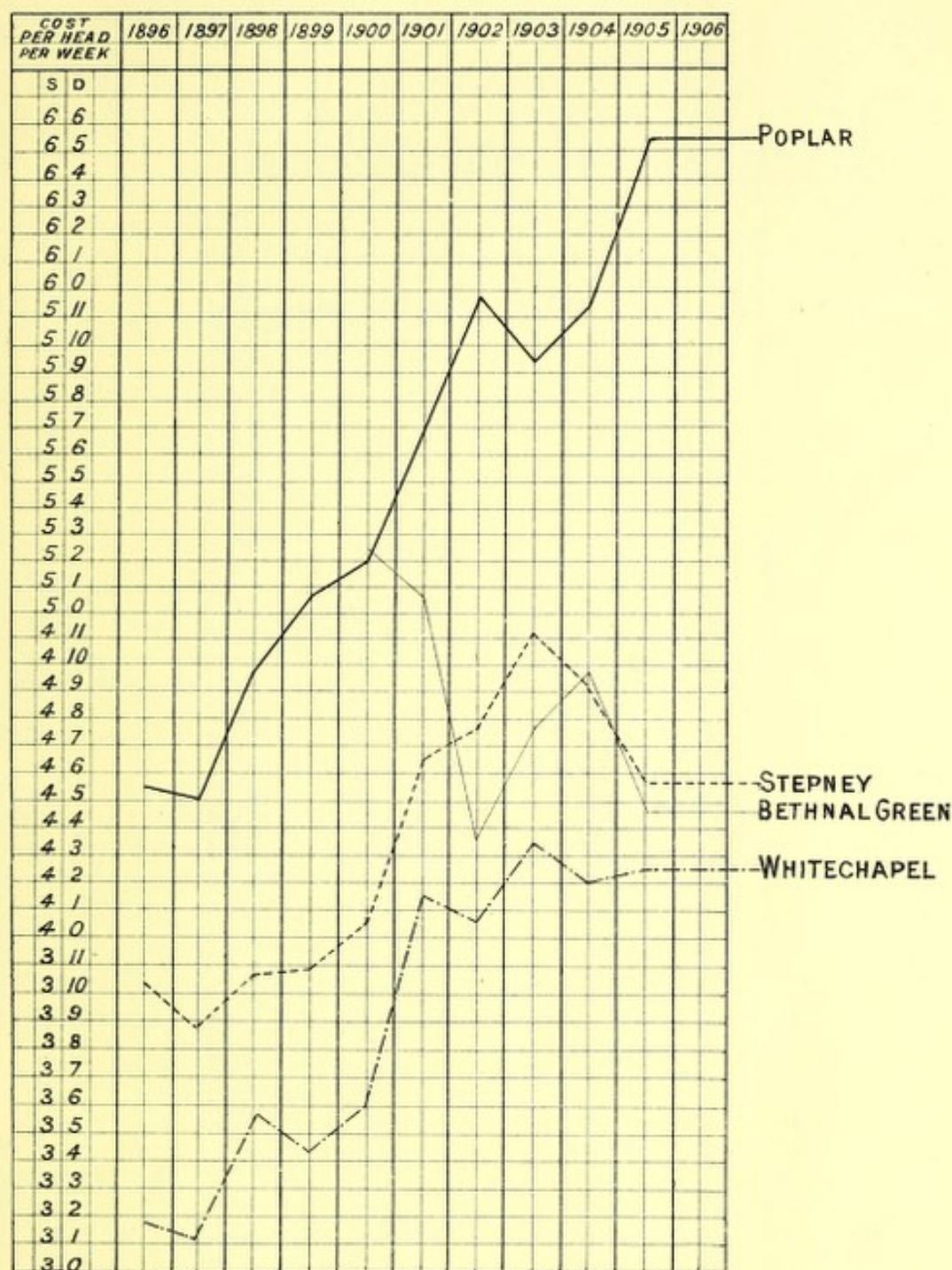


COST OF MAINTENANCE IN THE WORKHOUSE IN POPLAR AND ADJACENT UNIONS.

CHART F. (1)

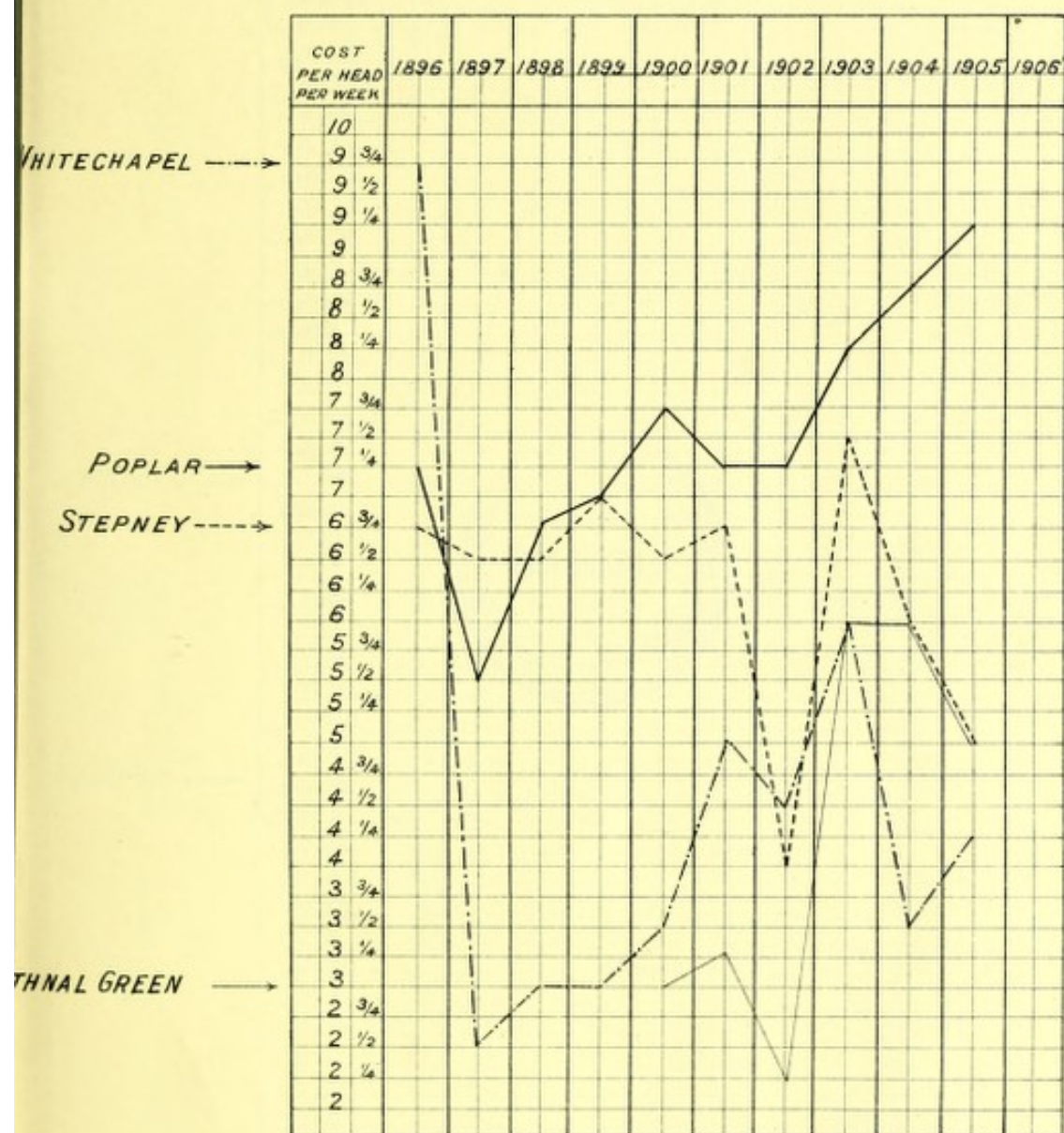
COST OF MAINTENANCE PER HEAD, PER WEEK.

(taken from Financial Statements &c. published by Guardians).





COST OF CLOTHING PER HEAD, PER WEEK.

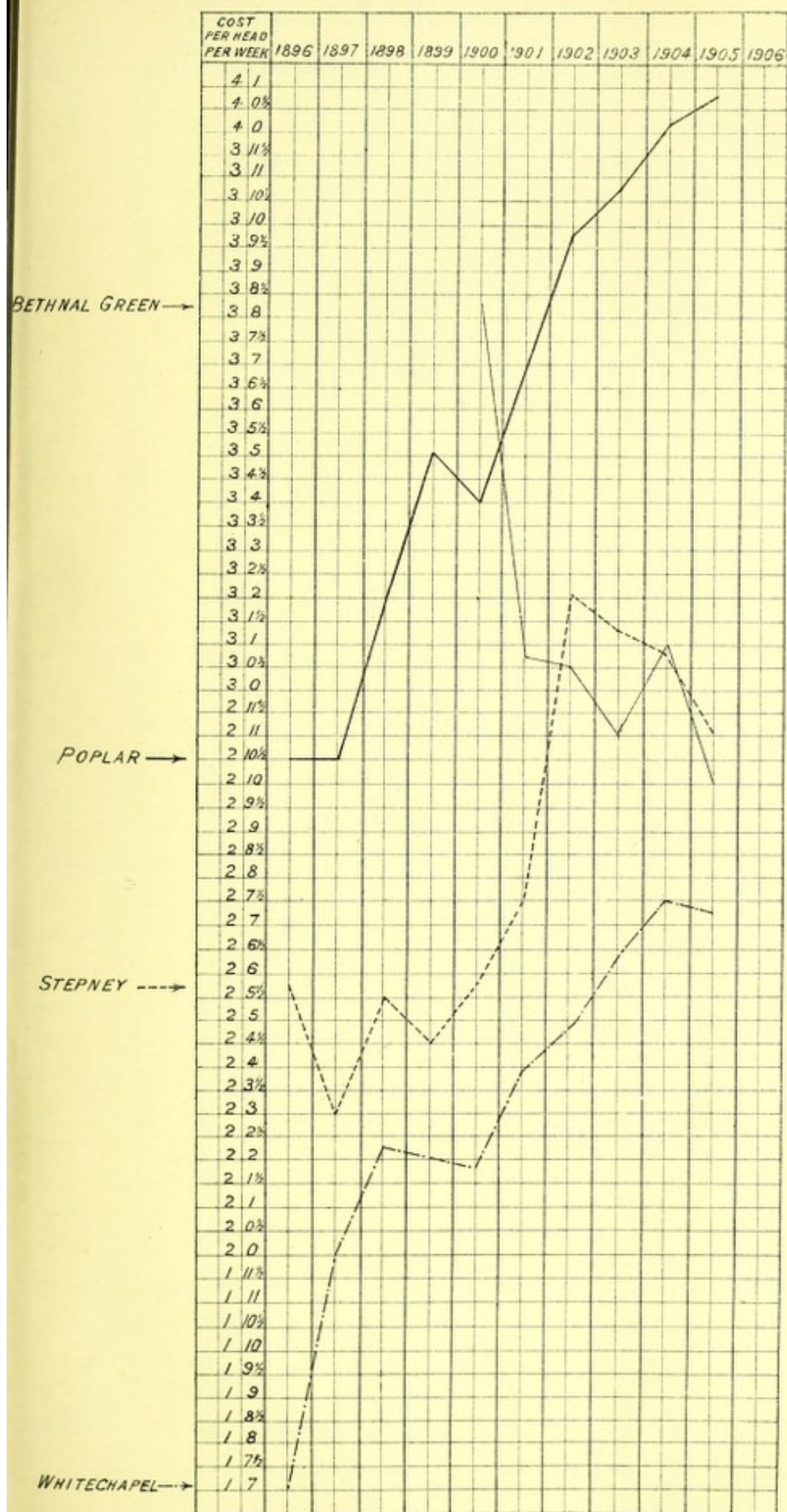


COST OF CLOTHING PER HEAD PER WEEK



COST OF PROVISIONS PER HEAD, PER WEEK.

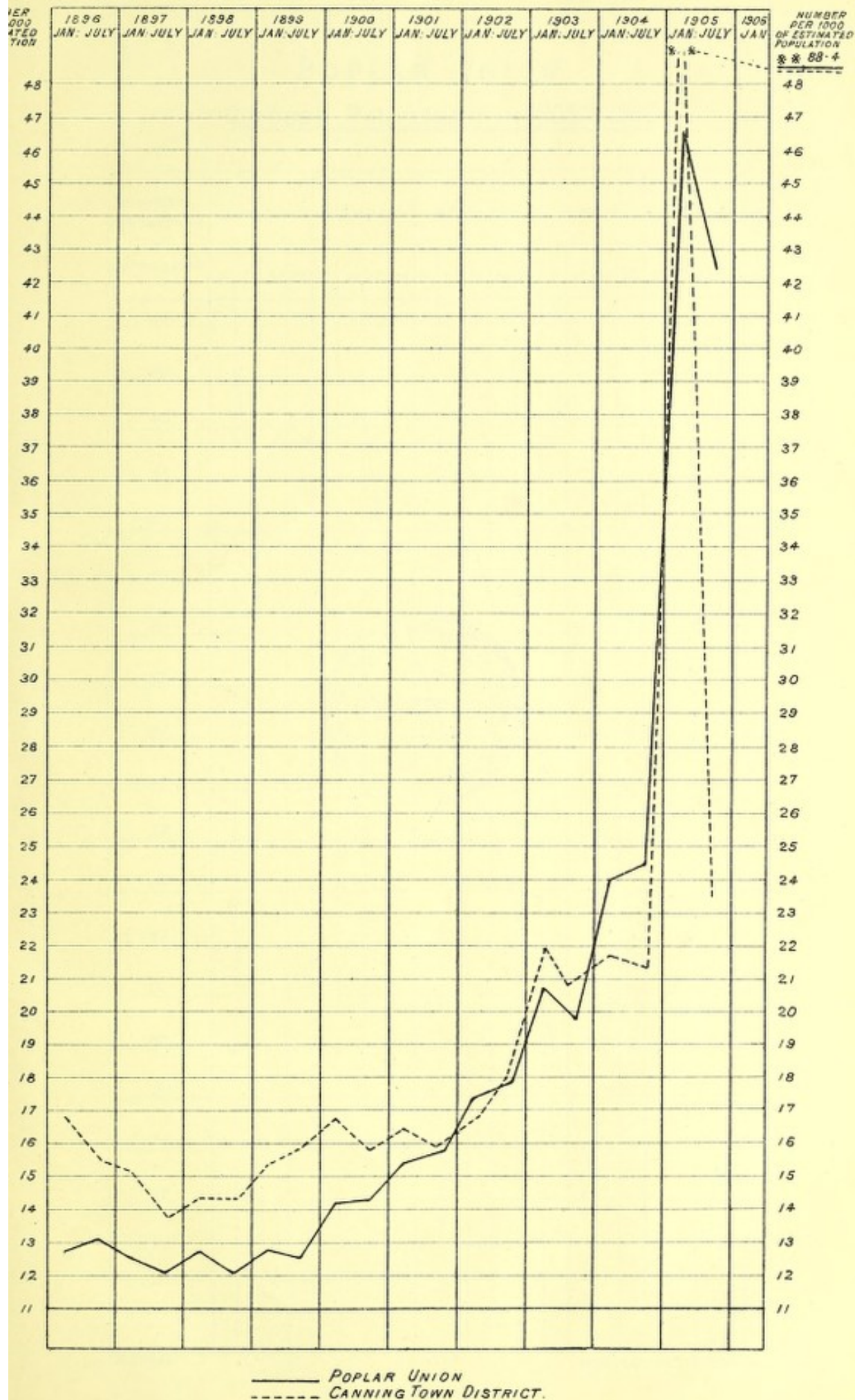
CHART F. (3)



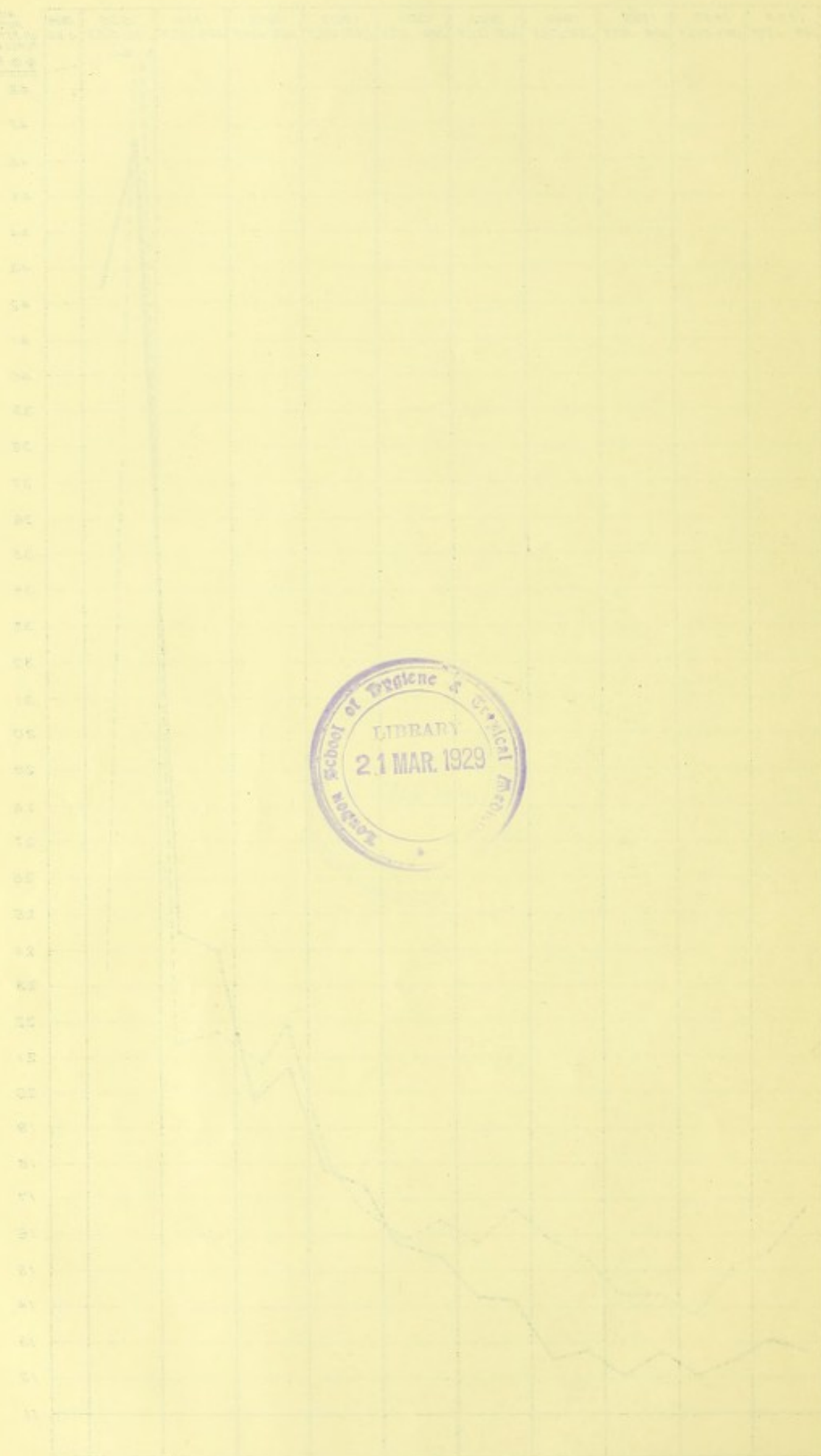


OUT-DOOR PAUPERISM IN POPLAR UNION AND CANNING TOWN DISTRICT OF WEST HAM UNION.

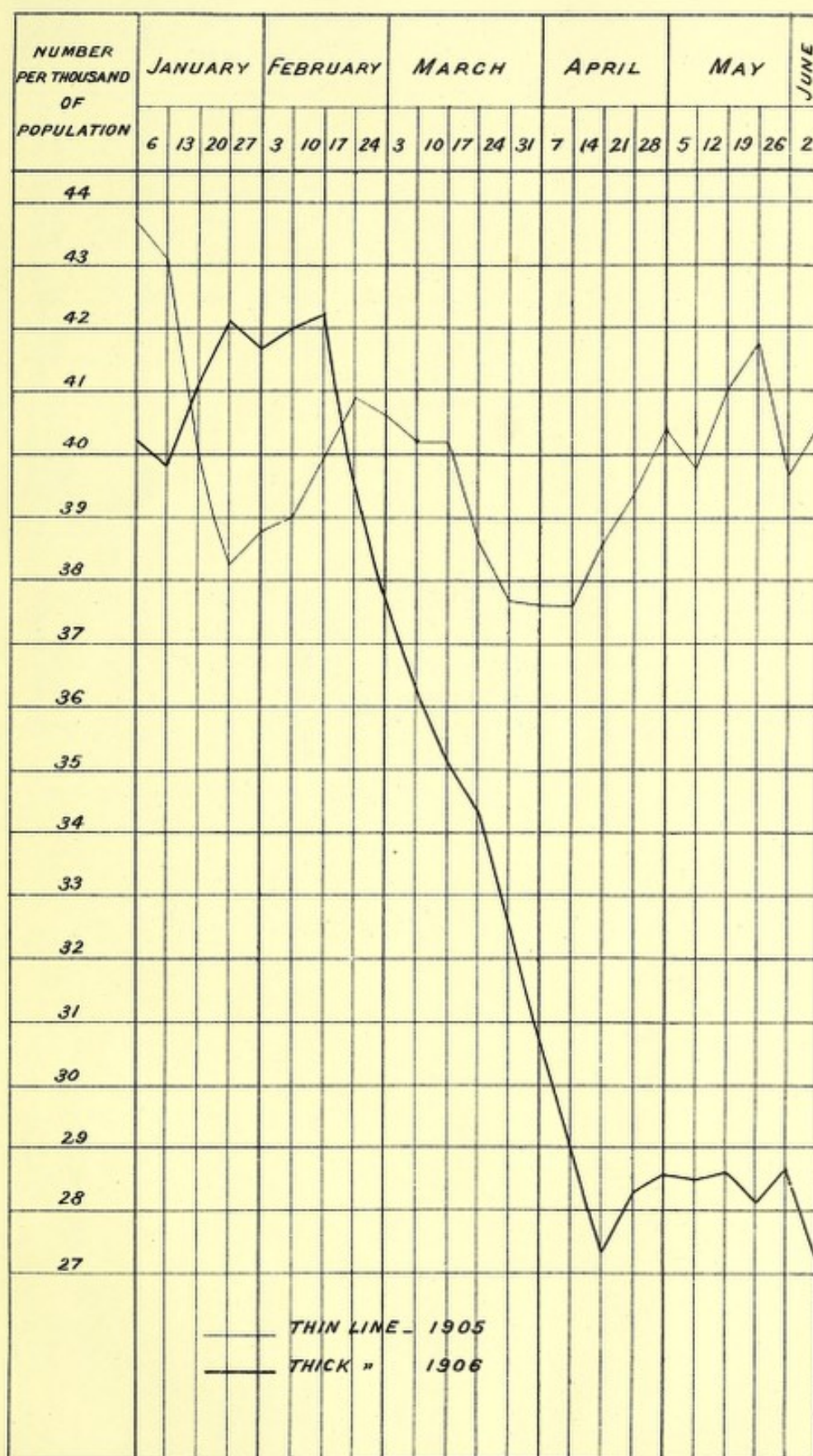
CHART H.



STATION
NO. 100
DATE 1929
A-28-5-9



POPLAR UNION.
OUTDOOR PAUPERISM IN 1905 & 1906.





STATEMENT OF IRONMONGERY TENDERS AND PURCHASES.

Description of Goods or Materials.	Estimated Quantity required.		Quantity actually purchased.	Accepted Tender, Pyle & Co.		Rejected Tender, Pryke, Palmer & Co.		Total cost of Goods actually purchased.	Cost if purchased at rejected Tender price.
	1905-6.	1906-7.		1905-6.	1906-7.	1905-6.	1906-7.		
1. Asbestos (United) engine packing	At per lb.	...	...	...	...	£ s. d. 1 6 3	£ s. d. 0 9 6
2. Asbestos millboard	"	—	—
3. Asbestos washers	"	—	—
4. Basins, enamel (large)	At per doz.	...	...	...	...	0 9 0	0 9 0
5. Cans, for kitchen copper	"	—	—
6. Cans (1-gallon)	"	—	—
7. Cans (2-gallon)	"	—	—
8. Cans (3-gallon)	"	—	—
9. Coffee pots	"	0 2 1	0 2 6
10. Colanders	"	0 5 0	0 3 6
11. Cinder shovels	"	—	—
12. Candlesticks	"	—	—
13. Coal shovels	"	0 18 0	0 15 0
14. Coal scuttles...	"	4 10 0	5 2 0
15. Cruets, 4 bottles (E.P. on N.S.) Rogers'	"	0 5 0	0 14 7
16. Dust pans	"	0 18 0	0 16 6

STATEMENT OF IRONMONGERY TENDERS AND PURCHASES—continued.

Description of Goods or Materials.	Estimated Quantity required.		Quantity actually purchased.	Accepted Tender, Pyle & Co.		Rejected Tender, Pryke, Palmer & Co.		Total cost of Goods actually purchased.	Cost if purchased at rejected Tender price.
	1905-6.			1905-6.		1905-6.			
	1905-6.	1906-7.		1905-6.	1906-7.	1905-6.	1906-7.		
17. Baths, galvanized, various sizes	2 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	s. d. 10 0	s. d. 10 0	s. d. 19 0	s. d. 19 0	£ s. d. 0 5 10	£ s. d. 0 11 1
18. Forks, officers (Rogers'), carving	2 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	10 0	10 0	8 0	8 0	—	—
19. Forks, officers (Rogers'), table	6 doz.	4 doz.	5 doz.	10 0	10 0	7 0	7 0	2 10 0	1 15 0
20. Forks, officers (Rogers'), dessert	6 doz.	4 doz.	1 doz.	6 0	9 0	5 0	5 0	0 6 0	0 5 0
21. Forks, inmates (Rogers'), carving	2 doz.	1 doz.	—	5 0	12 0	6 0	6 0	—	—
22. Forks, inmates table (Taylor's)	6 doz.	18 doz.	18 doz.	2 0	2 0	2 0	2 0	1 16 0	1 16 0
23. Forks for children (Taylor's)	30 doz.	3 doz.	3 doz.	2 0	6 0	1 9	1 9	0 6 0	0 5 3
24. Fire guards, 2 sizes	3 doz.	3 doz.	—	10 0	20 0	6 0	6 0	—	—
25. Fire-irons (tongs, poker, and shovel)	9 sets	6 sets	—	2 0	5 0	2 0	2 0	—	—
26. Goffering irons	2 doz.	3 doz.	½ doz.	2 6	6 0	3 0	3 0	0 1 3	0 1 6
27. Frying pans	3 doz.	2 doz.	—	2 6	10 0	6 0	6 0	—	—
28. House pails	22 doz.	18 doz.	14½ doz.	15 0	15 0	16 0	17 0	11 0 0	11 14 8
29. Knives, officers (Rogers'), carving	2 doz.	1 doz.	—	20 0	20 0	12 0	12 0	—	—
30. Knives, officers (Rogers'), table	7 doz.	4 doz.	8 doz.	30 0	27 0	6 0	6 0	12 0 0	2 8 0
31. Knives, officers (Rogers'), dessert	7 doz.	4 doz.	4 doz.	20 0	20 0	5 0	5 0	4 0 0	1 0 0
32. Knives, inmates (Taylor's), Poplar Union, table	6 doz.	24 doz.	18 doz.	3 0	1 0	6 0	6 0	2 14 0	5 8 0

STATEMENT OF IRONMONGERY TENDERS AND PURCHASES—continued.

Description of Goods or Materials.	Estimated Quantity required.		Quantity actually purchased.	Accepted Tender, Pyle & Co.		Rejected Tender, Pryke, Palmer & Co.		Total cost of Goods actually purchased.	Cost if purchased at rejected Tender price.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
	1905-6.	1906-7.		1905-6.	1906-7.	1905-6.	1906-7.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																			
54. Sugar tongs (E.P. on N.S.) (Rogers') ...	At per doz.	...	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	

STATEMENT OF IRONMONGERY TENDERS AND PURCHASES—continued.

Description of Goods or Materials.	Estimated Quantity required.		Quantity actually purchased.	Accepted Tender, Pyle & Co.		Rejected Tender, Pryke, Palmer & Co.		Total cost of Goods actually purchased.	Cost if purchased at rejected Tender price.	
	1905-6.	1906-7.		1905-6.	1906-7.	1905-6.	1906-7.			
								s.	d.	s.
89. India-rubber (plain)	42 lbs.	50 lbs.	72 lbs.	2 0	1 0	2 0	2 0	7 4 0	7 4 0	—
90. India-rubber rings	42 lbs.	43 lbs.	—	1 0	0 6	2 0	2 0	—	—	—
91. India-rubber washers	28 lbs.	28 lbs.	—	1 0	0 6	2 0	2 0	—	—	—
92. Spades, digging, cast steel, rivetted eyes, with shafts.	17 doz.	12 doz.	18 doz.	30 0	30 0	22 0	17 6	27 0 0	19 16 0	0
93. Forks, digging, 4-prong, rivetted eyes with shafts	12 doz.	12 doz.	9 doz.	45 0	40 0	19 6	17 6	20 5 0	8 15 6	6
94. Mattocks with shafts	6 doz.	2 doz.	3 doz.	30 0	30 0	19 0	26 0	4 10 0	2 17 0	0
95. Shovels	6 doz.	3 doz.	1 doz.	20 0	20 0	22 0	17 0	1 0 0	1 2 0	0
96. Canterbury hoes	6 doz.	3 doz.	—	20 0	12 0	12 0	10 0	—	—	—
Iron (cast) from the stock of any warehouse	—	35 cwt.	—	—	10 0	—	9 6	—	—	—
Iron (cast), galvanised	—	3 cwt.	—	—	10 0	—	13 6	—	—	—
Iron (cast) to pattern to be supplied	—	30 cwt.	—	—	3 6	—	10 6	—	—	—
Iron (cast) to pattern (galvanised)	—	3 cwt.	—	—	4 0	—	14 6	—	—	—
Iron, wrought (round, square, flat, &c.)...	—	60 cwt.	—	—	10 0	—	12 6	—	—	—
Iron, wrought (to sketch or description)	—	112 lbs.	—	—	0 5	—	0 2	—	—	—
Iron, wrought to sketch (galvanised)	—	112 lbs.	—	—	0 6	—	0	—	—	—

STATEMENT OF IRONMONGERY TENDERS AND PURCHASES—continued.

Description of Goods or Materials.	Estimated Quantity required.		Quantity actually purchased.	Accepted Tender, Pyle & Co.		Rejected Tender, Pryke, Palmer & Co.		Total cost of Goods actually purchased.		Cost if purchased at rejected Tender price.
	1905-6.	1906-7.		1905-6.	1906-7.	1905-6.	1906-7.	1905-6.	1906-7.	
119. Spoons, nickel (school), "Silvera," engraved "P.F.S." At per doz. ...	24 doz.	—	—	s. d. 2 0	s. d. —	s. d. 5 0	s. d. —	£ s. d. —	£ s. d. —	—
Tank and pipe covering fitted asbestos ... At per lb. ...	—	224 lbs.	—	s. d. —	s. d. 0 4	s. d. —	s. d. 2 0	£ s. d. —	£ s. d. —	—
120. Washers, vulcanite fibre, sizes as order ... At per doz. ...	6 doz.	8 doz.	8 doz.	s. d. 0 10	s. d. 1 0	s. d. 2 0	s. d. 2 0	£ s. d. 0 6 8	£ s. d. 0 16 0	0 16 0
121. Pie dishes, enamelled ... " " ...	3 doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	s. d. 20 0	s. d. 20 0	s. d. 6 0	s. d. 6 0	£ s. d. 1 0 0	£ s. d. 0 6 0	0 6 0
122. Rings, Taylor's ... " " ...	24 doz.	5 doz.	15 doz.	s. d. 2 0	s. d. 10 0	s. d. 5 0	s. d. 5 0	£ s. d. 1 10 0	£ s. d. 3 15 0	3 15 0
123. Sheet tin ... At per lb. ...	126 lbs.	140 lbs.	28 lbs.	s. d. 0 1	s. d. 0 1	s. d. 0 5	s. d. 0 5	£ s. d. 0 2 4	£ s. d. 0 11 8	0 11 8
128. Hopkinson's patent G.G. cones ... At per doz. ...	24 doz.	6 doz.	3 doz.	s. d. 2 0	s. d. 2 6	s. d. 4 0	s. d. 4 0	£ s. d. 0 6 0	£ s. d. 0 12 0	0 12 0
129. Copper gauze wire ... At per lb. ...	44 lbs.	23 lbs.	10 lbs.	s. d. 0 6	s. d. 1 6	s. d. 1 6	s. d. 1 3	£ s. d. 0 5 0	£ s. d. 0 15 0	0 15 0
130. Copper oil measures, 1-qt., 1-gall., 1-gall. ... At per set ...	2 sets.	2 sets.	—	s. d. 10 0	s. d. 10 0	s. d. 10 6	s. d. 10 6	£ s. d. —	£ s. d. —	—
131. Lead wire ... At per lb. ...	14 lbs.	10 lbs.	—	s. d. 0 3	s. d. 0 3	s. d. 0 2	s. d. 0 2	£ s. d. —	£ s. d. —	—
132. Belt clips (Bristol's patent steel belt lacing) ... At per gross ...	6 gross.	6 gross.	2 gross.	s. d. 10 0	s. d. 1 0	s. d. 5 6	s. d. 5 6	£ s. d. 1 0 0	£ s. d. 0 11 0	0 11 0
133. Copper pipe, to description ... At per lb. ...	112 lbs.	112 lbs.	351 lbs.	s. d. 2 0	s. d. 2 0	s. d. 1 2	s. d. 0 11	£ s. d. 35 2 0	£ s. d. 20 9 6	20 9 6
134. Iron, cast flanges, screwed and faced ... At per cwt. ...	1 cwt.	—	10 cwt.	s. d. 20 0	s. d. —	s. d. 14 0	s. d. —	£ s. d. 10 0 0	£ s. d. 7 0 0	7 0 0
135. Belt guards (wire) ... At per ft. ...	50 ft.	50 ft.	—	s. d. 2 0	s. d. 0 3	s. d. 0 9	s. d. 0 6	£ s. d. —	£ s. d. —	—
136. Valve seats (renewable seat valves up to 1½ in.) At per doz. ...	24 doz.	5 doz.	1 doz.	s. d. 1 0	s. d. 1 0	s. d. 3 6	s. d. 3 6	£ s. d. 0 1 0	£ s. d. 0 3 6	0 3 6

137. Valve seats (renewable seat valves up to 3 in.) At per doz.		6 doz.	6 doz.	2 doz.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Enamelled dessert plates	...	...	...	12 doz.	—	—	3 6	—	3 9	—	—
Enamelled mugs, 1 pint	...	...	...	12 doz.	—	—	6 0	—	4 3	—	—
Enamelled dinner plates	...	...	...	12 doz.	—	—	5 0	—	4 9	—	—
Enamelled basins, 1½ pint	...	...	...	12 doz.	—	—	2 6	—	6 0	—	—
Enamelled hot water cans	...	...	Each	1 doz.	—	—	2 6	—	1 6	—	—
Enamelled slop pails	...	...	...	1 doz.	—	—	5 0	—	1 6	—	—
138. Belting and materials from J. Tullis & Sons, Bridgeton, Glasgow, at per cent. discount off their list.		£	£	£ s. d.	per cent.	per cent.	per cent.	per cent.	per cent.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
139. Brass work, &c., from the lists of J. Warner & Son at per cent. off their list * (or the Lambeth Brass & Iron Company).		20	50	20 4 0	50	5	77½	25	30	6 0 10	10 5 5
140. Files and rasps (all sizes) Tourton's * (or Bedford's) make, at per cent. off their lists.		25	25	7 17 2	87½	87½	87½	60	65	7 17 2	25 2 11
141. Lines (the Belfast Rope Work Company, at per cent. off their list).		20	20	12 4 10	5	5	75	40	45	12 4 10	7 14 7½
142. Screws (any number, size or pattern, Nettlefold & Sons) at per cent. off list.		20	20	17 17 4	5	5	50	55	70	17 17 4	8 9 3
143. Walker's engine and pump, packing and jointing material, at per cent. off their list.		80	—	84 7 6	2½	—	—	20	—	84 7 6	69 4 7½
Engine and pump, packing and jointing material, at per cent. off the list of any maker.		—	30	—	—	—	2½	—	30	—	—
144. Steam tube, at per cent. off list of J. Russell & Co. * (or Lloyd & Lloyd).		100	30	120 1 5	25	25	25	65	60	120 1 5	56 0 8
145. Steam tube fittings, at per cent. off list of J. Russell & Co. * (or Lloyd & Lloyd).		200	30	7 10 3	40	25	25	70	65	7 10 3	3 15 1½

* In 1906 Schedule only.

STATEMENT OF IRONMONGERY TENDERS AND PURCHASES—continued.

Description of Goods or Materials.	Estimated Quantity required.		Quantity actually purchased.		Accepted Tender, Pyle & Co.		Rejected Tender, Pryke, Palmer & Co.		Total cost of Goods actually purchased.		Cost if purchased at rejected Tender price.	
	1905-6.	1906-7.	£	s. d.	per cent.	per cent.	per cent.	per cent.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
146. "Simplex" tube and fittings at per cent. off List value ...	75	50	£	247 14 4	5	2½	25	25	247 14 4	195 11 4		
147. Lavatory basins at per cent. off Doulton's list ...	50	—	0	8 6	85	—	20	—	0 8 6	2 5 4		
Instruments, &c., at per cent. off the list of Schaffer and Budenberg. ...	—	20	—	—	—	70	—	20	—	—		
Lavatory basins at per cent. off the list of any factor or maker. ...	—	10	—	—	—	85	—	25	—	—		
Locks (from the list of any maker) at per cent. off their list. ...	—	5	—	—	—	5	—	20	—	—		
Valves, steam traps, gauges, and machinery at per cent. discount off any maker's list. ...	—	25	—	—	—	2½	—	20	—	—		
Ironmongery, general, at per cent. off the list of Nettlefold & Sons. ...	—	50	—	—	—	2½	—	25	—	—		
The speciality of any maker at per cent. off their list. ...	—	100	—	—	—	5	—	20	—	—		
Excess, in respect of goods purchased, of accepted over rejected tender ...										1,084 3 6½	818 7 8	
										£265 15s. 10½d.		

STATEMENT OF ACCEPTED PRICES IN CONVEYANCES CONTRACTS, 1902 to 1907.

26146

COACHOWNERS. For supplying Conveyances, with Drivers—	1902-3.		1903-4.		1904-5.		1905-6.		1906-7.	
	Clarke.	Jacobs.	Clarke.	Jacobs.	Clarke.	Jacobs.	Clarke.	Clover.	Clarke.	Clover.
From the Workhouse to Bexley Asylum and back : A Brougham and a Pair of Horses	s. d. 18 0	s. d. 19 0	s. d. 21 6	s. d. 21 6	s. d. —	s. d. —	s. d. 15 0	s. d. 15 3	s. d. 15 6	s. d. 15 3
From the Workhouse to Hanwell Lunatic Asylum and back : A Brougham and a Pair of Horses	15 0	14 0	15 0	15 0	17 0	16 0	15 0	17 0	13 0	13 6
From the Workhouse to Horton Asylum and back : A Brougham and a Pair of Horses... ..	20 0	25 0	25 0	27 6	—	—	18 0	17 9	15 0	14 6
From the Workhouse to Tooting Bec Asylum and back : A Brougham and a Pair of Horses	—	—	—	—	15 0	17 6	14 0	15 0	14 0	15 0
From the Workhouse to Epsom Asylum and back : A Brougham and a Pair of Horses	—	—	—	—	—	—	18 0	17 6	15 0	15 0
From the Workhouse to Colney Hatch Lunatic Asylum : A Brougham and a Pair of Horses	14 0	14 0	15 0	15 6	15 0	16 0	14 0	14 6	14 0	14 6
From the Workhouse to Banstead Lunatic Asylum : A Brougham and a Pair of Horses	18 0	19 0	20 0	21 0	19 0	18 0	16 0	17 9	14 6	14 0
From the Workhouse to Cane Hill Asylum and back : A Brougham and a Pair of Horses	20 0	19 0	19 6	20 0	21 0	19 0	17 0	18 6	15 0	15 6
From the Workhouse to Claybury Asylum and back : A Brougham and a Pair of Horses	14 0	14 0	16 0	17 6	17 0	18 0	15 0	15 6	15 0	15 6
From the Workhouse to Darent Asylum and back : A Brougham and a Pair of Horses	20 0	20 0	22 6	21 0	20 0	19 0	17 0	18 0	15 6	15 0
From the Workhouse to Leavesden Asylum and back : A Brougham and a Pair of Horses	20 0	20 0	21 0	20 0	21 0	20 0	17 0	19 0	14 0	13 0
From the Workhouse to Caterham Asylum and back : A Brougham and a Pair of Horses	20 0	19 0	25 0	25 0	22 6	21 0	17 0	18 0	15 0	15 6

STATEMENT OF ACCEPTED PRICES IN CONVEYANCES CONTRACTS, 1902 to 1907—continued.

COACHOWNERS. For supplying Conveyances, with Drivers—	1902-3.		1903-4.		1904-5.		1905-6.		1906-7.	
	Clarke.	Jacobs.	Clarke.	Jacobs.	Clarke.	Jacobs.	Clarke.	Jacobs.	Clarke.	Jacobs.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
From the Workhouse to Forest Gate School and back : An Omnibus or Brake and a Pair of Horses ... for each journey at	11 0	8 0	12 0	12 0	12 0	12 0	12 6	6 3	12 6	10 0
A Van (4-wheeled) with One Horse ... at per journey	5 0	3 6	6 0	5 6	6 0	5 0	6 0	5 9	6 0	5 9
A Cab and One Horse ... for each journey at	5 0	4 0	6 0	5 0	6 0	5 0	6 0	4 0	5 6	4 0
From or to the Workhouse and any part of the Union : A Cab and One Horse ... for each journey at	2 6	3 0	3 0	3 0	3 0	4 0	3 0	3 0	3 0	3 0
Do. ... waiting at per hour	—	—	—	—	2 0	2 0	2 0	—	2 0	2 6
A Van and One Horse ... for each journey at	—	—	—	—	4 0	6 0	4 0	4 3	4 0	4 3
From the Relief Offices, North Street, to the Bow and Bronley Relief Station, Fairfield Road, and back to the Relief Offices, North Street : Van (4-wheeled) with One Horse ... at per journey	—	—	—	—	4 0	4 0	4 0	4 0	4 0	4 0
For a Driver, Horse or Horses with Harness, for the Ambulance belonging to the Guardians, for the Removal of Patients from or to any part of the Union...	2 0	2 6	2 0	3 0	2 6	2 6	2 6	2 3	2 6	2 3
Ditto, for a day of eight hours, to be timed from the time of arrival at the Workhouse ... at per day	11 0	10 6	12 0	12 0	13 0	12 0	12 0	13 3	13 0	13 3
Ditto, for each hour after the first eight ... at per hour	2 0	1 6	2 0	2 0	2 0	2 6	2 0	2 9	2 6	2 9
From or to either of the following Railway Stations and any part of the Union : A Brougham and One Horse—										
Ditto London Bridge ... for each journey at	3 6	2 6	3 6	3 0	3 6	3 0	3 6	3 6	3 6	3 6
Ditto Cannon Street ... for each journey at	3 0	3 0	3 0	3 0	3 6	3 0	3 6	3 6	3 6	3 6

Ditto	Holborn Viaduct ...	...	...	for each journey at	4 0	3 6	4 0	4 0	4 0	4 0	4 0	3 9	4 0	3 9
Ditto	King's Cross	...	...	for each journey at	5 0	4 0	5 0	4 6	5 0	5 0	4 6	4 6	5 0	4 6
Ditto	St. Pancras ...	...	...	for each journey at	5 0	5 0	5 0	4 6	5 0	5 0	4 0	4 0	5 0	5 0
Ditto	St. Pauls ...	...	...	for each journey at	—	—	—	—	3 6	4 0	3 6	3 9	3 6	3 9
Ditto	Paddington	...	...	for each journey at	5 0	5 0	5 0	5 6	5 0	5 0	4 6	4 6	5 0	5 6
Ditto	Euston	...	...	for each journey at	5 0	5 0	5 0	5 6	5 0	5 0	4 0	4 0	5 0	4 0
Ditto	Liverpool Street	...	...	for each journey at	3 6	3 0	3 6	4 0	2 6	2 6	3 0	3 0	2 6	3 0
Ditto	Waterloo	...	...	for each journey at	—	—	—	—	4 6	4 0	4 6	4 6	4 6	4 6
From Workhouse to Hanwell Ophthalmic Schools and back :														
An Omnibus and a Pair of Horses ...				for each journey at	15 0	19 0	15 6	12 0	—	—	—	—	—	—
A Brougham* and One Horse ...				for each journey at	9 0	10 0	9 6	7 6	—	—	—	—	—	—
From Workhouse to St. Agnes Orphanage, Leyton, and back :														
An Omnibus and a Pair of Horses ...				for each journey at	11 0	10 0	10 6	11 0	—	—	—	—	—	—
A Brougham* and One Horse ...				for each journey at	5 0	5 0	5 6	5 0	—	—	—	—	—	—
From the Workhouse to the Bow and Bromley Relief Station, Fairfield Road, and back to the Workhouse :														
Van (4-wheeled) with One Horse ...				at per journey	3 6	3 6	3 6	3 6	—	—	—	—	—	—
For a Brougham and a Pair of Horses for any journey				at per hour	3 0	3 0	3 0	3 0	—	—	—	—	—	—
For a Cab and One Horse for any journey				at per hour	2 0	2 0	3 0	2 6	—	—	—	—	—	—
For a Van and One Horse for any journey				at per hour	1 6	1 6	1 6	2 0	—	—	—	—	—	—
From or to the Workhouse and Hoxton House Asylum :														
A Brougham and One Horse ...				for each journey at	3 6	3 0	2 6	2 0	—	—	—	—	—	—
From or to the Workhouse and Bethnal House Asylum :														
A Brougham and One Horse ...				for each journey at	3 6	3 0	2 6	2 0	—	—	—	—	—	—
From or to the Workhouse and Grove Hall Asylum :														
A Brougham and One Horse ...				for each journey at	3 0	3 0	2 6	2 0	—	—	—	—	—	—

* Cab in 1902-3 Contract.

POPLAR UNION.

TRANSCRIPT OF SHORTHAND NOTES

TAKEN AT THE

PUBLIC INQUIRY

HELD BY

J. S. DAVY, C.B.,

CHIEF GENERAL INSPECTOR OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD,

INTO THE

GENERAL CONDITIONS OF THE POPLAR UNION,
ITS PAUPERISM, AND THE ADMINISTRATION
OF THE GUARDIANS AND THEIR OFFICERS.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.



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POPULAR UNION

TRANSCRIPT OF SHORTHAND NOTES

WRITTEN BY THE

PUBLIC INQUIRY

BY

J. S. DALL, C.B.

WITH GENERAL INTRODUCTION BY THE EDITOR AND COMMENTARY BY THE

POPULAR UNION



PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY THE



PRINTED FOR THE

POPULAR UNION

LIST OF WITNESSES.

Name of Witness.	Description of Witness.	Pages of Evidence.
ANDERSON, J. - - -	Guardian - - - - -	305
BERRY, F. A. - - -	Relieving Officer - - - - -	111, 284
BROODBANK, R. V. - - -	Secretary, Poplar Municipal Alliance - - - - -	246
CLARKE, J. - - -	Superintendent, Laindon Branch Workhouse - - - - -	156, 157
COLVIN, C. H. - - -	Foreman Painter at Workhouse - - - - -	372
COMFORT, R. W. E. - - -	Out-relief Distributor - - - - -	145, 287
CONOLEY, REV. D. - - -	Chaplain of Workhouse - - - - -	99
CROOKS, W., M.P., - - -	Chairman of Board of Guardians - - - - -	316, 334, 357
CROSBIE, W. - - -	Inmate of Workhouse - - - - -	101, 105
DEASON, A. C. - - -	Relieving Officer - - - - -	143, 286, 300
DIAMOND, B. - - -	Guardian - - - - -	232, 238
EVINS, J. - - -	Relieving Officer - - - - -	118, 128, 132
EVINS, R. (Miss) - - -	Dressmaker at Workhouse - - - - -	269, 287
FORD, E. J. - - -	Vice-Chairman of Board of Guardians - - - - -	373, 378, 388
GARD, R. - - -	Relieving Officer - - - - -	138
GENERY, C. W. - - -	Master's Clerk at Workhouse - - - - -	87
GIBBS, R. H. - - -	Guardian - - - - -	192, 196
GRANT, C. E. (Miss) - - -	Infants' Mistress, Devons Road Council School, Poplar - - - - -	288
GREAVES, T. W. - - -	Electrical Supply Agent - - - - -	203
GRIFFITHS, H. - - -	Marine Store Dealer - - - - -	298
HASWELL, J. - - -	Porter at Workhouse - - - - -	67
JACOBS, A. - - -	Jobmaster - - - - -	36
LAMONT, J. - - -	Medical Officer of Workhouse - - - - -	49, 57
LANSBURY, G. - - -	Guardian - - - - -	379, 392
LAW, A. - - -	Relieving Officer - - - - -	148, 285
MADELEY, E. (Mrs.) - - -	Late Matron of Workhouse - - - - -	124
MADELEY, W. A. - - -	Late Master of Workhouse - - - - -	13, 19, 48
MARDEN, A. - - -	Superintendent, Essex County Police - - - - -	150
MARTLEY, W. G. - - -	Secretary, Poplar Branch, Charity Organisation Society - - - - -	214
MCCARTHY, J. T. - - -	Guardian - - - - -	124, 310
MCCULLUM, E. W. - - -	Confectioner - - - - -	300
MILES, P. G. - - -	Relieving Officer - - - - -	141
MOSLEY, Rev. H. A. - - -	Rector of All Saints, Poplar - - - - -	293
OXLEY, J. S. - - -	Assistant Inspector, Local Government Board - - - - -	{ 164, 173, 273, 279, 295
PALMER, J. W. - - -	Director, Bow Iron Works - - - - -	125, 303
PERCIVAL, F. J. - - -	Contractor - - - - -	189
PITT, G. - - -	Relieving Officer - - - - -	133
POWELL, W. E. - - -	Relieving Officer - - - - -	136
PYLE, H. - - -	Contractor - - - - -	179, 258
REEVE, G. - - -	Constable, Essex County Police - - - - -	155
RENAHAN, K. - - -	Nurse at Workhouse - - - - -	270
SEEDSMAN, E. - - -	Clerk and Foreman, Millwall Dock Company - - - - -	202
USHER, E. - - -	Assistant Matron of Workhouse - - - - -	262
WALTON, W. - - -	Acting Master of Workhouse - - - - -	74, 80, 271
WHITFIELD, H. - - -	London Manager, Whitfield Bedsteads, Ltd. - - - - -	315

PERSONS TAKING PART IN THE INQUIRY.

Guardians

MR. J. ANDERSON.

" S. BACON.

" W. G. BEAUMONT

" J. BELLISHAM.

" W. H. BUNDOCK

MRS. E. J. CORDERY.

MR. W. CROOKS, M.P. (*Chairman*).

" B. DIAMOND.

" A. E. FINDEN.

" E. J. FORD (*Vice-Chairman*).

" R. H. GIBBS.

" H. JUNGBLUT.

MR. G. LANSBURY.

" J. LINDSAY.

" J. T. McCARTHY.

" J. A. PECKHAM.

" A. PHILLIPS.

" C. S. POOLE.

" A. SMITH.

" C. E. SUMNER.

" A. A. WATTS.

" F. WEBSTER.

MRS. L. WILSON.

MR. A. W. YEO.

Clerk, MR. G. H. LOUGH.

Solicitor, MR. E. J. MARSH.

MR. CORRIE GRANT, M.P.

AND

MR. J. A. JOHNSTON

} appeared for the Guardians.

MR. E. ELVY ROBB - - - " " The Poplar Borough Municipal Alliance.

MR. A. A. ROBINSON - - - " " Mr. Madeley.

DR. HEBER HART - - - " " Mr. Percival.

MR. H. A. GOOD - - - " " Mr. Pyle.

The Inspector was accompanied by Mr. J. S. Oxley and Mr. F. L. Turner of the Local Government Board.

TRANSCRIPT OF SHORTHAND NOTES

TAKEN AT THE

PUBLIC INQUIRY

HELD BY

J. S. DAVY, C.B.,

CHIEF GENERAL INSPECTOR OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD,

INTO THE

General Conditions of the Poplar Union, its Pauperism, and the Administration of the Guardians and their Officers.

FIRST DAY.

Thursday, 7th June, 1906.

(*The Inspector.*) On the 6th of last March the Local Government Board wrote to the guardians to the effect that they had decided to direct me to hold an Inquiry as to the industrial and financial conditions of the Poplar Union, its pauperism and its administration. In reply to that letter the guardians, on the 8th of March, said that they welcomed the decision of the Local Government Board that an Inquiry should be made into the general industrial and financial position of the union, its pauperism and administration, but that they were strongly and unanimously of opinion that in order to ascertain the true facts, the Inquiry should be conducted with the fullest possible publicity. In accordance with that request the Local Government Board decided that such investigation was necessary and advisable, and that a public Inquiry should therefore be held, at which the guardians should be represented and be able to examine any witnesses they might call and cross-examine others. The Local Government Board, on the 13th of March, received a communication from a body known as the Poplar Borough Municipal Alliance requesting that they also might be heard at the Inquiry. On the 19th of March the Local Government Board wrote that before a public Inquiry was opened a preliminary investigation should be made by me. Later on, on the 9th of May, the Local Government Board communicated with the guardians and the municipal alliance and stated that they had decided to hold such public Inquiry. I then furnished the guardians with a short Memorandum, with charts and tables which deal with pauperism in the Poplar Union, and informed them of the heads of the Inquiry:—

The cause of the rise of indoor and outdoor pauperism.

The cause of the disproportionate expenditure on in-maintenance.

The comparison of Poplar with the neighbouring unions.

The explanation of the out-relief given to able-bodied men in the winter of 1904 and since.

The cause of the increase in cost of indoor pauperism, especially in the workhouse.

The cause of the increase of cost in the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum as shewn in the statistical statements of the guardians.

Figures of Poplar pauperism between 1895 and 1905 as contrasted with the figures of other metropolitan unions.

Explanation of the out-door relief figures for Poplar and Canning Town.

Why the lowest tenders are not accepted and why tenders are not divided as is done in Lambeth and other places.

I stated that I should call some of the relieving officers as to the distribution of out-door relief and take some evidence as to the administration of the workhouse. The Local Government Board also wrote to the municipal alliance, asking what points they hoped to bring forward. On the 31st of May we received notice that among other matters they proposed to deal with at the Inquiry, were the general system of contracting for supplies, including the rejection of low-priced tenders, the general system of out-door relief, the indiscriminate way of giving out-door relief, the system of managing farm colonies and the cost of maintaining paupers thereon, the omission to provide suitable tasks for paupers, and the general methods of administration on the part of the master, the matron, and other officers; the provision of refreshments at the cost of the union for certain of the guardians, extravagant expenditure on the school buildings, and the method of preparing annual statistical statements and certain inconsistencies and variations therein. That letter was forwarded to the guardians for their observations, and I am here to-day to hold the Inquiry. Does anyone appear for the guardians?

(*Mr. Crooks.*) We all do.

(*The Inspector.*) That won't do.

(*Mr. Anderson.*) I am going to appear for myself.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) I also appear for myself.

(*Mr. Ford.*) I do also.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) Certain charges were made against me as one of the guardians, and I am going to defend myself. I am also a ratepayer and am entitled to be here as well as a body representing other ratepayers.

(*The Inspector.*) The guardians are entitled to be present and to put through me any questions they may

wish a witness to answer. But due order must be preserved. There must be order. I ask Mr. Crooks if he wishes to appear on behalf of the guardians.

(Mr. Crooks.) Then I wish to say that I represent the guardians as their chairman. You have already given the guardians permission to put questions to witnesses on their own account.

(The Inspector.) Through me.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I take it that other people will do the same.

(The Inspector.) Never mind about the other people.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I am a ratepayer and I am going to claim the same right as these gentlemen are claiming.

(The Inspector.) We must keep order.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Very well then.

(Mr. Crooks.) I want to say that we welcome this public inquiry. There is only one small anxiety, and that is that we think we should have had some person to conduct the proceedings who has not already expressed an opinion with regard to our conduct. Naturally we are somewhat anxious about that. We hope, however, that the spirit of fair play which is so predominant in all Englishmen and the English character will cause you to dismiss from your mind any impressions you may have had, and that you will hear the evidence impartially and fairly which may be set before you. The point is that this letter which was sent to you—

(The Inspector.) Wait a moment, while I ask the municipal alliance who appears for them.

(Mr. Robb.) I appear for them.

(The Inspector.) Does anyone appear for any others?

(Mr. Lansbury.) Yes, I appear for myself, as a ratepayer in the Poplar Union.

(Mr. Stevens.) I should like to appear as an ex-guardian and also as a ratepayer. My name is Stevens.

(The Inspector.) Now, Mr. Crooks.

(Mr. Crooks.) Personally, I want to ask you how it is proposed to conduct the inquiry. Are we to go on from day to day? We should be much obliged to you for the hours of sitting.

(The Inspector.) I propose to-day to adjourn for a short time at one o'clock, and then sit on till four. Then I propose to sit again to-morrow and then to adjourn until Thursday and Friday next week. I hope that arrangement will suit the convenience of all parties.

(Mr. Robb.) As far as I am concerned I think so. I wish further to say that I think it will be necessary to ask at an early date for certain returns, and I think it may be necessary to adjourn for that purpose.

(The Inspector.) We will decide that point later on.

(Mr. Crooks.) May I at this stage, with a view to getting proper procedure rules, ask you to decide how far these gentlemen are adjuncts to the Local Government Board, because we are here at the request of the Local Government Board to answer certain specific questions. These gentlemen come here as representing another body which is quite outside the Local Government Board. There are certain questions and certain charges which are put in cold print against us. We shall ask them to present evidence in support of such charges. We shall then claim the right to examine their witnesses, and, in so far as they are concerned, we cease to acknowledge them in any shape or form. You, Mr. Davy, are here to hold an inquiry on the part of the Local Government Board and not for the municipal alliance. We don't intend that this shall be a fishing enquiry on their part to enable them to build up a case as they go along. First of all they write intimating that they are not going to call evidence. They say: "I am not aware what authority there is for the assumption by the guardians that my clients have undertaken to bring forward charges against them at the forthcoming inquiry," and yet they go on to tabulate a number of charges and at the same time claim that they are not going to call evidence. So far as their share in the inquiry is concerned we take it that they have nothing to do with it. You are here to inquire on behalf of the Local Government Board into our work. We shall be glad if they will state their case as far as they can.

(Mr. Robb.) May I say that I am at a loss to understand the views just expressed by the gentleman who has sat down. My clients appear here as an association representing over 2,000 ratepayers resident in the Poplar

union, and they claim the right with your permission to appear here as such. As ratepayers they claim the privilege of having a searching inquiry, and of having not only such witnesses as they may hereafter tender heard, but such officials of the board as may be necessary, and subject them to examination and cross-examination. As to the taunt as to the nature of the charges, I can only say that the letter referring to them was conceived and written in a most moderate spirit, and there is not a word in it which cannot be proved, and proved up to the hilt.

(Mr. Crooks.) If I have hurt this gentleman's feelings I apologise, but the letter says: "The general nature of the case my clients intend to present at the inquiry is, as the guardians are well aware, that they have been guilty of wasteful and deliberate extravagance, and that instead of administering the Poor Laws with judgment and discretion they have unduly and improperly fostered and increased the pauperism of the district." Is that moderate language?

(Mr. Robb.) We regard that as exceedingly temperate language.

(The Inspector.) I think we have had enough of this. You will just allow me to put in a word. What I have got to do here is to find out the facts, and I am going to find them out, even if I have to sit here until the end of July. The inquiry is one of very great interest and importance, and this is the time to thrash out every allegation made against the guardians. Now the guardians can only conduct their case by being orderly, giving and taking a little latitude, and by taking a temperate view of the whole matter. I think it would be as well if Mr. Robb were to open his case. I am going to call some witnesses. My first one will be Mr. Madeley, the master of the workhouse. I shall put some questions to him and Mr. Robb will do the same. Another witness I am going to call is the medical officer of the workhouse, Dr. Lamont. I am going to call the relieving officer who has been surcharged. These are my witnesses. I am going into the whole case. Mr. Robb will tell you what he is going to do.

(Mr. Robb.) Sir, in this matter, as I have already said, I appear here by the instructions of the Poplar Municipal Alliance, an association of ratepayers numbering at the present time 2,185 members, with a rateable value of something like 35 per cent. of the entire rateable value of the union. It is necessary that I should trouble you with one or two details regarding the association I represent. Although it has a membership of 2,185, it was only founded a year ago—on the 9th May, 1905. The immediate reason for its formation was that the already heavy rates had shortly prior to the date named been augmented by an additional sum of 2/- in the £; the greater portion of which was, according to my instructions, for the purposes of the guardians. In addition to that, great disquietude and dissatisfaction had been felt for some considerable time past as to the general policy and administration of the Poplar Board of Guardians. It was felt that they were pursuing a policy which was possibly honest and which they possibly believed to be right, but one which yet was fraught with the most disastrous consequences to the district. It was a matter of common knowledge that Messrs. Yarrow decided about that time, in consequence of the additional heavy rates imposed upon them, to remove their shipbuilding yards from this district to the Clyde. It was a matter of common knowledge that since then they have actually secured premises in Scotland. Well now, sir, there was in addition an entirely abnormal increase in the pauperism of the district both as regards inmates of the union and out-door paupers to whom relief is administered. It was felt that although there might have been causes at work which would account for a portion of the increase, there was no cause to which could be attributed the enormous increase of pauperism in the district, the details of which I will give you in a moment. That being the state of things, this association was formed, with the avowed object not of being hostile to the guardians, but to endeavour by fair and proper criticism, by the agitation of the ratepayers, and by disseminating information on local matters, to get the guardians to take a different line of policy to that which they had been pursuing. It is for that reason we are here to-day, and although you have called on me to open the case, and I am proceeding to do so and don't shrink from the responsibility one iota, yet I entirely disclaim on the part of the alliance being here in the slightest degree in the capacity of prosecuting. I

am entirely here as a ratepayer, to gain information as to how my money is being spent, to assist you if I can in the course of the Inquiry, and to ascertain if there is any proper explanation of the matters which I have tabulated in the letter to which Mr. Crooks referred, and other matters which will be dealt with in the course of this Inquiry. As far as I am aware, the association I represent has never levelled any charge of a personal character against the guardians, and whatever may be the outcome of this Inquiry, whatever may be the result of the evidence taken here, I have no instructions at the present moment to make anything in the nature of a personal charge against the guardians. My case against them for the moment is that they have deliberately pursued a policy, which, as I said before, might be a policy which they think a right and proper one, but which at the same time has proved to be an unsuccessful and disastrous policy so far as the ratepayers of the union are concerned. Since my clients first asked for this Inquiry a great deal of valuable information has been collected and tabulated for your Board in the form of a Memorandum as to pauperism in Poplar and the charts to which you have referred. If I may be allowed to do so, I must refer for a moment to these papers because they embody to a very large extent my clients' case and the evidence on which to a very large extent also they rely. If you turn to the first page of the Memorandum it is shown that between the years 1885 and 1895 there was an increase in in-door paupers in Poplar of 1,153, or 70 per cent., and an increase in the cost of £16,921, or 80 per cent. From 1895 to 1906, still dealing with in-door pauperism, there was an increase of 1,024, or 36 per cent., and there was an increase in the cost of £32,594, or 86 per cent.—the increase in the cost being entirely disproportionate to the increase in pauperism. In the previous period of ten years, the increase in in-door pauperism was 70 per cent. and the increase in the cost was 80 per cent., whereas for the ten years between 1895 and 1906 the increase in in-door pauperism was 36 per cent., the increase in the cost according to the Memorandum was no less than 86 per cent., an increase that was entirely disproportionate. Then the tables dealing with out-door pauperism shew that from 1885 to 1895 there was an increase of 565, or 37 per cent., and an increase in cost of £6,801, or 92 per cent. From 1895 to 1906 there was an increase of 5,169, or 249 per cent., and an increase in the cost of £31,459, or 222 per cent. Then, sir, on pages 6, 7 and 8 of the Memorandum—I don't propose to deal with these in detail—there is shown year by year the increase in the number of paupers, and I venture to say that the figures shown there are both remarkable and unprecedented. As far as I am aware, and as far as my enquiries have been able to take me, there is no precedent either in this country or in any other country for the condition of Poplar at the present time, or perhaps I should say at the end of last year, as regards the number of out-door paupers. Then we find, on page 13, tables giving the cost of relief, both in-door and out-door. Well, now, first of all in dealing with in-door pauperism we find that in 1885 the cost was £21,131, and that it had risen in 1895 to £38,052. In 1906 it had further risen to £35,323. The 1906 figure, however, as stated in the Memorandum, is an estimate based on the half-year ending Michaelmas, 1905. But as that will be the summer half-year the estimate is obviously a most conservative one. Then with regard to out-door relief. In 1885 the total cost was £28,501. In 1895 it was £52,323.

(Mr. Ford.) Pardon me, Mr. Robb is making a serious mistake there. He is giving the figures for both in-door and out-door relief. The last column is the total of both accounts for in-door and out-door relief. Perhaps it would be better to take the figures separately, for we don't want any mistake. Perhaps my friend will allow me. The total spent in the year 1885 on the maintenance of paupers in the workhouse was £21,131.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Mr. Davy, that is not only for the maintenance of persons in the workhouse, but also for the maintenance of paupers in institutions not under our control, such as the Metropolitan Asylums Board's institutions, the Sick Asylum, &c.

(Mr. Robb.) It is in regard to the general in-door maintenance of paupers with the exception of lunatics.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Read the heading of the last column.

(Mr. Robb.) "In-maintenance of paupers in workhouses, &c., under control of the guardians and maintenance of paupers in institutions not under the

"control of the guardians." In 1885 the total was £21,131; in 1895 under the same heading the figures had gone up to £38,052; in 1906, for the half-year, only six months, mind you, the figures were £35,323. So, sir, for the half-year in 1906 the cost will total almost as much as for the whole of the year 1895. Well then, dealing with out-door relief the total for out-door relief was £7,370 in 1885. In 1895 it had reached £14,171, in 1905 it reached £34,456, and for the half-year in 1906 it was estimated at £22,815. Thus taking the totals of both in-door and out-door relief—the total of both descriptions of relief—in 1885 it was £28,501, in 1895, £52,223, in 1905 it was £102,735, and for the half-year of 1906 it was estimated at £58,138, or at the rate of £116,000 per annum. Then, sir, there are comparisons of the pauperism in Poplar, and in the neighbouring unions, based on figures taken from the London County Council's statistical abstract. These figures show the following results—I will only give the totals and won't labour the matter. Taking the totals, the figures for 1905, the total number of paupers both in-door and out-door, in Bethnal Green was 2,942, in Bermondsey 5,940, in Stepney 2,046, in Whitechapel 1,482, and in Poplar 9,364. The percentage of pauperism per thousand of the population in the same period was—Bethnal Green 22.6, Bermondsey 47.5, Stepney 35.9, Whitechapel 18.7, and Poplar 55.7. Well then, sir, we come to what is perhaps the most interesting portion, and that is the general statistics relating to the Poplar Union. These show that the outstanding loans of the guardians have increased from £85,306 in 1896 to £182,710 in 1905. In the same period the rateable value of the union has increased from £739,484 to £818,922, which I make to be an increase of £79,438. The amount received from the Poor Rate and disbursed by the guardians has, during the same period, increased from £88,119 to £152,908. The causes for this I won't deal with—the cost of maintenance and out-door relief I have already dealt with. Then there is an item relating to the rations of officers which I think certainly calls for some explanation from the guardians. In 1896 the rations of officers stood at £1,600, in 1905 they had increased to £5,477. I shall have to ask that during the course of the Inquiry we shall be furnished with a return shewing the number of officers who are in receipt of rations.

(Mr. Crooks.) The Forest Gate School District was dissolved in 1898 when we had to take over the whole of the staff in the schools.

(Mr. Robb.) I am quite aware of that. But my point is that that would not account for the whole of the increase. I should be glad to have a statement shewing the total number of officers in all the institutions under the control of the guardians, so that we can ascertain what is the cause of this great increase in the cost of maintenance. I shall be very much surprised if it does not shew a sum approaching £1 per week per head. Then we come to a remarkable item, one to which I venture to call the serious attention of the guardians, because it seems to me it is one of the most important features of this Inquiry, and does call for some explanation. And that is in respect to the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum.

(Mr. Crooks.) Mr. Davy, may I point out to you and also to our friend, that this Inquiry is confined to acts of the Poplar Board of Guardians. The Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum has nothing whatever to do with this board, and is altogether outside the purview of this Inquiry. May I also point out that we did not come here to hear the municipal alliance's case. He is stating your case. Our time is as important as Mr. Robb's. We are defending our honour. That is all we have to defend. This gentleman is earning fees.

(The Inspector.) What you say is perfectly true. The Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum is a different body.

(Mr. Crooks.) I assure you it is so. There is an Act of Parliament by which we elect members. We are not responsible for their actions. They are responsible to the Local Government Board.

(The Inspector.) They are quite independent. They have got to defend their actions.

(Mr. Lansbury.) We have enough to do to defend ourselves.

(The Inspector.) I told the guardians in my letter that I did not propose to make any detailed inquiry into the administration of the asylum at present. It is only fair to the guardians that these sums should be included, because if you look at the total you will find a sum of £42,000 included for the sick asylum.

(Mr. Robb.) I am informed that this is a joint hospital, and that eight out of the twelve members are elected by the Poplar Board of Guardians and are members of that body, so that there seems to be a very effective control.

(Mr. Lansbury.) You are not going to allow that to go forth to the public, are you, Mr. Davy?

(Mr. Crooks.) Once the election of managers has taken place these men are responsible to the Local Government Board and not to us.

(Mr. Robb.) But no amount of argument can do away with the fact that out of a total of twelve persons, eight of them are members of the Poplar Board of Guardians, and therefore I repeat my statement that in effect the Poplar Board of Guardians has control.

(Mr. Lansbury.) No, No.

(The Inspector.) For how long a period are the members elected?

(Mr. Lansbury.) For three years.

(The Inspector.) Then for three years they are entirely independent.

(Mr. Crooks.) I will go further and say that at the expiration of three years a member ceases to be a member of the board of guardians, but he may still remain a member of the managing body of the sick asylum. That is to say, the time overlaps. Sometimes they may remain managers for one year or for two years after they have failed to secure re-election to the board of guardians, and are therefore quite irresponsible to the board of guardians.

(The Inspector.) Until their three years would be up.

(Mr. Crooks.) We have nothing to do with them once we have elected them. It is like the Asylums Board. We select a representative to this board and we have no control after.

(The Inspector.) What you mean is that out of your income a lot has to be paid away for which you are not responsible.

(Mr. Crooks.) Not only do our rates go to the sick asylum, but to the London County Council, the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and to the police rate. Assuredly they cannot cross-examine us on that expenditure.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Crooks, I am sure, wants me to give facts.

(Mr. Crooks.) Certainly.

(Mr. Robb.) The figures seem to be inserted because we find that in 1896 it cost £23,000 to maintain 566 patients in this asylum, who were chargeable to the Poplar Union.

(Mr. Lansbury.) And Stepney.

(Mr. Robb.) But in 1905 it cost £42,390 to maintain 601. That is to say it cost £19,000 more to maintain an additional 35.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Robb, it may be all right and is perhaps a fair subject of inquiry, but you cannot ask the Poplar Board of Guardians to answer it. By and by I will probably deal with it.

(Mr. Robb.) But I assume that the Poplar Guardians don't pay this amount without comment. I assume that when they are asked for an additional £19,000 for the support of an additional 35 persons in this Asylum they make some kind of enquiry. I assume that my friend Mr. Crooks, who is a public man of some experience, when he is asked for the money on the precept, when he is asked for an additional £19,000 for an additional 35 persons chargeable to the Poplar Union, does not pay it without going into the thing. Surely after his experience in public affairs he is in a position to give us some explanation with regard to this item.

(Mr. Lansbury.) The Metropolitan Asylums Board recently asked us for an increased rate. We have no control over them.

(Mr. Robb.) If it is not germane I will not press it. But I do invite Mr. Crooks or Mr. Lansbury to explain this particular item.

(Mr. Lansbury.) We cannot go to the sick asylum.

(Mr. Crooks.) I am sorry—

(Mr. Robb.) And the ratepayers are sorry too.

(Mr. Crooks.) You seem to think that we never pay rates.

(The Inspector.) The suggestion is that when election time comes round the Poplar Guardians have to nominate persons to the Sick Asylum Board of Managers, and that on the other hand when they are once elected they have no control over them.

(Mr. Robb.) It does not appear to me to be a matter for any mirth, if I may say so.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I cannot help laughing, because it will be a year after the next election of guardians before we can deal with the sick asylum. Therefore what this gentleman is asking us to do we cannot do. The law don't allow us to.

(The Inspector.) Then it will be a matter for your successors.

(Mr. Robb.) I won't quarrel over quibbles. If the guardians won't answer I will leave it there. But on behalf of my clients I invite and challenge them to explain why it cost an additional £19,000 to support 35 more people in the sick asylum.

(Mr. Lansbury.) And we challenge them to go to the sick asylum and ask them.

(Mr. Robb.) I cannot carry that part of the case any further. I must leave it where it is, without any further comment because I don't think any comment is necessary. Well, sir, so much for the statistics, for which I freely confess I am indebted to the labours of the Local Government Board. I think it is only right and fair to say this because they embody a great amount of information, which induced my clients, in the first instance, to assume the attitude they did. Well, now I come to some points which I have tabulated against the guardians. I said on behalf of my clients that the guardians are pursuing a policy of extravagance—of deliberate extravagance—that in fact they are fostering and pampering pauperism and making it actually attractive; and that they are attracting people from other districts to Poplar in order that these people may enjoy the comforts, nay the luxuries, in the Poplar Workhouse, which they do not get in other institutions elsewhere. In support of my contention that there has been extravagance, I rely first of all on the general figures. I will come to the details afterwards. I rely first of all on what is shewn in the charts. Chart F gives the cost of maintenance per head per week in the workhouse, and shews that in Poplar it has risen from 4s. 5d. per head in 1896 to 6s. 5d. per head in 1906. The greater part of that increase would appear to be attributable to provisions, because the cost of provisions per head has risen from 2s. 10½d. in 1896 to 4s. 0½d. in 1905. Well, sir, I say that if the case were carried no further than that, if it were left to these figures alone, on this large increase alone there would be ample matter for enquiry.

(Mr. Crooks.) Hear, hear.

(Mr. Robb.) I am giving matter for the guardians to explain. But if my instructions are correct there are other matters to explain and I am going to deal with them as fairly and as temperately as I can. If it appears during the course of the Inquiry that I am wrong in any statements, or if my instructions are not borne out by the evidence, no one will withdraw anything more frankly or more freely than I shall. But I shall endeavour to let the matter develop more by evidence than by statements made by me. This is not a matter for oratory or declamation, it is rather a question for ascertaining facts by sworn evidence. What we are here for is to enquire into the facts, sift facts, and enquire into the truth. After this preface then, I challenge straight away the tender forms and contracts, and I know at once that I am in troubled waters. I am going to ask you to request the clerk to the guardians to prepare a return covering the last three years and shewing during that period the actual tenders received for supplies with the figures in each case; the accepted tenders, and delivery of supplies as against such tenders. My object in asking for that is that at the present time I have only the figures before me relating to the last contracts. These contracts were entered into at a time when your Board was busy with an investigation and when my clients were bestirring themselves, and so I say that the last contracts are not a fair criterion of the situation, and that in order to get the truth and probe the matter to the bottom it is essential that we should have a return covering the last three years. I think I can satisfy you that there is ample ground for asking for that. On the last occasion, as is pointed out in your Memorandum, out of some 40 tenders, or rather 40 sets of tenders, for various articles required, in 17 tenders

the lowest tender was not accepted. If the lowest tender had been accepted in every case there would apparently have been a saving to the ratepayers of £1,500. Some of the supplies call for special remark. For instance, the brewer. The highest tender was Whitbread & Co., for £311, which was accepted. The lowest tender was Thorne Brothers, £193, and there were other tenders from well known firms—Meux, Lovibond and so on. The guardians seem to have accepted the highest tender, whereas if they had accepted the lowest tender in respect to beer they would have saved a sum of £118. Then it is sometimes suggested that tenders are accepted at higher figures in order that business may be kept in Poplar, and that Poplar tradesmen may be patronised. That may be matter for some consideration, and for the consideration of your Board during the course of this Inquiry, as to how far a public body is justified in considering local tradesmen when their tenders are considerably higher than those of other people. It will also be a matter for your consideration as to how far the whole thing is desirable, that contractors should have so much allotted to them when they are in close proximity to guardians and the officials. But it also appears from some of these tenders, when there are two people in competition, it is not always the lowest one that is accepted—even in Poplar itself. I have shewn you that in this way seventeen tenders which were not the lowest were accepted when an apparent saving of £1,500 might have been made, and that in the case of the brewer the highest tender was accepted at an increased cost of £118. We find that in Poplar itself between two competing tradesmen the lower tender is not always accepted, and so I say that there is ample ground for the return for which I have asked you and for which I press seriously on behalf of my clients. I regard it as essential for this Inquiry that this return should be prepared. Then not only is the method of accepting tenders and the making of contracts at fault, but I go further and say that the tender forms themselves specify articles of a description and quality and class which are in many cases entirely unsuitable for an institution such as this. For instance, in the form of tender for cheesemongery we see such items as these—best butter, "Three Churn" Taunton, Wright & Co's., 24 lb. boxes, of 2 lb. rolls, best English Cheddar, Stilton cheese, Gorgonzola cheese, best American cheese, best bacon (Denny's) in rashers, back and streaky, gammons (Denny's), best butter—in fact I think I am not going too far when I say that the word most frequently used in the tender forms is the word "best." The alternative tender for the cheesemongery, &c., embodies margarine, and here we come to a most important point to which I invite the attention of my friends, and that is as to the system under which they are purchasing their margarine at the present time. I speak subject to correction as to the facts, but if my instructions are right, what happens is this. For ten or twelve years prior to 1903 the guardians supplied margarine to the inmates. They then used to specify in their tender forms two or three kinds of margarine—including Van den Berg's, Le Dansk, and I think one other as well. In the year 1903 butter was substituted, and butter was used entirely up to the end of last year, at an increased cost of something like £2,000 per year, because the guardians used many hundredweights of butter or margarine as the case may be. For the butter they paid from 1/0½ to 1/2½ per lb., and the margarine they could have purchased at the average rate of 7d. per lb. That would shew a difference of something like £2,000 in the course of a year.

(Mr. Lansbury.) It was in 1898 when the guardians adopted it.

(Mr. Robb.) I don't care when they altered it, but it is perfectly clear that before they adopted butter the guardians always specified two or three brands of margarine. That is to say, they allowed the supply of margarine to be open to competition. Now then, mark you, when the guardians gave up butter and came back to margarine, what do we find them doing? We find that they take the peculiar course of specifying one brand of margarine—Van den Berg's—and they ask for it in 24 lb. boxes and in 2 lb. rolls. Why, I am at a loss to imagine, because if I am correctly informed butter is served out to the inmates in small pats of 1 ounce or ½ an ounce. Why therefore should they go to the additional expense of buying it in 2 lb. rolls instead of buying it by the cwt. or ½ cwt.? I cannot imagine their reason. And on this point I ask them to explain why they are paying 72s. per cwt. for the margarine: I speak subject to correction—if I am wrong

—but I am informed they are paying 72s. per cwt. for this particular margarine, when other brands, equally good, are being supplied to neighbouring institutions at 56s. per cwt. sold in bulk? I also invite them then to explain why, after having always made it a practice before they introduced butter to specify three brands of margarine, they limit the tender forms to one brand of margarine, so that there can be no competition in margarine. I say that this system is extravagant and wasteful, and it is really an important item. I ask my friends to give it their attention in the course of the Inquiry and to explain the item. So much for the cheesemonger's form. The poultryer's form specified poultry drawn and trussed, 1,300 lbs., and 1,850 dozen English eggs, best new-laid eggs, eight to the lb.

(Mr. Lansbury.) They are wrong.

(Mr. Crooks.) Le Dansk is the only article specified in '97 for margarine.

(Mr. Robb.) But many years.

(Mr. Lansbury.) 1897 and 1898. We cannot go further back. We give you the last two years.

(The Inspector.) That tender, 72.

(Mr. Crooks.) The same brand.

(Mr. Robb.) The same brand in bulk.

(Mr. Lansbury.) All this is statement, Mr. Davy. We cannot cross-examine Mr. Robb. It is rough these all going to the press as startling revelations.

(The Inspector.) If you care about the press it will have a much worse effect.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Here is a statement that has gone out that before this last contract the guardians had been in the habit of specifying a variety of articles. We resent it and look it up and see the last two occasions when margarine was bought, 1897 and 1898, only one brand was specified and in these two years this gentleman's statements are untrue, and they have gone out to the press as true.

(Mr. Robb.) It can only appear that the same pernicious system was pursued in 1897 and 1898 as in 1906.

(Mr. Lansbury.) If you ask me—

(Mr. Robb.) I am going to ask for a summons to compel the attendance of the contractor for margarine. I said that I would be careful not to say anything that would not be supported by evidence, and, if I find that my instructions are inaccurate in any particular, that I would frankly and freely put the matter right.

(Mr. Crooks.) If a lie gets a start it is very hard to overtake it.

(Mr. Robb.) Then we must be careful not to tell them, Mr. Crooks. I think if my friend Mr. Lansbury will restrain himself a little we shall get on better. I am quite sure it is due to enthusiasm and a desire to elicit all the facts.

(Mr. Lansbury.) It is to prevent you making mis-statements.

(Mr. Robb.) I was dealing with the English best new-laid eggs, 1,850 dozen of which were specified in the tender. Well, sir, I say that is an extravagance.

(Mr. Crooks.) I am going to ask your pardon before I speak. That is the sort of evidence which is exceedingly popular with the public mind. You are going to put a question, which I shall make a note of, as to the cost of living for the officers, and that we shall answer at the proper moment; but the inference about eggs and cheese and those items is that they were things tendered for for the inmates. We will conclusively prove that they were for the officers' dietary. It looks nice in the press, "Fare for paupers." To get a start like that is unfair. If you say these are officers' items the public will know what they are.

(Mr. Robb.) Even assuming for a moment that they were officers' items I should say they were still wrong.

(Mr. Crooks.) All right.

(Mr. Robb.) But they cannot all be that.

(A guardian.) And the sick.

(Mr. Robb.) They cannot all of them be officers' items for this reason—the best English Cheddar, 2,700 lbs. Do the officers require 2,700 lbs?

(Mr. Lansbury.) The casual wards, the schools and Landon are all included. The contract is for the whole of the institutions. The gentleman is saying it is only the workhouse.

(Mr. Robb.) Best butter, 292 cwt. Do the officers require 292 cwt. of best butter? Best bacon, full branded, back and streaky.

(Mr. Ford.) Is there any alternative tender?

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, best bacon.

(Mr. Ford.) What is the alternative tender? What was the amount? I suggest that Mr. Robb has spoken to the most recent tenders.

(Mr. Robb.) I am quoting from the tender forms from 1st April, 1906, to 30th March, 1907.

(Mr. Ford.) Yes, I submit we didn't accept any tender for butter. A misleading impression is going round. Mr. Robb has charged us with one specifically. This is very important. I mean to say we are being blamed for having one special brand of margarine and we are charged with having 292 cwt. of butter, which are alternative tenders.

(Mr. Robb.) I can understand this is not pleasant reading.

(Mr. Lansbury.) It is not true.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Lough, was that tender form identical with the last tender form?

(Mr. Lansbury.) Yes.

(Mr. Lough.) There was an alternative tender.

(The Inspector.) For margarine?

(Mr. Lough.) Yes.

(The Inspector.) This was an identical tender to the previous time. Do you remember?

(Mr. Lough.) There was no alternative tender a year ago.

(The Inspector.) Was the tender for the same description of butter?

(Mr. Lough.) The butter was the same.

(Mr. Robb.) I submit I am entitled to hear evidence. I may be told they did not have these articles. I say you have put in your tenders items which it was wasteful and extravagant for you to have, and which you did have, or you put in a number of articles which you knew you could not possibly require and misled some of the contractors. My friends will be on the horns of a dilemma.

(Mr. Lansbury.) There may be other people in the same position.

(Mr. Robb.) Dealing with Mr. Crooks' point about the officers' rations: the best bacon, the full branded, back and streaky, Denny's, 5,136 lbs., do the officers of the workhouse require 5,136 lbs. of this superior article of bacon? Gammons, 270 cwt., and so forth. I return to the eggs, which I was upon when I was diverted. Here we have 1,850 dozen English best new-laid eggs, eight to the lb. I say on behalf of my clients that this is an extravagance. Of course they may be necessary. I don't say they are not, but I venture to ask the guardians how many poor ratepayers of Poplar can afford new-laid eggs? There are many of us, I hope in respectable positions of life, who occasionally have to put up with French eggs. I do myself occasionally. It may be desirable to have them, but to specify them for an institution of this kind is, I say, an evidence of extravagance and wasteful expenditure.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Tinned meat.

(Mr. Robb.) The green-grocer is to supply the best onions, the best turnips, the best carrots. The grocer and cheesemonger—this is for Laidon—biscuits, various, Huntley and Palmer's, in tins, 100 lbs.; currants, best Patras, 250 lbs.; cake, 2,000 lbs.; candied peel—

(Mr. Lansbury.) Is this Laidon?

(Mr. Robb.) Laidon, sir—35 lbs.; chicory, ground, 260 lbs.; best ground coffee, 1,000 lbs.; best cocoa, 70 lbs.; mustard, Colman's superfine, 70 lbs.; nutmegs, 2 lbs.; Lazenby's pickles, 36 bottles; pepper, pure, ground, black and white, 70 lbs.; best Valencia raisins, 250 lbs.; best Rangoon rice, 8 cwt.; best Demerara sugar, 50 cwt.; best castor sugar, 21 lbs. And in another place I shall show you a large quantity of castor sugar for ordinary use instead of Demerara. Sultanias, 56 lbs.; Lea and Perrin's sauce, 36 bottles; Mazawattee tea at 2/6, 50 lbs. I shall perhaps be told that 50 lbs. of Mazawattee tea was for the officers. Assuming it was, it is still an unwarrantable and extravagant expenditure. I don't drink, and not many people can afford to drink, Mazawattee tea of 2s. 6d. quality. The guardians have no right to supply their officials with tea of that quality,

and I have statements—I am glad Mr. Crooks agrees with me, and I hope with the help of Mr. Crooks we shall ascertain in the course of this Inquiry which of these officials have this superior article—I have statements from some of the officials who don't get this luxury. I want to know, and Mr. Crooks will want to know, where these luxuries go to and who has them. The butcher is called upon to supply good English ox beef, fresh killed, consisting of thick flanks, middle ribs, rounds, and leg of mutton pieces to order, free from bone, including such joints as may be ordered by the officers; good English wether mutton, fresh killed, all legs and shoulders and loin when ordered; pork fresh and salt, and 65 stone of the best beef suet. I am not expert in house-keeping details but I should have thought instead of consuming all this best beef suet, a large quantity of dripping might be utilised. So much for the butcher. Then I come, sir, to an item that will interest ladies, and that is the drapery. I am going to submit to you that the tender for drapery shows further items which call for attention. Item 26, twenty-nine dozen white counterpanes for beds. I say on behalf of my clients that to supply the people provided for in this institution with white counterpanes that require constant washing is an extravagance. They ought to be supplied, as domestic servants usually are, with counterpanes of some dark colour. Then we find one dozen cricketing belts, 51 dozen pairs of cuffs and 180 dozen four-fold collars. That may be necessary.

(Mr. Lansbury.) They are for the girls' outfits at the schools.

(Mr. Robb.) 104 pairs of lace muslin or net curtains, and we also find in another part of the tender, in addition to the curtains, 924 yards of muslin or net for windows. I cannot conceive, and my clients cannot conceive, how in an institution of this kind they can require 104 pairs of muslin curtains to drape the windows and then the further 924 yards of muslin or netting in addition, apparently for the same purpose. Then we come to 36 dozen Irish cambric handkerchiefs. I want to know, sir, for whom were these 36 dozen Irish cambric handkerchiefs intended. Then there is a large quantity of linen sheeting, 800 yards of linen sheeting, 400 yards of linen sheeting, red striped, and 800 yards of linen sheeting, blue striped, 400 yards blue and red striped, 100 yards forty inches wide. There is 2,500 yards of linen sheeting. Well, I should have thought—I speak subject to correction—that in an institution of this kind, it was not necessary to provide linen sheeting of that description. There may be some explanation forthcoming on the part of the guardians. Then, sir, I find 400 yards of damask table linen, 60 inches wide. I ask for whom was the damask table linen intended? Then there is one gross of dress preservers, possibly necessary for the female inmates.

(Mr. Lansbury.) For the children.

(Mr. Robb.) 170 dozen pairs of men's merino socks and 200 dozen pairs of men's merino stockings. I should have thought that there would not have sufficed. Fifteen dozen toilet covers. Who wants fifteen dozen toilet covers? It cannot be fifteen dozen officers who want toilet covers. Eighteen dozen damask table napkins. Who were the table napkins for? Are the table napkins for the inmates or the officers, and why need they be specified damask?

(The Inspector.) Damask?

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, it is a very fine quality.

(Mr. Lansbury.) We have samples.

(Mr. Robb.) It is the finest quality with the finest finish that can be obtained. One hundred yards of art serge, various colours, for draping, double width. For draping what? Are they aesthetic inmates of this institution who want to drape statuary, or for what purpose? I speak seriously, and want to know the explanation of these items of art serge for drapery. Then, sir, I would direct your special attention, if I might be allowed, to the tender for printing and stationery. I have had the privilege of seeing the stationery list of one or two banks and large institutions, but never in my life have I seen a list of stationery and printing such as this, covering five pages. That is conceived, I say, on the most extravagant scale. The paper specified is only of antique-parchment, double thick, cream wove. Even memoranda have engraved headings. Large quantities of pens are specified. Thirty boxes of some descriptions and eight different descriptions of pens

specified. Here is an item I cannot understand, and that is 2,500 ivory visiting cards. We shall, no doubt, hear in the course of the inquiry whether these ivory cards are for the inmates or the guardians, or who they are for.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) I shall be delighted to put witnesses in the box if you will ask them who the visiting cards are for.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I am quite satisfied to ask. Taking the general grocery tender. The grocery tender just now was for Laidon. Mazawattee tea was for Laidon. We get here under grocer best Jamaica arrowroot, 112 lbs., Huntley and Palmer's fancy lunch biscuits—Here I could imagine Mr. Crooks saying these are for the officers.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) No.

(*Mr. Robb.*) My reply would be—you account for 12,552 lbs. fancy lunch biscuits, so they cannot possibly be for the officers.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) It is all right, it is for the children.

(*Mr. Robb.*) 6,180 lbs. of coffee nibs, best roasted Mocha; two dozen Eiffel Tower lemonade; 153 bottles of Lea and Perrin's sauce; and again our old friend the Mazawattee tea at 2s. 6d. There are, sir, numerous other items which, I say, go to substantiate my charge of wasteful and extravagant expenditure.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) That is your charge.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I say that it is. I am going to substantiate it further. I say it is substantiated by the general statistics and also by the tender forms.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) We may as well go home.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I will ask you, sir, to be good enough in the course of the inquiry to examine carefully these tender forms and see for yourself the further details I cannot possibly give here without prolonging this inquiry to an inordinate extent. In addition to that there is the very important question indeed of the out-door relief. We say that the out-door relief has been indiscriminate; that it has been granted—in fact almost forced upon people.

(*The Inspector.*) One word. It may save time. I had intended going into this question of tendering as in a neighbouring union, but I have started in a different way. I have this morning given directions for the Poplar tenders during the past two or three years to be examined.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) We shall be glad. It is like driving a willing horse.

(*The Inspector.*) This work I cannot undertake myself.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I venture to say when we get all the facts no one will be more surprised than some of the guardians themselves. I believe this inquiry will be a surprise to all the guardians. While we are on that question of stock-taking, I have this comment to make.

(*Mr. Ford.*) I object. The guardians are standing as a whole. We are all tarred with the same brush. We stand or fall together. If you have any specific charge against any individual—I am not expressing surprise at what you have said.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Upon this question of stock-taking—if my information is correct, the stock-taker is a gentleman of the name of Maddams, who is a member of the Borough Council, and he has no special training or experience to fit him for the position of stock-taker. When the stock is taken, it is not taken by the stock-taker going in unexpectedly and saying, "Where are your books and stock" and checking them. It is done by arrangement with the master of the workhouse and the stock-taker.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) According to the Local Government Board Order it has to be done.

(*Mr. Robb.*) And the books—

(*Mr. Crooks.*) All under examination now.

(*Mr. Robb.*) The books are prepared for the stock-taker and ready for the stock-taker. I was dealing with the question of out-door relief, and on the expenditure under that heading we charge the guardians with this waste and extravagance. I say they appointed the relieving officers, who I hope we shall see in the box to give their explanations, and they have been treated not as relieving officers. They have deprived them of the whole of their discretion. They have treated them as mere clerks and machines, and I think you will hear when you get the relieving officers in the box, instead of matters being left, as they ought to have been left, for

them to make their proper investigations and report as to the merits of each particular case, they have been, in fact, coerced and ordered to relieve in certain cases whether they chose to do so or not. I believe that some of the relieving officers hold letters from members of the board of guardians directing them to administer relief in particular cases. I shall call before you at the proper time the keeper of a common lodging-house, perhaps the keeper of more than one common lodging-house, in Poplar who will tell you that the men go there; they stay there one night in order to qualify for reception into the workhouse instead of going into the casual wards. The object of that is, I assume, to avoid the tasks which, I believe, are imposed upon casuals.

(*A guardian.*) You are wrong.

(*The Inspector.*) I am open to correction, but I assume that even in Poplar some tasks are imposed upon casuals.

(*The guardian.*) No.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Then it was only an inference on my part, and that falls to the ground. These lodging-house keepers will tell you they are requested by relieving officers to fill up forms, that one man filled up sixty in a very short time and filled them up in a helter-skelter, indiscriminate manner, and one relieving officer told one keeper, "Fill it up as you like; we are bound to relieve everyone who applies." I am not going further into details at the moment, except to draw your attention to the extraordinary circumstance affecting two of the relieving officers.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) Stone and Gibbs.

(*Mr. Robb.*) No, I am not dealing with prosecutions. I allude to Berry and Miles, two of the relieving officers; at the end of the sixth week of the Lady Day quarter of the present year these two men changed districts. Miles had up to that time distributed in relief amounts chargeable to the common fund the following sums per week:—£117 6s. 4d., £104 17s. 10d., £98 19s. 4d., £97 15s. 6d., £100 9s. 5d., £100 16s. 6d. The average is £100 a week. Berry in the same period—

(*Mr. Crooks.*) In cash?

(*Mr. Robb.*) Yes, I understand so. I am not dealing now with the out-relief districts, but relief amounts chargeable to the common fund of the union.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) The point is rather important.

(*Mr. Robb.*) It is cash.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) And it is not for able-bodied paupers?

(*Mr. Robb.*) I cannot say.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) We can.

(*Mr. Robb.*) That we shall hear when we get Mr. Miles in the box.

(*Mr. Watts.*) Don't you know that?

(*Mr. Robb.*) We shall hear when we get Mr. Berry in the box. It is the amount distributed in cash by way of out-door relief by two particular relieving officers. As I say, during these six weeks Miles distributed on an average £100 a week. During the same period Berry distributed £35 4s. 1d.; £35 4s. 5d.; £36 7s. 6d.; £37 16s. 6d.; £36 16s. 11d.; £37 11s. 10d. The average was £35 a week. At that point Berry and Miles changed districts. One would have thought in the normal course of things Berry would have gone to £100 a week and Miles would have gone to £35, Berry's last week to £100 10s. 3d.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) It is most unfortunate.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) We are going to have all this in the Mail to-morrow morning. You cannot help it.

(*Mr. Ford.*) It is rather rough on us though.

(*Mr. Robb.*) On the other hand—

(*Mr. Ford.*) Will Mr. Robb repeat those last figures, subject to correction?

(*Mr. Robb.*) I don't want anything that is not correct.

(*Mr. Ford.*) Trying to get it in.

(*The Inspector.*) Mr. Robb will call witnesses, I suppose?

(*Mr. Robb.*) Yes.

(*Mr. Ford.*) It has already gone out. I would like Mr. Robb to repeat those figures.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Well, sir, I don't want to take the slightest advantage or say anything that is the slightest unfair.

(*The Inspector.*) It would be better to be quite correct.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I was giving a statement which showed a curious fact when the districts were changed over. Apparently there is some mistake there, and it may be the figures are not quite so high as the figures I read. I am, therefore, going to have them properly got out, and for the moment I withdraw what I said relating to Miles and Berry.

(*The Inspector.*) On the understanding that you refer to these figures when Miles and Berry are in the box?

(*Mr. Robb.*) That is clearly understood. On the question, sir, of out-door relief we shall have to ascertain why the reports in respect of the cost, which, I think, were asked for and referred to in the Memorandum, have not been supplied. We shall have to ascertain the nature of the reports supplied by the relieving officers as to the various cases, and we shall have to investigate the number of cases, the expenditure, and certain discrepancies which, according to my instructions, exist. I won't labour that point further.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) Mr. Davy—Mr. Robb, may we get that question of the relieving officers cleared up now?

(*Mr. Robb.*) I understand it is merely this—that on the minutes by some mistake—it is apparently a mistake—in the minutes the figures were transposed. The figures relating to Miles were apparently against Berry and *vice versa*. That is, the £30 13s. 6d. against Miles should have been £87 14s. 11d. and the reverse in the case of Berry.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) The fact of Miles going into Berry's district did not cause him to make the jump as stated.

(*Mr. Robb.*) There is no point there.

(*The Inspector.*) It is a mistake.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Yes, we were misled by the minutes which attributed to Miles a larger figure than was due to him. It is a mutual mistake to some extent, because by what appeared in the minutes—

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) I am not in the minutes.

(*Mr. Robb.*) If Mr. Crooks says—

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) Mr. Crooks does not admit it.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) We don't know what the facts are.

(*Mr. Robb.*) The real point of the return was to show the discrepancy between the various districts; to show that a number of districts were badly split up because they varied very much, from £27 up to £114.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) You would not compare this district with the district of Bow Common.

(*Mr. Robb.*) It is a matter of comment. I don't say there is anything serious, but it is a matter of comment that there was a wide divergency between certain districts in given weeks.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) That is the rule.

(*The Inspector.*) Is it a fact that the two relieving officers exchanged districts?

(*Mr. Crooks.*) Yes. One officer took over another officer's district. There was no material alteration. They all varied a point or two.

(*Mr. Ford.*) The guardians put the oldest relieving officer in the worst district and the newest in the best district.

(*Mr. Robb.*) It is unfortunate these statements should be made, because I am obliged to contradict them. Stone and Gibbs, two new men who got into trouble, were put into the district where the heaviest expenditure was dealt with. If the statement is made that the most experienced officers—

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) In the case of Berry and Miles we exchanged Berry for Miles because he had more experience. You cannot contradict that truthfully; you can contradict anything, but it won't be true. The guardians did what we are saying. We cannot have this man saying what is not true. He brings in two new men—

(*The Inspector.*) We waste a good deal of time in this way.

(*Mr. Robb.*) To continue, it will be one of my points that the same thing, as Mr. Ford—

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) Mr. Ford didn't say that. We are not going to have words put into our mouths that we didn't say.

(*The Inspector.*) Let Mr. Robb finish his sentence.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) Mr. Robb makes a statement that is not true, and he talks about two men not under discussion, and he repeats his charge, almost contradicts Mr. Ford, and Mr. Ford has not said anything about officers except Mr. Berry and Mr. Miles.

(*The Inspector.*) Mr. Ford can take care of himself.

(*A guardian.*) We can take care of each other.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Mr. Lansbury appreciates—

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) Stick to the truth, that is all.

(*The Inspector.*) We won't have this.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) We won't have this man contradicting one man.

(*The Inspector.*) I am going to conduct this Inquiry.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) Yes, as you please, and I beg to assure you, you have to give us fair-play. This gentleman has no right to say we are making statements that are not true.

(*Mr. Ford.*) I was dealing specifically with Mr. Berry and Mr. Miles. No other names, only so far as these two officers are concerned. Mr. Robb immediately shifts his ground, and said I was not correct, and he referred to two other officers and inferred that what I said was not true.

(*The Inspector.*) I did not hear that. I thought the question of Mr. Berry and Mr. Miles was a mistake.

(*Mr. Ford.*) But Mr. Robb begins—

(*The Inspector.*) Then we are led off to this discussion. I thought by Mr. Crooks saying—

(*Mr. Crooks.*) As your Department is aware, when any promotion is going, you expect officers coming fresh to go to the easiest districts and they go from the easiest districts to the hardest. In Mr. Robb's view the new men get promotion.

(*The Inspector.*) Then Mr. Robb proceeded to give an instance where the more experienced officers did not go to these districts.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Assuming for a moment that Mr. Ford made no mistake I should still proceed to point out that two officers named Stone and Gibbs, who were men of little or no experience, were appointed as relieving officers some time in 1905, were given districts in which they disbursed considerable sums of money, and were entrusted with sums of money much over £100 each, when one of them apparently banked this with his own money. Both of them eventually got into trouble with the board and had to send in their resignations. The result of the whole thing—the total payments in out-relief in cash, starting the first week of the Lady-Day quarter, 1906, amount to £843 8s. 5d. That does not vary very much for several weeks until this agitation comes along and then by the end of the fifth week of the Midsummer quarter they drop to £678 8s. 7d.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) The point made about cash, if you please.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Relief accounts chargeable to the common fund of the union. I asked this morning, and I was told that represented cash or kind. I don't mind whether it is cash or not.

(*The Inspector.*) This is merely an opening statement; it will have to be proved.

(*Mr. Robb.*) My clients have had to get their information as best they could. They have been afforded no information or statistics by the guardians, and I say whether this is cash or kind I don't mind, but there is a decrease in the present year from the first week in the Lady-Day quarter of £843 8s. 5d. to the fifth week of the present quarter of £678 8s. 7d.—a drop of £200. So much for that branch of the case. Before concluding that subject I will simply ask why have the out-door paupers increased 62 per cent. in Poplar in twelve months, and only 8 per cent. in Whitechapel, Stepney and Mile End, where the conditions of labour are similar?

(*A guardian.*) No, no.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Poplar had at the beginning of the year 7,869 out-door paupers against 69 in Whitechapel, 439 in Stepney. I invite the attention of the guardians to these figures on the question of out-relief, and again I say if there was no other evidence but these figures alone it would be a serious case for enquiry and explanation. There are numerous points of extravagance which I shall

deal with in the course of the evidence. But for the moment I will only indicate one or two. We say that there was an undue expenditure upon several items, amongst them water. The amount spent on water last year was from £1,200 to £1,300. On the assumption that there were 1,600 people in the workhouse, 1,520 inmates and 79 workhouse officers, that would work out at 75 gallons of water per head per day.

(*The Inspector.*) What is the charge for water?

(*Mr. Robb.*) 7½d. per thousand gallons.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) Is it the Water Board water?

(*Mr. Robb.*) I don't know and don't care. I am dealing with the question of consumption in the workhouse. It is something like 75 gallons per head per day. As against that last year the total consumption per head of population in the whole of London for all purposes was 31·1 gallons. That is set forth in the London statistics of the London County Council, 1904-5, page 82. I ask the guardians how they account for that heavy use of water. I don't suggest the guardians—I have not made any suggestions; I am simply stating the pure dry facts. I should not have thought it was a subject of merriment on the part of the ratepayers.

(*The Inspector.*) The point is that the consumption of water is 75 gallons per head per day.

(*Mr. Ford.*) I don't accept that as an admitted fact.

(*The Inspector.*) Nor do I.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Now tobacco and snuff. Last year tobacco at 3s. 6d. per lb. cost £570. The number of people in the workhouse on 26th March, 1904, was 1,526; on March 25th, 1905, 1,514. The mean would be 1,520 persons. The average proportions as compared with admissions would be 53 per cent. men (806); 25 per cent. women (380), and 22 per cent. children. Assume there are 806 men and 66 per cent. are able-bodied (532) and 34 per cent. old men (that would be 274).

(*A guardian.*) No, no.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I am only taking the figures for purposes of argument. It does not matter.

(*Guardians.*) Oh! Oh!

(*The Inspector.*) This is not the evidence.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) Just fancy a man getting a free advertisement for that.

(*Mr. Robb.*) That tobacco would be sufficient for 53 quinces per inmate, or one ounce per week whether able-bodied or not for all the men. And it would give the aged women according to my statistics three ounces a week a piece. For the 380 women snuff was provided costing £96. That would be 16 ounces per inmate for all the women. If you take the aged women alone it would be about 57½ ounces per inmate per aged woman, assuming the aged women to be 107.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) Assuming!

(*Mr. Robb.*) At all events there is again material for explanation and material for inquiry. Then, sir, the beer. With regard to beer, I rely for some of my facts upon the report which I understand has been presented by Mr. Oxley, one of your Inspectors, and which was published in the Press. The report is before you, and has been published in the press. The cost of beer last year was £316 10s. 5d. Beer should only be given, according to my information, upon the recommendation of the doctor, and I am told, although the doctor has been desirous that many inmates should cease to be allowed to have beer, he has been over-ruled by the guardians in the matter. Mr. Lansbury, I see, assents to that, and admits that this is a fact—

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) Oh! Mr. Davy.

(*Mr. Robb.*) But you nodded your head.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) If I speak I am wrong; if my head nods in sleep I am wrong; but after all, I don't mind in the least.

(*The Inspector.*) It doesn't matter; the master will be called.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I thought Mr. Lansbury and myself were in agreement for once, and I could not help referring to it. I understand that the board allow ten per cent. of waste in respect of the beer?

(*Mr. Crooks.*) It is all waste as far as I am concerned.

(*Mr. Robb.*) That is a large item, and we shall have to ask the guardians, and some of the officials when they get in the box, what becomes of the ten per cent. of waste which is always debited in respect of the beer. As an instance of how money is spent on every conceivable object, whether work be performed by the inmates or not, the workhouse garden last year cost £83 18s. 7d. I have not had the privilege of seeing it, but I am told that it consists of a few small flower beds and a greenhouse. Now, sir, a great deal of that money was paid for labour, and my instructions are that £31 15s. 4d., part of the sum mentioned, was paid for labour to men living at Forest Gate, the work being done by these men, whilst there were a large number of able-bodied men in the house doing nothing. I say, if that be true, whilst there were upwards of 100 able-bodied men in the workhouse doing nothing, men were imported to do a little digging in the garden from Forest Gate, and paid a sum of over £30 for that. I say, here again is a matter for the guardians to explain, and here again is an instance of the wasteful and reckless extravagance of which my clients complain.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) Moderate language, Mr. Robb.

(*Mr. Robb.*) There is a rather interesting item with regard to newspapers. I am instructed that £112 was spent in newspapers last year. A portion of them were for the use of certain of the officers. The master, Mr. Madeley, had the following papers:—*Telegraph, Express, Answers, Weekly Telegraph, Sketchy Bits, Tit Bits, Pearson's, Illustrated Mail, Illustrated News.* On Sunday he had *Reynold's, Dispatch, News of the World*, and the *Times and Echo*, and being of a literary turn of mind, he also had some monthlies, consisting of *Pearson's, The Strand, The London, The Leisure Hour, Cassell's, The Quiver and Good Words.* I am told there is a card in existence in the office setting out the names of these officers, and the papers supplied for them, and I shall call, at the proper time, for the production of that card and particulars of the newspapers printed thereon. Mr. Walton, the assistant master, had the *Telegraph, Express, Answers, Weekly Telegraph, Amateur Gardening, Sketchy Bits, Tit Bits, Pearson's, Illustrated Mail, and Illustrated News.* He had *The People* and the *News of the World* on Sunday, and the same monthly magazines as the master. The cook had *Sketchy Bits, The People, and The News of the World.* Her taste in literature not being quite so high as the other officers, she had no monthlies. Mrs. Monk, the master's servant, had *Sketchy Bits, Pearson's, and Lloyd's.* Miss Usher, the assistant matron, had the *Telegraph, Answers, Weekly Telegraph, Tit Bits, Pearson's, Illustrated Mail, and Illustrated News.* My information further is that the papers for Mr. Walton, assistant master, who did not reside at the workhouse, would, when he was not present at the institution, be forwarded by one of the inmates who is a factotum of his (or was) to his private house for his use there. If those facts are true, I say again, here is a matter for explanation by the guardians; and, if it is true, it is again an instance of the extravagance of which I complain. I have said sufficient. I have numerous other instances, but I prefer them to come out in evidence. I have said enough to indicate in general terms the nature of my case upon that particular point; at all events, I think I have said enough to show that there was good ground for inquiry, that it was a matter of urgent and imperative public interest, and that there are matters here which must be probed, and sifted to the very bottom, not only in the interests of the ratepayers, but in the interests of the guardians themselves, and the officers of the union. There are other matters I will refer to. I must indicate generally what my case will be. With regard to the staff, my instructions are that appointments are too frequently made of people without sufficient experience, as in the case of two officers, Stone and Gibbs, and often without proper advertisement. Sometimes only a single application is entertained, and really, in some applications to the guardians, inexperience appears to be a qualification. There was a recent appointment of a female lunatic attendant. I am only giving this small point by way of example. This was dealt with on May 9th, 1906. There were 18 applicants for the post. Most of them had had several years' experience, with the exception of a young lady of the name of Clayton,

who, I understand, was recommended by some guardians. She had been assistant nurse at Stepney Workhouse for five months, and had attended Tooting Bee Asylum one month, and she got the appointment out of all the 18 persons on the list. I have looked at it, and hand it up for your inspection, sir. I think she is the person with the least experience of the whole 18; therefore, if that be so, I say it would appear that in securing an appointment under the guardians, inexperience and shortness of service are a qualification rather than otherwise.

(Mr. Crooks.) Will you, Mr. Inspector, note that four only of these candidates attended? There are so many of these reckless statements, that it is really impossible to catch them up.

(Mr. Robb.) It will be my duty to comment on certain matters with regard to the master. That will come under the denomination of "Staff," but I prefer to do that in eliciting the evidence. I do, however, desire to call attention to the large number of temporary officers. You will no doubt get evidence as to that. There is an enormous list of these officers. I understand that temporary officers are a purely local extravagance; they are not chargeable to the Common Fund of the Metropolitan. They are payable purely out of the local rates, and yet from year to year there is an enormous list of temporary officers carried forward—some of them apparently without rhyme or reason.

(The Inspector.) What about this list?

(Mr. Robb.) The list is published in the report and statistics of the guardians. There is a long list; I can give it you in evidence.

(Mr. Ford.) They are published fortnight by fortnight in the agenda.

(Mr. Robb.) They are published in the minutes, but there is an extremely long list, and it is a very serious feature—this retention of so-called temporary officers year by year. Some of these temporary officers (so-called) have been serving for years. There is a temporary tailor at 36s. per week; he has been there for three years; two temporary laundresses appointed at 18s. per week—another example. Some considerable time since, the cook, Mrs. Ferneyhough, hurt her ankle, and a temporary cook, by name Angel, was appointed for a fortnight. Mrs. Ferneyhough recovered from her sprained ankle, but Mrs. Angel, the temporary cook, was not displaced; she has been continued in her position ever since, although she was originally appointed for a fortnight only. I may say it is a serious matter, and therefore a matter for consideration and inquiry, the appointment of this large number of temporary officers. I allege, and I think I shall prove, a neglect of duty on the part of the late master and matron, and shall call for the porter's book—the book that the porter at the gate keeps—I think it is the in-and-out-book—and shall prove by reference to that book what has been the attention that these officials have given to their respective duties. So much, sir, in brief, for the staff. We shall get further details in evidence. Then I must say a word about the Laindon colony. I have some special evidence as to that, sir, evidence which will show that the institution is not of benefit, and not of the service that it is alleged to be. I assume that this colony was founded by the guardians to relieve the workhouse—to send men there to be trained in agriculture in the hope that they may become useful members of society and earn their own living. That has been attempted to be done, according to my instructions, by putting 142 men on something less than 70 acres, on a farm that was previously farmed by less than half-a-dozen men. There is a neighbouring farm of 85 acres, which was farmed by six men and four horses, and on this farm at Laindon I believe there is only 70 acres under actual cultivation, and there are 142 men and sundry horses and motors and a staff of 17 officials. I don't know what the motors are there for, but we shall hear that. What they can do except plough the land, or turn the soil over and over again, I am at a loss to imagine; but that is a matter for the guardians to explain at a proper time. The food given them is much too good.

(Mr. Crooks.) Oh, is it?

(Mr. Robb.) I have read a tender for Laindon, and I believe that the dietary scale at Laindon has already come under the notice of the Local Government Board. Then the guardians, instead of making proper inquiries, and sending men of deserving character down there, have turned into this rural part of Essex some of the biggest scamps on the face of the earth.

(Mr. Ford.) Prove it.

(Mr. Robb.) I will prove it. I hold here a list of convictions supplied to me by the police, and affecting certain of these colonists. I will put this in evidence when I call the police before you.

(The Inspector.) Will you call the Essex Superintendent?

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, I will.

(Mr. Lansbury.) We have had some of him.

(Mr. Crooks.) We have already replied to that; it is as stale as stale. This man (indicating Mr. Robb) is earning his living by bringing up old evidence like that. It is shocking!

(Mr. Robb.) Then I will give my friend Mr. Crooks something quite recent. On April 30th of this year a man named John Ingles, one of the colonists, was convicted at Brentwood Petty Sessions of an assault on the police and sentenced to a month with hard labour—a man who had been sent down as a deserving person, and a fit subject for the colony. I have the following record, which the guardians either knew or ought to have known. On the 23rd of January, 1897, this man was convicted of being drunk and disorderly at Thames Police Court. On the 24th of November, 1900, he was convicted of being drunk and disorderly at Thames. On June 9th, 1901, he was convicted of a similar offence at the same Court. On April 13th, 1902, of a similar offence at the same Court. On September 15th, 1904, of a similar offence at the same Court—six successive convictions for being drunk and disorderly—all at the same Court. Following on all that, he is regarded by the guardians as a fit and proper man to draft into Essex.

(Mr. Lansbury.) That is not true; we cannot have that.

(The Inspector.) Is it not obvious, Mr. Lansbury, that you must let Mr. Robb finish?

(Mr. Crooks.) He is getting the first innings, and we shall never catch up to him. He gets hold of a blackguard whom we are bound to send out, and he says that is a reward for good behaviour.

(The Inspector.) He does not say that. Probably the guardians thought it was about time to try a change of treatment.

(Mr. Robb.) I should have thought an inebriate home would have been more useful than a farm colony.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Why didn't you send him there?

(Mr. Lindsay.) The magistrate should send him there.

(Mr. Ford.) Are we entitled to refuse the man relief?

(The Inspector.) That is not the point.

(Mr. Ford.) That is the point. The man goes to the farm colony on April 30th. There is one conviction since he has been under our notice. We do not know anything about his career, and we are not responsible for it.

(The Inspector.) The point, Mr. Ford, tells as much for you as against you.

(Mr. Ford.) This was not one of the instances that was common knowledge last November when Mr. Robb and his colleagues were asking for an Inquiry. He has not advanced anything that was prior to last November; nothing whatever.

(Mr. Robb.) I am told I have singled out an instance. I have got sets of convictions against these colonists extending over a long period of years. I will simply deal with 1906. On March 22nd, 1906, John Sheehan, a colonist, was convicted at Brentwood for absconding.

(The Inspector.) You are going to call the Essex Police, Mr. Robb? I venture to suggest that you have said quite enough for them to open the whole case.

(Mr. Robb.) I quite agree, but I do not want to be under the imputation of singling out particular items. I must refer to, and put in, a report (because he will be cross-examined upon it) of Superintendent Marden, of Brentwood, presented to the Chief Constable of Essex, on May 8th, 1905. I shall formally put that in, because I shall call the superintendent:—

"Sir,—Dunton Farm Colony,—I have the honor to report, with reference to the above, that the Poplar Board of Guardians took possession of this farm in question about a year ago, and erected a corrugated iron building to house paupers, and work the farm by the men, who at present number about 200. There is a superintendent. The inmates are men"—

(Mr. Ford.) Only 100 per cent. out.

(The Inspector.) Has Mr. Lough a copy of it? If he has, there is sufficient material to cross-examine the superintendent when he comes.

(Mr. Ford.) We have refuted it time after time.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Your Board has a copy of it.

(Mr. Robb.) I put it in as part of my case.

(The Inspector.) I think we can take it as put in.

(Mr. Robb.) It is very important. This is a report of a responsible police officer:—"The inmates are men imported from Poplar, the majority of whom have a criminal record, and in most cases are idle and disorderly persons who have no desire to work for a livelihood. They are feasted on the best of food, and paid a small amount for pocket money, and after their labour hours are over, they are allowed to roam about the neighbourhood. They frequent public-houses, are frequently under the influence of drink, and at midnight shout and brawl and annoy residents. They go from one public-house to another, begging beer and tobacco from everyone they meet. I understand the place is open to them to return when they like, and nothing is said to them unless one absconds and returns to London."

(Mr. Watts.) Will Mr. Robb read our reply to that?

(Mr. Robb.) I understand, sir, that a gentleman who was a registrar of births and deaths—or something of that sort—a gentleman of the name of Butler—was appointed a sort of special commissioner, and was sent down at a fee of five guineas and expenses to make a certain report, and I leave my friends to put that report in if they think it helps their case.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Of course we will put it in.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Butler is down in the guardians' list as one of the staff, under the arrangement for births, deaths and marriages. He is the gentleman who was sent down as the independent commissioner.

(Mr. Lindsay.) He is a gentleman, too.

(Mr. Robb.) That was a year ago, but the information I have to-day shows that these men are repeatedly being convicted of drunkenness to the present time, that they are supplied with money by their friends—and (here is the crux of the whole thing) I invite the guardians to furnish us with a return of the number of men who have been sent to this colony from the inception of it, and a further return showing how many of them have subsequently been drafted into any useful employment as a result of that.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Hear, hear. We have got it.

(Mr. Robb.) I don't mean emigration. I know a number of them have been sent out of the country. I want return of the men who have been employed in any useful occupation as a result of being on this farm.

(Mr. Ford.) That is to say, the persons who cease to be chargeable?

(The Inspector.) You must not cross-examine Mr. Robb.

(Mr. Ford.) I want to be clear on the last statement. Do I understand him to ask for a return of the number of persons who have been admitted to the colony, and who have ceased to be chargeable?

(Mr. Robb.) No, I want the return—

(Mr. Ford.) Of what nature?

(Mr. Robb.) If you have it—if my clients might have an opportunity of seeing it.

(Mr. Ford.) Can we follow these men when they cease to be chargeable?

(The Inspector.) What is the good of this, Mr. Ford?

(Mr. Ford.) Oh, I am not getting wild, Mr. Davy.

(Mr. Robb.) My point is this—

(The Inspector.) Give Mr. Robb a chance.

(Mr. Lansbury.) This man is getting all the chances.

(Mr. Robb.) If I am getting them, I am getting them under great difficulties.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Oh, you are all right.

(Mr. Robb.) I now come to an item with which I am bound to deal, and I regret to have to do so because it is to some extent of a personal character, and it is the item regarding the supply of refreshments to guardians. Now, I do not say that this item, in itself, is a very large matter, but it is the cumulative effect of all these small items that

go to make good or bad administration in any institution. I do not say that it is unreasonable, *per se*, that guardians who devote their time to the public should have some small refreshment. Personally, I do not think it is, but there is extant an Order of the Local Government Board that no refreshments shall be supplied out of the workhouse stores unless the guardian is travelling for the purpose of the union outside his own district. It has been the custom (and I will prove it) of various committees, and sometimes of the whole board, when constituting a visiting committee, to have regular teas supplied to them out of the workhouse stores. These teas have consisted, not only of bread and butter, but also of meat, ham sandwiches, and poached eggs, and articles of that kind; and if the guardians had been frank about it, I should not have criticised their conduct, but, instead of entering it up as teas supplied to the guardians, it used formerly to be the practice to charge these as "extraordinary supplies." Well, it was extraordinary supplies, no doubt, but not of the kind contemplated under that head. Extraordinary supplies, I understand, are something supplied to the inmates or officers for a special purpose. Now, I believe that quite recently these teas have been charged as "teas supplied to guardians," but, at the same time, it was the practice to charge them up under the somewhat misleading heading of extraordinary supplies; and I say this, sir, the matter is a small one in itself, but if the guardians wanted to have these refreshments at the public expense—to commit a breach of what they know to be the law—they ought, at least, to have been frank about it, and entered the item under the proper heading.

(Mr. Lansbury.) The date is rather important.

(Mr. Robb.) The matter is regrettable from this point of view—it is not so much the cost of the meals supplied to the guardians, but it is setting a very bad example to the officials; it is subversive of all discipline in the establishment, because if the officials see the guardians committing breaches of the General Orders and Regulations of the Local Government Board, it tends to lead the officers in their turn to do the same thing; and that is what they have been doing. Officers, in addition to guardians, have had meals to which they were not entitled, and officers have kept various members of their families out of the public cost in the workhouse when they had no business to do so. That I shall prove. I regret to have to mention it, but my instructions are that certain of the guardians have taken refreshments in the master's quarters, where brandy and lemonade have been served. I have a signed statement of witnesses I shall call that it has been served to certain guardians in the master's quarters. It is against proper administration in an institution of this kind that there should be any undue familiarity between the master and the guardians, or any undue familiarity between the master and guardians and contractors. This sort of thing, though small in itself, tends to subvert discipline, and to a maladministration of the whole institution. That is all I say on that. My clients do not raise it in any carping spirit, or wish to contend that people who give time to the public service ought not to have some sort of recompense; but the law does not at present allow them to have it, and until it is passed they ought to be the first to keep within the limits of the law as an example to their own officials, if for no other purpose.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Eight years it has been on our records. 1898 is when it was done. You may well say, Mr. Inspector, that we can't cross-examine him.

(Mr. Robb.) However that may be, we shall have the officials here.

(Mr. Lansbury.) It is not the officials; it is in our minutes—you can't get away from them.

(Mr. Robb.) I am not speaking of the minutes.

(The Inspector.) The minute is this:—minute passed by the guardians, December, 1898: "That tea and bread and butter be provided for the members of the committee at each meeting, and the articles to be brought from the stores and entered into the workhouse accounts accordingly."

(Mr. Robb.) As what, sir?

(The Inspector.) It does not say.

(Mr. Robb.) Well, we shall have the books.

(The Inspector.) I ask you, Mr. Lough, whether you have ever had a surcharge from the Local Government Board?

(Mr. Lough.) No, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) If there has been no surcharge, it could not have been entered as teas for the guardians. Has it been entered as extraordinary supplies?

(Mr. Lough.) I could not say, sir, without referring to the books.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Our point is that the guardians publicly let the public outside know they were having refreshments. You said we hid it up.

(Mr. Robb.) I say that in the accounts, according to my information, it is under a wrong heading. We shall get the details of that presently. The other points I do not propose to deal with now, sir, because I think they will appear sufficiently by the evidence. I propose now to close my opening case, again saying that the position my clients take up is not one of hostility. It is one of criticism. They feel that their complaints against the guardians are just and natural. They feel that there are matters which must be explained, and it is only in the performance of a very unpleasant, but at the same time an urgent and necessary public duty that my clients appear at this inquiry at all.

(The Inspector.) I suppose that now you will proceed to call witnesses?

(Mr. Crooks.) You made some sort of a remark about calling the master first: but we expect them to call their evidence.

(The Inspector.) There are three witnesses I have got.

(Mr. Crooks.) You will call them to-day? We expected the alliance to state their case right away by witnesses.

(The Inspector.) The witnesses I shall call are the master, the medical officer, and the relieving officers. It might be convenient to take them now.

(Mr. Crooks.) Excuse me, the case has been stated—

(The Inspector.) The master must be taken, as I understand he is going away.

(Mr. Crooks.) In a general way a statement has been made, and that statement we were promised should be substantiated.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Robb will call his evidence, no doubt.

(Mr. Robb.) I shall call, if necessary, in the first place a number of officers, but I ask you, sir, to call the officers in the first instance.

(The Inspector.) I shall call all the officers I named.

(Mr. Robb.) And then I shall submit a further list of officials of the board, who I suggest shall be called.

(The Inspector.) We will see about that.

(Mr. Robb.) It is very important if we are to get at the truth of this matter, that any official of the board who is called, should be called, not as a witness of the guardians, or as a witness of the alliance, or any party, but as a witness of the Local Government Board; and that any official who is called should be afforded the protection of the Local Government Board.

(The Inspector.) That I can safely promise—that, so far as the Local Government Board is concerned, he will. But I do not think any protection is needed. The guardians would be extremely foolish, to say the least of it, to object.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Did not we send round and ask our officials to give all the information in their power? It is rather rough to make such an insinuation.

(Mr. Crooks.) Mr. Robb either calls evidence, or not. If he does not, he ceases to have any connection with this case at all.

(Mr. Robb.) I want the master.

(Mr. Crooks.) We are here answering the inquiries of the Local Government Board. We do not recognise you in the matter, and you do not recognise the guardians. The Local Government Board Inspector can do what he likes, but if you are proposing to make certain charges we ask you to put your witnesses in the box, and put them on oath to substantiate the charges you have already made. I want the public to take some notice of this fact. One of our officers—a poor old woman, a cook, has received a visit from someone claiming to represent the Local Government Board, and language was used to her that certainly was not of that encouraging character that

would lead her to believe that she could give evidence without fear. Intimidation was practically used that she would be obliged to—

(Mr. Robb.) Rubbish.

(Mr. Lansbury.) It is not rubbish, Mr. Robb.

(Mr. Crooks.) Now they claim protection for officers they themselves have intimidated. We should not intimidate an officer. The charge of intimidation falls rather flat from the gentleman who is conducting the case against us. We do object to the case proceeding until Mr. Robb puts his evidence forward to corroborate what he says.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Robb has no power to compel witnesses to attend, but if he asks me to summon witnesses I shall do so on his telling me that such witnesses are essential.

(Mr. Robb.) To-day we shall be fully occupied with the master.

(The Inspector.) I think that, after him, the medical officer must come. The medical officer desires it.

(Mr. Crooks.) The statements made have now gone broad-cast, and I—

(The Inspector.) Do you ask for an adjournment?

(Mr. Crooks.) No, I only ask that the alliance case should be given now.

(Mr. Robb.) I am going to have the necessary officials in the box first of all.

(The Inspector.) I think the better way would be to go straight on with the witnesses that I want to put in the box.

(Mr. Robb.) I will not be driven into the position of a prosecutor. I am going, at the proper time, to prove every allegation. I have proved a number of them already from the documents.

(Mr. Crooks.) My point is that the documents put in will be answered by myself at the proper time. I propose after all the evidence is given, to sum up the case—after everybody has been examined. The point I tried to make this morning was that the municipal alliance was out on a fishing expedition. They had no case—absolutely none. You, Mr. Inspector, were engaged by your Chief to make a diligent inquiry. That we welcome, and we are prepared to answer the charges, but we want to know where the alliance comes in. They have made general charges—charges that have been passed round by a lot of old women in the streets for the past 12 months. All the alliance now does is to submit your documents and our documents. Our documents are public property, and your documents are public property. And they submit these as evidence. I contend that unless they are prepared to put witnesses in the box to substantiate their case, they cease to have any *locus standi*.

(The Inspector.) I have already said that the first witness will be the master, and the second the medical officer. Then the Chief Constable of Essex has written to me. Mr. Robb will ask me to call certain other witnesses. You will also probably do so, and I shall call them.

(Mr. Crooks.) I think it is rather cheap of the Local Government Board to appoint a man as an adjunct to the Inquiry. You must remember that our honour is at stake. We have nothing to live on but our reputation. We are not making fees out of this. It is of the utmost importance we should clear our characters of the imputations cast upon them. An imputation has been made that we were guilty of maladministration, which means (apart from any frailty in human nature in giving extra relief) that we ourselves have benefited, otherwise the English language is not what we think it is. We are charged with maladministration.

(Mr. Robb.) Not in that sense.

(The Inspector.) I don't take it that maladministration means charges of corruption against the guardians.

(Mr. Robb.) Certainly not.

(Mr. Crooks.) Then what does it mean? We have been told that we have been guilty of wasteful and deliberate extravagance, and that instead of administering the Poor Law with judgment and discretion, we have unduly and improperly fostered and increased the pauperism of the district. Those are startling charges to make against men who have nothing but their honour.

(The Inspector.) They fall rather short of charges of corruption.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Crooks said, in the course of my remarks, that he welcomed my statement that I did not make any charges of personal corruption.

(Mr. Crooks.) But you went on to make personal charges.

(Mr. Robb.) I said that, although I regretted the introduction of the refreshments, I regretted it as a bad example to the officials, subversive of discipline, and leading to maladministration. I did not use the word maladministration in the sense of imputing to him personal corruption. I think it would be better to wait till the end of the Inquiry and hear the evidence before we have all this indignation on the part of my friend, which may be well-founded or not.

(Mr. Crooks.) That is all very fine from a man who made the first statement, but we want to know the course the Inquiry is going to take.

(The Inspector.) Certainly. The course is, the master will be called. I have to ask him certain questions, and Mr. Robb will want to cross-examine; and probably you will want to examine him.

(Mr. Crooks.) I suppose, if we had been legally advised—but, there, I don't complain of that. But I don't see where the master comes in at the moment.

(The Inspector.) The master comes in in cross-examination.

(Mr. Crooks) (to Mr. Robb.) Oh, I think I can account for one or two people like you. If the master is to be cross-examined, I would say that the rise of in-door and out-door poor cannot affect him.

(The Inspector.) Oh, yes; it can. It may be due to a relaxation of discipline, the small amount of labour exacted from inmates, excessive dietary, excessive allowance of tobacco, &c. The cause of the disproportionate expenditure on in-maintenance is certainly a point for the master.

(Mr. Crooks.) As to food; the master does not order the food; the guardians do that.

(The Inspector.) The master receives and gives the food, and is responsible for seeing that the food paid for by the guardians is delivered at the workhouse, and that stores are not unduly consumed.

(Mr. Crooks.) But, so far as the cost of the articles is concerned, that is entirely a matter which the guardians are responsible for. We have no right to put that on to any official.

(The Inspector.) The master is to be called on another matter—as to the general Inquiry into the administration of the workhouse.

(Mr. Crooks.) If we are not careful we shall mix one thing with another to an alarming extent. We want to be clear, because if you are going to inquire into the financial and industrial conditions of the union I shall have to talk about it. We are mixing up a dozen different things—there is the question of the administration of Laindon Farm Colony, and—

(The Inspector.) All of which have an influence on the cost.

(Mr. Crooks.) It cannot have an effect upon the industrial condition of the place.

(The Inspector.) That is another thing.

(Mr. Crooks.) That is the cause of all our trouble—the industrial condition of the place. We want to prove that the industrial conditions of the place are of such a character that we were compelled to spend the money. Secondly, we are going to prove that, as far as administration is concerned, we are the most economical body in London. That is a very tall thing to say without being able to prove it, but we will. I would mention that our value per head of the population is only £4 12s. in Poplar, while the value per head of London as a whole is something like £8 8s. odd. We are only half as well off, and, considering the large increase in pauperism, and the enormous amount of work we have had to do, we are the very lowest in all London in official expenses, viz., we are less than 14 per cent.—no one in London can compare with us for our total expenditure. If the industrial and financial condition of the union is to be your first consideration then we will deal with it at once and before these petty details about cakes for children, the number of tablets of soap used, whether officers should have streaky bacon or not, or whether a man once went to the master's office and had a drink of brandy. Why, he may have been taken ill. All these things summed up cannot amount to more than one-eighth of a penny in the pound.

(The Inspector.) All the same, I will call the master. The line will be to inquire into the administration of the guardians and their officers, and into the general condition of the union and its pauperism. It is more convenient to take the administration of the guardians and their officers first. You say the increase in out-door pauperism in 1904 was due to the exceptional conditions of the union?

(Mr. Crooks.) We will prove that pauperism was exceptional; that our administration was economical and efficient. We shall prove that by our total expenditure.

(The Inspector.) You will have all the relieving officers and the books to help you to prove it.

(Mr. Crooks.) We understand that the municipal alliance does not call witnesses?

(The Inspector.) No doubt the municipal alliance will give me the names of the witnesses, and if I think they are necessary I will call them. You will have fair notice before they are called.

(Mr. Crooks.) I don't blame a permanent Department of the State for getting evidence where it can, but I object to such a Department taking on an outside body, and using them as an adjunct to the Department to give these people a handle to come here on a fishing expedition. I enter my protest against it. May I correct one of your charts? The chart which told against us, I suppose, with the Poplar and Canning Town figures. The chart was made, as you know, up to 40 something—46—and then we are jumped clean up, and the figure put to 88. Although Canning Town went up to 88, we never got beyond 46, and although they dropped to 24, we also ought to have had the credit of dropping down to 28 also. This is important, as we are fighting charts now.

Mr. W. A. MADELEY; sworn and examined.

(The Inspector.) What is your name?—William Alfred Madeley.

Q. How long have you been master of the workhouse?—Thirteen years.

Q. What was your previous occupation?—I was for five years general relieving officer. Previous to that I was four years at St. George's, Hanover Square, and before that second relieving officer at Lewisham Union.

Q. Have you ever had any complaint made against you or your conduct?—Never in my public life.

Q. You have now resigned?—I have.

Q. How long ago?—A month or six weeks ago.

Q. When does the resignation take effect?—At the end of June, quarter day, the 24th.

Q. Do you remember the date of the new dietary table?—We have had several—I can't remember.

Q. Under the new Dietary Order of the Local Government Board?—Two years ago, I think, sir.

Q. Was there much change made in the dietary?—Yes, sir, there was a change.

Q. Was one of the changes that a great deal more mutton was used than formerly?—Speaking from memory, I think there was more than in the old one.

Q. You have, I believe, a system in Poplar that no work—nothing like skilled labour—is done by the pauper?—That is so.

Q. Have you got an order from the guardians to that effect?—There is an order, yes, sir.

Q. Can you give me the date of that order?—Some years ago, sir; I could not tell you the exact date.

Q. In your judgment, did that order have any effect on the discipline of the workhouse?—No, I don't think so.

Q. You still find it possible to give sufficient labour to the able-bodied men?—Oh, yes.

Q. How many temporary officers are employed in the workhouse?—I have not seen them lately. I should say about 22 or 23.

Mr. Madeley.
7 June.

Mr. Madeley.

(Mr. Lough.) Twenty-five.

7 June.

(The Inspector.) Is that a greater number than originally?—No, I have had more.

Q. Do you employ much out-door labour in the house?—Yes, sir; labourers—casual labourers.

Q. Are you in charge of them?—Yes.

Q. What supervision do you exercise over them?—According to the work being done.

Q. Have they a fixed number of hours?—There are trades union wages and hours.

Q. Do you check the time they go into the workhouse?—Every man has a ticket.

Q. You do that yourself?—Yes.

Q. I hold in my hand a summary of the porter's book from the 27th of January, 1905, to the 27th of March, 1906—for a year—sixty-one weeks. I have here the visits to the workhouse. I find that Mr. McCarthy visited the workhouse 386 days, or 6·3 days per week. Is that so?—That would be correct.

Q. I also find that he visited two or three times in the day. Is that so?—Very often; I do not think it was two or three times a day.

Q. Read that?—That book is correct.

Q. Where did Mr. McCarthy get his meals?—He has had dinner with me occasionally.

Q. And where did he have his supper?—He did not often have any supper.

Q. Would that be out of your rations?—From my table—yes, sir.

Q. What is your table?—The scale laid down by the Local Government Board.

Q. I think other guardians attended at different times in the week. Did they dine with you also?—Perhaps they did.

Q. Did they go about the house?—I didn't often see them as they came in.

Q. You say that guardians came in every day. I have here the Auditor's report. I think there is one week that shews a consumption of beer to the extent of 118 pints. Who got that beer?—There was a beer list kept and the names of those receiving it were put down.

Q. Were they able-bodied men or infirm?—Chiefly infirm, but there were some able-bodied men who received beer who did laborious work.

Q. How much?—Some had half-a-pint and others a pint.

Q. I see the waste is considerable—80 pints in a week. What did you do with the waste?—I don't know.

Q. Did you use the beer yourself?—I ordered a barrel which I paid for myself.

Q. Your own beer?—Yes.

Q. Did you share that beer with the guardians?—I have given a guardian a glass of beer.

Q. Was there a regular and systematic drinking of beer?—No.

Q. They went to the cellar?—It was perfectly open when they came down.

Q. Your beer or the guardians' beer?—My own beer.

Q. Here is another report which says the waste of spirits amounted to 4½ ounces in a week. What became of that waste?—I suppose it would be caused in the serving out.

Q. Now about the soda-water. Did you consume any of it yourself?—I don't drink soda-water or ginger-beer.

Q. How are the guardians' teas provided?—In the men's kitchen.

Q. Of what do they consist?—A little cake, bread and butter, and perhaps a ham sandwich.

Q. Is that all?—Yes. They may have an extra sometimes.

Q. Any beer?—Oh no, sir. A cup of tea.

Q. And is that entered in your book?—I believe Mr. Walton kept the books as they came from the stores.

Q. There were other luxuries?—Not to my memory.

Q. You have a son?—Yes.

Q. Where does he live?—In East India Dock Road.

Q. Does he get his meals at the workhouse?—He has been occasionally to dinner.

Q. How long ago?—I told my son I thought it time he should live elsewhere.

Q. How old is he?—20, sir.

Q. What sum did he pay?—4s. 2d. per week.

Q. Have you any other children?—I have a daughter.

Q. How old is she?—She is 18.

Q. Does she live in the workhouse?—She is still in the house.

Q. Are the guardians aware of that?—Yes, and I regularly report the fact in my journal.

Q. How often?—Every quarter when I pay the money into the bank.

Q. Why did you resign your position as master of the workhouse?

(Mr. Crooks.) May I suggest you should ask whether it was due to any quarrel with the guardians?

(The Inspector.) You see there is a question of facts?—I took the position of general relieving officer before I became master, and after 21 years' service I thought I had done enough for the poor law.

Q. Did you have any quarrel with the guardians?—No quarrel.

Q. None whatever?—None whatever.

Q. Did you have some domestic trouble?—I have had some.

Q. Was that the reason you resigned?—That had something to do with it—yes, the chief reason.

Q. What reason did you give the guardians for resigning?—I simply said I was resigning.

Q. You are an applicant for a pension?—I have asked the guardians for an allowance.

Q. Is the matron entitled to a pension?—I believe she is.

Q. Don't you know?—The guardians have already considered the case, and I think she will have some years of service added, provided your Board will approve of it.

Q. Can you explain to me how goods are received in the workhouse?—They are brought there by the porter's gate and the things are taken in by Mr. Walton.

Q. Are they weighed?—Yes.

Q. Do you have anything to do with the invoices?—I sign them after they have gone through the assistant master.

Q. Do you exercise any supervision yourself over, say, deliveries of meat?—As a rule I have generally seen the meat in myself.

Q. Every morning?—Yes, mostly.

Q. Does the meat come in every day?—Yes. It comes straight in to the lodge and then goes to the kitchen.

Q. Do you handle the meat?—I see it weighed.

Q. Can you tell foreign meat from other meat?—Yes.

Q. The meat is always up to the standard?—Yes.

Q. One more question—have you any direct knowledge of receiving any profit or emoluments from any of the contractors or tradesmen employed by the guardians?—No. I never had.

(The Inspector.) Does anyone else wish to ask Mr. Madeley any questions?

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Madeley, you say you have never directly or indirectly received any emolument from any contractor?—I do.

Q. Do you know Mr. Jacobs?—Oh, well, sir, I do.

Q. You know Mr. Jacobs?—I do. I have said so.

Q. Was he a contractor?—Yes.

Q. Who used the broughams?—I did.

Q. What for?—For my private use.

Q. What did you want broughams for your private use for?—For my private use when I wanted one.

Q. What use did you make of them?—Just where I was going to.

Q. Did they take you to theatres and restaurants in the West End?—I am not going to say where, when I was off duty.

Q. Where did they take you to?—I am not going to tell you.

Q. Did you ever have the brougham to take you to Frascati's?—I am not going to say.

Q. Did you take anyone with you?—I am not going to say.

(Mr. Watts.) I must protest against this way of asking a man to commit himself. This is not the administration of the Poplar Guardians. It is absolutely shameful.

(Mr. Robb.) What other carriages did you have?

(Mr. Lansbury.) Is not cross-examination, Mr. Davy, on some thing that has taken place in examination? May I point out to you that this is altogether out of order. He is cross-examining him on something else.

(The Inspector.) I asked him if he had ever directly or indirectly received any remuneration from contractors. He said in answer that he had not. Now he is being cross-examined on that reply.

(Mr. Crooks.) I protest against this fishing for evidence. It was 13 years ago, and is now being dragged up.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Robb will have to prove this when he calls his witnesses. But how can he call them without having put questions to Mr. Madeley?

(Mr. Lansbury.) But surely the law of evidence is that you should call such evidence against a man and then call on him to disprove it. What you are trying to do is to make Mr. Madeley out of his own mouth commit himself.

(The Inspector.) I have examined him, Mr. Robb is cross-examining him, and then you can cross-examine him.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Are you going to do this with all the witnesses?

(The Inspector.) Oh yes.

(Mr. Watts.) I don't care what Mr. Robb can bring up against me, but I do protest against a man being treated as Mr. Madeley is being. If Mr. Robb has anything to bring up against Mr. Madeley let him bring up a charge, and make Mr. Madeley disprove it.

(The Inspector.) I am afraid you don't understand the order of procedure.

(Mr. Watts.) But I understand what is fair play.

(The Inspector.) It would be very unfair to call witnesses against him now.

(Mr. Watts.) Let Mr. Robb tabulate his charges against Mr. Madeley.

(Mr. Lansbury.) And all the other officers.

(The Inspector.) You can cross-examine each one.

(Mr. Lansbury.) You are asking Mr. Madeley to prove himself innocent of something he never heard of before.

(The Inspector.) But he has heard of the writ.

(Mr. Lansbury.) He may have heard of 40 writs, but the point is that Mr. Jacobs has not yet been put on his oath.

(The Inspector.) If Mr. Jacobs had been called without this being put in, he would not have been heard.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Then I think Mr. Robb is learning something of legal procedure.

(Mr. Ford.) I understand that Mr. Robb has repeatedly told us that he was going to call his evidence to prove the allegations he made. If I knew the lines the alliance was going to take up—

(The Inspector.) Are you going to call Mr. Jacobs?

(Mr. Robb.) Yes.

(Mr. Lansbury.) First?

(Mr. Ford.) We want your witnesses first and we shall want the Inspector to cross-examine them.

(The Inspector.) We cannot have much more of this.

(Mr. Robb.) If we are going to have much more of this I shall ask you, Mr. Davy, to take the Inquiry somewhere else. I shall ask you to take it to the City of London. It is impossible to carry on an Inquiry such as this with these continual interruptions. I shall have to ask you to take it somewhere else.

(Mr. Ford.) All I ask is for fair play.

(The Inspector.) You can protest just as much as you like. I am in the chair and I shall conduct the Inquiry in accordance with my view of what fair play is.

(Mr. Ford.) I take your recollection back to the beginning when Mr. Robb intimated that he was going to call his evidence at the close of his statement.

(The Inspector.) If Mr. Robb did not ask any questions of this witness he could not call Mr. Jacobs.

(Mr. Lansbury.) You have already said you would call witnesses.

(Mr. Robb.) I shall call them at the proper time. My friends will understand that no amount of this sort of thing will induce me to call evidence until we have had the officers in the box in the ordinary way.

(Mr. Crooks.) I assure you that my experience is exceedingly limited on these points of jurisprudence and legal evidence. The counsel for the prosecution which represents the Local Government Board in the person of Mr. Robb is endeavouring to convict a witness out of his own mouth. It has been laid down that you cannot do this. Witnesses can always claim protection from questions of this character.

(The Inspector.) Do you mean to say that the representative of one of the parties to the Inquiry cannot cross-examine witnesses?

(Mr. Crooks.) I maintain that it is not their case. It is the Poplar Guardians against the Local Government Board. It is nothing to do with the municipal alliance. Here they come on a fishing expedition. He is trying to stretch the law of evidence. He would not be allowed to break the law of evidence unless he had a sympathetic judge. We protest against his interference in this Inquiry at all. I say you should never allow this kind of thing to go on. It should never be allowed to be put in against this board of guardians. If there was a legal gentleman standing in my place, Mr. Robb would not dare to put leading questions to a witness. He would not dare to do it.

(The Inspector.) Now, Mr. Crooks, it is the usual practice, the invariable practice, to put such questions to witnesses in cross-examination in order that they may have an opportunity of contradicting.

(Mr. Crooks.) Evidence should be given against him before he is cross-examined on it.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Will you allow me?

(The Inspector.) Oh, no.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I understand you have called Mr. Madeley because he is going away from England. He is to give evidence on some charges, proof of which is to be given after he has gone away. Such a thing has never before happened in a court of law. It just happens that thirteen years ago I had to play the part of Mr. Robb in this room, and I was circumscribed in every way and not allowed to put leading questions. I was not allowed to cross-examine, or to put a question such as Mr. Robb has done to-day. I had to supply the Local Government Board with a written statement of what each witness was going to say; I had to supply it to the board of guardians and to Mr. Deason, the gentleman whose conduct was under discussion. In this Inquiry you have just tumbled down. Last night I got the précis of your statement. Now we have statements made about Jacobs and Madeley—Jacobs who has lost his contract and has issued a writ against Mr. Madeley. You have conducted this Inquiry just as you conducted the private inquiry. You made a bargain with me and Mr. Ford that we should always be present and you never allowed us to be present. You conducted the inquiry underground. You may conduct the Inquiry just as you like, but we shall be heard outside. Here is Mr. Madeley. He may or may not have done anything. He is cross-examined and is told that someone is going to give evidence on a future occasion. That is the point. I say there is no law in England that will defend your conduct in having taken such a course. Perhaps we may be able to find some means of taking legal advice.

(The Inspector.) I shall only be too glad if you will take legal advice. Mr. Madeley may refuse to answer the questions on the ground that he may incriminate himself, but I don't think he will.

(Mr. Robb.) What other carriages did you have beside the broughams?—Dog carts.

Mr. Madeley.

7 June.

Mr. Madeley.

7 June.

Q. What is the total amount of Jacobs' account against you?—Just under £50.

Q. Over what period does this extend?—It extends about 13 years.

Q. Was it ever sent in before you gave up your office?—No, not until he lost the contract.

Q. Then you had an account running with this man for 13 years?—No, I did not. I never said I had an account. Then he sent something in and said I had not paid it.

Q. Then I ask you for what period the account covers?—I have not got an account and I cannot tell you.

Q. Then I ask you to produce it?—I cannot do it to-day.

Q. Then you can produce it at an adjournment. Will you undertake to produce it then?—It is a private matter and has nothing to do with anyone else.

Q. This account extends over 13 years?—I do not say it did.

Q. Your private account with one of the contractors to the workhouse for carriages supplied to you. Is that right?—Let Mr. Jacobs apply for it in the ordinary way.

Q. He never applied for it all these years till you left. Did you ever think he would apply?—I did not owe it and he could not apply for it.

Q. Did you ever think he would apply for it?—I did not know or trouble about it at all.

Q. How did you treat that account for which he never applied. How did you treat it?—I don't know.

Q. Did you think you were going to have carriages from Jacobs for nothing?—I am not going to say anything to incriminate myself. Mr. Jacobs can summons me if he likes.

Q. I ask you again, did you expect to get carriages from Jacobs for nothing?—My dear sir, if Mr. Jacobs has anything to say let him go to the proper court.

Q. I am asking you for an explanation of having a private account running all these years with one of the contractors to the workhouse. An account which you say was never applied for?—I am not going to discuss that account with you.

Q. I ask you to produce that account. You decline on the ground that it may incriminate you?—Nothing of the kind.

Q. Then I shall ask the Inspector to direct an officer to produce that account?—Let Mr. Jacobs fight it.

Q. Here is the position. Mr. Jacobs is the contractor to the workhouse for carriages. He supplies you with private carriages to the extent of nearly £50. That account you tell us extends over a period of 13 years. I ask why it was never sent in and never paid?—Who said it was never paid? I don't say so. I know what I am going to do if Mr. Jacobs takes it in hand.

Q. You have no further explanation?—No.

Q. Have you received anything from any other contractor?—I have told you once.

Q. Well now, you are on very friendly terms with other contractors, are you not?—Not that I know of.

Q. Were they in the habit of visiting you at your house?—If they come on business I have to see them.

Q. Do they visit you at your private apartments?—They have been there on business.

Q. Always on business?—Yes.

Q. Do you visit Mr. Pyle?—Very seldom. I have to go to his place on matters of business.

Q. Very seldom?—Yes.

Q. And do you visit him?—Yes, I have known Mr. Pyle for years.

Q. Do you keep a record of your visits?—I have something else to do than that.

Q. You keep no records of your visits?—No.

Q. Do you ever visit Mr. Blott at Kensington?—When necessary.

Q. When was it necessary?—When business rendered it so.

Q. Did you visit Mr. Percival?—No.

Q. Have you been there since your resignation?—I will not answer the question.

Q. Do you keep a record of telephone calls at the workhouse?—I do not.

Q. Does anyone?—Not that I know of.

Q. Immediately after your resignation, were you engaged daily in telephoning to various contractors?—Not that I know of.

Q. Will you swear you were not?—I could not say what I was doing.

Q. What?—I could not swear I was. I used to telephone frequently while I was there.

Q. Did you telephone to Percival on several occasions?—Yes.

Q. What about, after your resignation?—I do not know I telephoned afterwards.

Q. Did you have a private brougham on one or two occasions to drive to his place in the Borough?—Not in the Borough.

Q. Have you had a private brougham to drive to him?—I could not say.

Q. With regard to the beer, is it true that the cellar was known amongst the inmates as the "Madeley Arms"?—It may be, but still I never heard of it.

Q. Who had the key of the cellar?—Myself and the assistant master.

Q. No one else?—No.

Q. Did the matron have a key?—The matron has a key, but did not go there.

Q. Were glasses kept there?—Yes.

Q. Down in the cellar?—Yes.

Q. About a dozen?—Oh, no.

Q. I suggest to you that the crockery store is next door?—Yes.

Q. About a dozen glasses were brought out from time to time?—Oh, no.

Q. How many glasses?—I could not tell you.

Q. What were they there at all for?—To drink out of.

Q. In the cellar. Who used to drink in the cellar?—I did.

Q. In the cellar?—Yes.

Q. Who else used to drink there?—Any friends of mine might come and have a glass of beer.

Q. Did not that include some of the guardians?—Oh, yes. They have had a glass of beer, some of them.

Q. In the cellar?—Yes.

Q. Many of them?—Oh, I could not say.

Q. What became of this "waste"—80 pints in one week?—I told the Inspector I did not keep the books. You can ask the assistant master.

Q. But I ask you, sir; do you know what became of it?—No, the waste is charged; the books will show.

Q. On your oath—do you know what became of 80 pints of waste?—I don't keep the books.

Q. That is not an answer to my question?—That is all I can give you.

Q. Do you know?—I don't keep the books.

Q. That is not an answer?—It is the only answer I can give you.

Q. Will you pledge your oath you do not know what became of it?—I won't pledge it at all.

Q. What became of any portion of that eighty pints of waste in one week? (*Witness did not reply.*)

Q. Is that all the explanation you can give?—Yes.

Q. Any beer for the inmates is supposed to be supplied only on the doctor's orders?—That is so.

Q. Was it supplied upon the doctor's orders?—The book was always seen by the doctor.

Q. Did the doctor express any opinion as to why it was required in certain cases or not?—Not to me; he has not. He put it on.

Q. Do you know the doctor protested against the supply of beer to certain of the inmates?—Sometimes he did, sometimes he didn't.

Q. By whose order was beer supplied to inmates notwithstanding the doctor's protests?—We could not serve any beer without it was in the doctor's books. That is perfectly clear. It is all down.

Q. You say some of the guardians have lunched and dined with you?—I do.

Q. Those supplies coming out of the stores?—They were out of my rations.

Q. Was anything special ever sent for?—No.

Q. Do you remember sending out for salmon on one occasion?—If I sent out for it I ate it and put it in the books.

Q. You sent out for salmon for Mr. McCarthy?—No, I did not send out.

Q. Will you pledge your oath on that?—If I sent out for salmon I ate it. If anyone came in, they could have it. I was not afraid of what I did, and if I did it, I put it on the books.

Q. What books?—I don't know, it was in the proper division.

Q. What are the books you refer to, then?—

(*The Inspector.*) Had you fixed rations, measured out once or twice a week?—Yes.

Q. Anything you liked to order?—No, something in reason. I have sent to the fishmonger's.

Q. Do you receive any money?—No, all rations are contracted for.

Q. Did you order rations from the contractors?—No, they came through the stores. If I thought I would have salmon I had it.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Has beer been served to guardians in your apartments as well as in the cellar?—I have private beer at my own house apart from the cellar.

Q. Private beer in your house as well?—Yes.

Q. Now have you been absent from duty at all during the 12 months preceding your resignation?—Absent from duty? I could not live in the house altogether. I went out at times.

Q. Have you been frequently absent?—No, I don't think so.

Q. For week-ends?—Oh, no; I have not been week-ends.

Q. Is there any book?—Yes, the book will give it to you to the minute. I have been always booked out, and always told my officials to book me out.

Q. Have you been to Eastbourne repeatedly?—No, I have not.

Q. Will you swear that?—I do swear that.

Q. Have you ever supplied stationery from the workhouse store to any guardian?—No, I have not. They might have asked for a piece of paper or a pen in the private office.

Q. Did you direct a parcel of stationery to be made up for Mr. Finden, one of the guardians?—No.

Q. On the occasion of the annual outing, was a carriage and pair provided for you and the matron?—No, it was paid for out of the funds I collected. I have been in the habit of collecting funds to take the old people out, and the carriage and pair was given in.

Q. Who was the carriage and pair paid for by?—I collected the money and handed it to the Christian Community.

Q. Who did you pay for the carriage and pair?—It was paid for by the Christian Community, who take the old people out each year with the guardians' consent.

(*The Inspector.*) That was done by the Christian Community?—Yes, I get £30 or £40 together every year for it.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I want you to give some general information. You are master of the workhouse, and ought to know all the figures. What was the amount spent on newspapers last year?—It was read out once.

Q. £112—is that right. I called for that card specifying the newspapers for particular officers?—It is in the general office, I think.

Q. I call for the card specifying these newspapers?—It is in the general office. You can hear that.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) Give him an order of admission, and he can go and see it.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Then the sum I stated was correct—£112?—I don't take it as correct.

Q. What do you think it was. You were master of the house. If it is not correct, give me the correct figure?—No, certainly not.

Q. If you say £112 is not correct, give me the correct figure?—I can't give it to you.

Q. Get the book and get it?—

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) Mr. Inspector, do you allow people to be talked to in this sort of way, because, if so, we shall say some pleasant things to this man. "Get a book and get it." Mr. Robb is not a paid bully, is he? You are supposed to be impartial. Is that the proper way to speak to a witness? And you are laughing about it.

(*The Inspector.*) I don't think I heard him say that.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) After that, Mr. Inspector, I hope there will be no suggestion that we use unjustifiable language.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I submit it is the duty of any officer who is called, to give us the proper information.

(*The Inspector.*) Of course, only within his scope.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Is it true, Mr. Madeley, that you had the list of papers I have read out?—Yes.

Q. You had the *Telegraph*?—I had all those you read out.

Q. But I want to go through them?—I had all of them.

Q. That is one point proved, at all events.

(*The Inspector.*) What do you do with them?—I give them back, and they are distributed to the young men, and then they go round the house.

(*Mr. Robb.*) All the papers were sent to you?—Yes.

Q. And that is a correct list?—Yes.

Q. Can you tell us the amount spent on the workhouse garden last year?—No, only what you say; I daresay it is about right.

Q. Is it correct that labour was imported from Forest Gate?—There is a contract entered into with a nurseryman at Manor Park.

Q. At the time that the labour was employed were there a number of able-bodied inmates?—There were men, so-called able-bodied.

Q. Men so-called?—Yes.

Q. How many were there?—Oh, I couldn't say.

Q. Were there any who could have done a job of digging, etc.?—Never handled a tool in their lives.

(*The Inspector.*) Is it a large garden?—There are several plots.

Q. Is everything for the purpose of the workhouse?—Yes, to make the place a little brighter.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Just before your resignation, were you voted £50 for extra services?—Yes.

Q. What did those extra services consist of?—I don't want to answer this question.

(*The Inspector.*) I think you had better answer it?—It is for the supervision of the labourers—direct labour, and also the removal of cases to a convalescent institution.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Have you any details showing the amount of work you did?—Oh, yes.

(*The Inspector.*) We have a letter about that from the guardians.

(*Mr. Robb.*) What work did you supervise?—The direct labour of the house, and the removal of people to institutions.

Q. Direct labour?—Yes.

Q. Well, what would that amount to in the course of 12 months?—I could not say.

Q. Have you got any details?—No.

Q. A little painting?—Big painting.

Q. What else?—The ordinary direct labour of the house.

Q. What would that consist of?—Painting, brick-laying, carpentry, and other works—the general work of the house.

Q. They would be things coming within your purview as master, in the ordinary way?—(*Witness dissented.*)

Q. What extraordinary duties did you perform?—Those are some of them.

Q. Did you supervise the redecorating of the assistant master's room?—I had to get that done, and it was done.

Q. This is the class of work you were paid to supervise. When was it done?—I don't know.

Mr. Madeley. Q. What did it cost?—I don't know.

7 June.

(*The Inspector.*) What did the work cost?—I cannot say. I do not know the price of the work. The work was not priced.

Q. There is some misconception with regard to this. Will you tell me whether that gratuity was voted for more than one year?—It is the third time the Local Government Board has sanctioned it.

(*The Inspector.*) But we have not sanctioned it this year.

(*Mr. Lough.*) Not at present.

(*Mr. Robb.*) This redecoration of the assistant master's room that you supervised. What is the size of the room, approximately?—An ordinary size sitting-room.

Q. Do you know what it cost for labour alone?—No.

Q. Was this a part of the work?—It was only one job. There were half-a-dozen going on.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) May I remind you, Mr. Davy, that you put a question to Mr. Madeley yourself about the supervision of the work, and keeping the time sheets, and that sort of thing, and he answered you that he did it. That is the work that the Local Government Board has year by year sanctioned the payment of £50 for as extra services, and it is not within the purview of the work of the master.

(*The Inspector.*) Can you tell me the date when the guardians decided to employ direct labour instead of inmates?

(*Mr. Crooks.*) It is years now. We had a superintendent of labour, who left, and Mr. Madeley took over the responsibilities of the work. I think we paid the superintendent something like £180 a year, and the work is now done for £50. We are anxious that this point should be brought out in a proper manner.

(*Witness.*) And I did the whole of the removals except settlement.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Were there any other officers employed on the work as well as you?—Yes, I only supervised the arrangements; I did not actually take them away.

Q. The actual removals were performed by other officers?—Yes.

Q. And you were paid this amount for some arrangements you made at the workhouse relating to removals?—Yes.

Q. We have not finished about the master's room. Did it cost £12 odd for labour alone in re-decorating that room?—I could not say.

(*The Inspector.*) You paid the men?—Yes, sir, every week; all the staff I pay.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Will you kindly look into that, Mr. Madeley, and let us know who was responsible for it, and what the cost was. Would £12 be a reasonable sum for labour alone for re-papering and painting that room?—I could not say.

Q. You could not say, but, you know, you are an expert, and were paid £50 a year for supervising it?—No, I am not paid £50 for supervising.

Q. You cannot say. Surely you were not given £50 a year to supervise and you knew nothing of the work?—I did not say I was; it was removal work as well.

Q. You know the room well?—I know it well.

Q. I ask you whether £12 for labour and re-decorating was reasonable?—I say I don't know.

Q. Is it a fair price?—I don't know; I can't say.

(*The Inspector.*) When was the work done?—I could not say.

Q. During the last few months?—No, I think last year, or the year before.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Perhaps you will kindly have that looked into, Mr. Madeley. Now, as to water; can you tell us the amount of water consumed last year in the workhouse, and what was paid for it?—I heard what was said—75 gallons per head against 35 gallons outside.

Q. And that is about right? (*Witness assented.*)

Q. How do you account for using 75 gallons per head?—Our regulations must be obeyed, and people must be kept clean, and people must have a bath, and the place must be kept clean.

Q. How do you account for the fact that while the consumption per head in London for every purpose,

streets and everything, is 31 gallons per head of the population, for the domestic purposes of the workhouse alone you consume 75 gallons per head?—There is an immense amount of laundry done, and water is used in keeping the place clean.

Q. Is there a road there that is watered every day?—No, it is washed down occasionally—about two or three times a week.

Q. Is it sometimes watered immediately after a heavy rain?—I say no.

Q. Have you no other explanation to offer of the 75 gallons?—No.

Q. You said, in answer to the Inspector, that you had two children—one aged 18 and the other 20. The boy had been maintained in the workhouse until recently?—Yes.

Q. Was the boy earning a salary of £100 a year?—I believe it was something like that.

Q. Under the Poplar Borough Council?—Yes.

Q. And what did he pay for his keep?—Four and two-pence per week.

Q. Four and two-pence, or three and six-pence?—Four and two-pence.

Q. Was that an adequate amount?—It was for a little one.

Q. Was it adequate payment for a young man of 20 earning £100 a year. Did he have the best provisions as you did?—He lived from my table altogether.

Q. I suppose, then, he had Mazawattee tea at 2s. 6d. per pound, best pickles, and Gorgonzola cheese?—No, I don't have Gorgonzola cheese; I don't like it. It was never put on my table.

Q. We were told that the delicacies were all for the officers?—I did not have them on the table.

Q. All these things were sent to your table if you required them?—Yes.

Q. Having regard to that, is 4s. 2d. a proper payment for your son's keep?—That was the payment laid down by the board.

Q. When he was a small child?—Yes.

Q. It was never altered when he grew up?—(*Witness acquiesced.*)

(*The Inspector.*) Why did he leave the workhouse?—Because I thought he ought to be outside.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) Does not the master pay for goods actually drawn from the stores?

(*The Inspector.*) I understand that the payment mentioned was to last up to fourteen; but owing to the fact that the Auditor does not see it, or it escapes the attention of the clerk, the payment goes on thereafter at the same rate. That is the way I look at it?—The same rations are always drawn.

Q. You never draw more?—No, never draw more.

Q. You drew no more when he was 18 than when he was a child?—No.

(*Mr. Robb.*) It was your duty to exercise supervision over the inmates of the workhouse. Were there any tasks prescribed for the able-bodied inmates?—There was work, but no task work.

Q. Was there any regular work?—Oh, yes.

Q. Were they all kept regularly employed at something?—Yes.

Q. Have you read Mr. Oxley's report?—Yes.

Q. He finds the work at the house not sufficient to keep the men employed?—No.

Q. Is the work sufficient to keep the men employed?—Yes.

Q. Where do you keep a record of the work that is done year by year?—There is no record. The place has to be kept clean.

Q. How many able-bodied inmates did you have per day within the last year?—According to the books between 200 and 300.

Q. And they were required in addition to the officers to keep the place clean?—Yes, they were there to keep it clean.

Q. So there is sufficient work for them?—We keep them going.

Q. Keep them going?—Yes.

Q. Is it not a fact that day by day there were a large number of these able-bodied men doing absolutely nothing?—No. They were in the wood-shed chopping up wood or doing something else.

Q. The whole of them in the wood-shed?—Oh no, they were distributed all over the place.

Q. Have you read Mr. Oxley's report?—Yes.

Q. You agree with his conclusions generally. Mr. Oxley found that there was not sufficient work. Some of the men were among the unemployed?—(No answer.)

Q. Is there any regular system of providing any sort of work or task for these men?—Work there must be in a big place like this, cleaning the place and bedding, and scrubbing and cleaning.

Q. You have an in-door staff of about 79 officers?—About that.

Q. 79 or 80 officers, and then you have about 200 or 300 able-bodied inmates. Do you suggest that their time is fully occupied in just cleaning up?—But they have all got something to do.

(The Inspector.) When did you take charge in Poplar?—In 1894.

Q. Was there any task work then?—Yes.

Q. When was it given up?—About two or three years after.

Q. What was the task work?—Picking oakum chiefly and other things.

Q. Is there such work now?—No.

Q. Have you any organised work of that character now?—We have wood-chopping or tying wood bundles.

Q. Has Landon affected your numbers?—They have gone down. Not to a great extent, but to some extent.

Mr. Madeley.

7 June.

SECOND DAY.

Friday, June 8th, 1906.

Mr. W. A. MADELEY; recalled, and further examined.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Madeley, you told us yesterday afternoon that you never received any sort of present from Jacobs. Do you, upon consideration, confirm that?—I do.

Q. Will you look at that cheque and counterfoil. Read the counterfoil, read the whole of it, and look at the endorsement on the back. Is that your signature on the back of that cheque?—Yes.

Q. That is a cheque dated the 12th of February, 1894, London and South Western Bank, Mile End Branch, drawn by Alfred Jacobs in favour of W. A. Madeley for £6?—Yes.

Q. On the counterfoil is "Bd. & Com. £3, £1 com., £1 com., £1 com." It is endorsed in your handwriting?—I did not see the counterfoil until now. It is the first time I have seen the counterfoil.

Q. What did that cheque represent?—As I said yesterday, Mr. Jacobs had borrowed money of me.

Q. How many sums?—I cannot say.

Q. When did he borrow money from you?—Some years ago.

Q. Can you explain why he should put "Com."?—I never saw the counterfoil until to-day.

Q. Can you explain why this "order" cheque was altered to "bearer"?—No, I cannot.

Q. Why did you endorse it?—I had to sign it when the money was paid.

Q. It is a "bearer" cheque?—Yes.

Q. Well, now, do you want to give any further explanation of that?—No.

Q. I ask, sir, that that cheque may be impounded. (To witness.) I ought to ask you whether the cheque and the counterfoil were written in your presence?—I never saw the counterfoil until you showed it to me this morning.

Q. Were you on good terms with Mr. Jacobs at that time?—Quite.

Q. Friendly with him?—Yes.

Q. Had you any quarrel in 1894?—I cannot tell you.

Q. Can you suggest any reason why he should put "Com." on the counterfoil if it were not true?—I do not know.

Q. Have you looked at the writing?—Yes.

Q. It was apparently all done at the same time?—I cannot say; I had not seen the counterfoil until this morning.

Q. There was another contractor for conveyances of the name of Clark?—Yes.

Q. Did Clark and Jacobs meet in your office at the workhouse?—They have been there.

Q. For what reason?—Oh, for a chat, that is all the reason I know.

Q. A chat about what?—I do not know.

Q. They would not go there to chat about the weather?—Probably not.

Q. What did they come to chat about—these two contractors?—I do not know.

Q. They were in competition, were they not?—I do not know that they were.

Q. They were two rival contractors?—I do not know.

Q. Now, sir, as master of the workhouse, do you know anything about its administration?—Oh! yes, but that has nothing to do with the administration.

Q. Can you tell us whether or not Clark and Jacobs were rival contractors?—I do not know.

Q. But they both tendered for the same contract?—Yes.

Q. And were rival contractors?—I do not know.

Q. Why did you lend them your office to meet in?—I do not know.

Q. You do not know why you lent them your office. They had it?—They went in.

Q. Are you accustomed to let any outside people go into your office?—If they wanted to see me they would.

Q. But you have told us they did not want to see you, but to chat together?—Yes, I have.

Q. Are you in the habit of letting any outside people use your office to chat in?—No.

Q. Why did you allow Clark and Jacobs?—I cannot tell you.

Q. Well, I want you to carry your memory back and tell us why you allowed these two contractors to meet in your office and to chat matters over?—I cannot tell you.

Q. I must press you to answer that?—Well, I cannot.

Q. Do you suggest any possible reason why these two men, rival contractors, meet in your office and chat matters over?—(No answer.)

Q. Did they come there by arrangement with you?—I do not know.

Q. Did they come there to arrange the amount for which they were to respectively tender?—I do not know.

Q. Will you deny it?—I do not know.

Mr. Madeley.

8 June.

Mr. Madeley

8 June.

Q. What was this mysterious meeting about. Do you allow people to come in from the street and use your office in that way. What were these people doing there?—I do not know.

Q. I suggest these two men came there to meet you and discuss their tenders, and that they arranged with you figures that they should tender?—I am not going to answer any further.

Q. And that you said it would be all right?—I did not.

Q. What did you tell them?—I do not know.

Q. You must have a very bad memory, Mr. Madeley?—*(No answer.)*

Q. Cannot you remember anything about it?—No.

Q. Come, just think. What did you talk to these people about?—I cannot tell you.

Q. Have you any further explanation to give about that?—No.

Q. Now, in addition to beer, I believe brandy is kept in the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. By whose orders is it given?—The doctor's.

Q. Have you ever approached the doctor about brandy?—No.

Q. Just think?—All brandy is given by order of medical officer.

Q. Have you ever suggested to the doctor that he should administer brandy to the patients?—No, I have not.

Q. I think, in answer to the Inspector yesterday, dealing with the question of stores, you said you booked something in and out yourself. Does that relate to stores?—No.

Q. What was it?—I do not know now what it was.

Q. Meat?—Nearly all meat.

Q. And the Inspector said you took it in yourself?—I saw it weighed.

Q. You did not take it in?—No, I saw it.

Q. Did you keep any books of any kind relating to the administration of the workhouse?—I did not.

Q. No books at all?—No.

Q. Now you told the Inspector they were always of the quality specified?—I did. If they were not they went back.

Q. Did you ever have complaints from any officer or inmate concerning the quality of the goods?—No.

Q. Or any guardian?—No.

Q. Mr. Gibbs is a guardian, did he ever complain?—No.

Q. Now is there a porter at the hospital named Haswell?—Yes.

Q. Did he formerly occupy some other position?—Yes.

Q. What was that?—Ambulance attendant.

Q. Has he ever addressed any complaints to you about the meat?—No, I do not think so.

Q. Did he personally refuse to serve it on several occasions?—Not to my knowledge.

Q. Did you order him, on an occasion referred to, to serve the meat, when he refused to do so?—I do not know. What date was that?

Q. I ask you if you remember any occasion?—I do not.

Q. Did he ask you personally to inspect the meat?—No.

Q. Did you say it was quite good enough?—I do not remember saying it.

Q. In spite of that did Mr. Haswell absolutely decline to serve it?—I have no knowledge that he did.

Q. If an officer behaved in that way would you have reported it?—Yes, probably I should.

Q. Has Haswell complained to you at any time about the inmates' insubordination and so on?—He would have to bring that up to me.

Q. How have you dealt with his complaints?—According to the case.

Q. Would it be right to say that in some instances you ignored his complaints?—No.

Q. Did Haswell and others on one occasion complain about the milk?—Not to my knowledge.

Q. Was your attention drawn to a quantity of greasy matter or some other substance in the milk?—I cannot tell.

Q. What?—I do not know.

Q. Was the milk supplied to the workhouse for some time anything but pure milk?—I have no knowledge of it.

(Mr. Crooks.) I suggest that witnesses ought to have been called in support of these allegations before Mr. Madeley was cross-examined upon them.

(The Inspector.) This is the ordinary course of procedure.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I would like to ask you whether Mr. Madeley will have an opportunity afterwards of going into the box and also of having legal advice. What I mean is this: What is going on now, you know, really may be criminal. I want to put it to you perfectly baldly. I want to ask you whether you think it is right to allow a man to sit in that chair, without anybody to defend him—because we are not defending Mr. Madeley—and to give evidence against himself. I only want to suggest to you that the right course to adopt would be to adjourn the evidence of Mr. Madeley and allow him, if he wishes, to get legal advice, and then, so far as I am concerned, I have nothing to say. I only want that he should have justice, because the devil has to have that.

(The Inspector.) Of course, if Mr. Madeley wants legal advice he will be recalled.

(Mr. Lansbury.) But you are making him give evidence against himself.

(The Inspector.) He is my witness.

(Mr. Ford.) Yes, he has been examined by you, but the cross-examination of the alliance does not affect your examination. You have not examined him on the points raised by Mr. Robb.

(The Inspector.) I did ask him whether he ever received any consideration or emoluments. These questions all go to that point.

(Mr. Ford.) That point has been dealt with. I suggest to you that you never put any questions to him as regards friction between himself and Mr. Haswell, or raised any question as to bad meat or milk, and I submit that he has been cross-examined upon evidence that has not been given.

(The Inspector.) You may be quite sure Mr. Madeley will receive all that he has a right to, and will have an opportunity if he likes of asking for legal assistance afterwards.

(Mr. Ford.) No evidence has been given; that is my point.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Madeley may say he would like someone to cross-examine the evidence which Mr. Robb is bound to call.

(Mr. Ford.) It does not necessarily follow that he will call his evidence. Mr. Robb will probably submit later on that he has got all the information from Mr. Madeley.

(Mr. Robb.) I assure my friends that I shall ask you to put in the box not only every official whose name I have mentioned, but also many others. The only point is this: These officials are in a very delicate and awkward position. Pressure has already been brought to bear, I am sorry to say, on some of them.

(Mr. Lansbury.) More serious allegations!

(Mr. Robb.) I am quite ready and willing to take the responsibility of their examination. I shall ask, in justice to these officials, that you will put them, in the first instance, into the box as witnesses of the Court, and then I shall be quite prepared to conduct their examination, but unless the witnesses—the officials of this board, many of whom have given information—feel they have protection, the indemnity of the Court to a certain extent, we shall never get the truth.

(Mr. Ford.) That is radically unfair.

(Mr. Crooks.) I should like to hear the Inspector on that. You may help us. It is such an easy thing for a man to say that certain pressure has been brought to bear upon some people. That is a charge against the whole of the guardians.

(The Inspector.) Hardly. It may be a charge against some of the guardians.

(Mr. Robb.) I have an unpleasant duty to perform, and I am trying to do it as fairly as I can. I have actually refrained, as my friends know, from putting

certain questions which I might have done, to Mr. Madeley, out of consideration of the fact that he is not legally represented, but I am bound to put to him questions relating to the administration of the workhouse. I cannot see myself that they involve any penal consequences.

(Mr. Lansbury.) My point is that it seems altogether wrong: the rest of them did not give their evidence first. This is so un-English. This is the French way of doing it.

(Mr. Robb.) I will make it clear at the outset that, although I will not shirk any responsibility on behalf of my clients, I am not here to prosecute. This is an Inquiry of the Local Government Board, directed to be held by the Board in consequence of certain preliminary investigations. I am simply here as a ratepayer, as a representative of the association of ratepayers, to assist as far as I can in arriving at the truth, and any officials I mention must be called as witnesses for the Court. Of course, I would put my witnesses in the box at the proper time.

(The Inspector.) I have quite made up my mind about the procedure.

(Mr. Crooks.) We are as anxious as yourself to find out whether the guardians have been imposed upon and whether any criminal charge is made against any officer or guardian. We have nothing to hide. We are, as we have been at street corners and public halls, ready to answer any and every question. We have absolutely nothing to hide, only we do not want innuendoes thrown out which we shall not have a chance of meeting. As I pointed out yesterday, all the catchy phrases are in the papers. Let the Inquiry go on as it likes, we will defend ourselves as best we can; after all, the biggest court is public opinion.

(Mr. Robb.) On this question of milk, did Haswell complain to you of a considerable quantity of some foreign substance floating in the milk?—I had no knowledge of it.

Q. Will you swear he did not?—I cannot say, sir. I have no date.

(The Inspector.) What is the date?—

(Mr. Robb.) I am afraid that at the moment I cannot give the exact date. (To witness.) If there were 20 or 30 lbs. of foreign substance it would attract your attention?—Yes.

Q. Are you able to say whether or not that incident ever occurred?—No, sir.

Q. Who was the milk contractor for the workhouse?—Do you mean now?

Q. Yes?—Whitlock.

Q. Has he been contractor for some years?—No.

Q. How long has he been contractor?—This year.

Q. His price is 9d. per gallon.—I do not know.

(The Inspector.) Don't you know the price?—I do not.

(Mr. Robb.) You don't know the price! But surely you, as workhouse master, know all about the supplies that come through the guardians?—I don't see the contracts.

Q. But they must send in the prices. You would advise the guardians what supplies were needed?—If they asked for my advice.

Q. Do you know that Whitlock's price is 9d. per gallon?—Yes.

Q. Do you know that other dairies tendered at 8½d.?—I do not know that.

Q. Do you know whether there is any particular superiority in milk supplied by Whitlock?—I do not know.

Q. I was asking you how long Whitlock had been contractor?—I cannot tell you.

Q. Was Whitlock's contract ever cancelled in previous years?—I cannot say.

Q. Well, I must press you on that. Was Whitlock's contract ever cancelled?—I cannot say. I do not know.

Q. Do you know anything about these contracts?—Oh! yes.

Q. Perhaps we shall ascertain later on. I ask you again, do you pledge your oath you know nothing about Whitlock's contract?—He contracts now.

Q. Was his contract ever cancelled?—I do not know.

Q. Who is the officer who can give us the information. There must be some one?—(No answer).

Q. If the workhouse master does not know, who would?—(No answer).

Q. You told us that part of your duties, in respect of which you receive that extra remuneration of £50, was dealing with removals?—Yes.

Q. Would that include the removal of settlement cases?—No, sir.

Q. What class of removals did it comprise?—The whole of them except settlement cases.

(The Inspector.) Here is a minute, dated April, 1901, "The medical officer called attention to the fact that on several occasions during the past fortnight the milk supply had been less than 8 per cent. of cream," and "that the contract with Messrs. Whitlock & Co. for milk be determined summarily by the board and that advertisements be issued for tenders for milk returnable on the 17th inst." This was a report of the schools' committee, and that report came up for confirmation before the guardians and was confirmed.

(Mr. Lansbury.) The guardians sanctioned that.

(The Inspector.) The guardians sanctioned the report of the committee.

(Mr. Crooks.) Upon the report of the schools' medical officer.

(The Inspector.) The medical officer states that the recorded percentage of cream went as low as six.

(Mr. Robb.) Then it would appear that Mr. Whitlock's tender was cancelled in 1901. You did not remember that, Mr. Madeley?—(No answer).

Q. Will the clerk kindly state whether Mr. Madeley was present at that meeting?

(Mr. Lough.) No.

(Mr. Robb.) I should have thought the workhouse master would have been present. Well, I gather that the whole contract was cancelled for the workhouse as well, and that would have come, I should have thought, under Mr. Madeley's notice. Then we find, as the Inspector pointed out, that the percentage of fat was very low indeed, and the same Mr. Whitlock, who had his contract cancelled in 1901, is the contractor to-day at 9d. per gallon, as against other contractors at lower prices. Am I stating the case correctly?—I do not know the prices. I do not have the prices of the other contractors.

Q. Very well, he is the contractor to-day, in spite of what happened in 1901. Do you know any other instances of contracts having been cancelled?—I cannot say.

Q. I was diverted for the moment from the discharges. When you discharged paupers from the workhouse did you give them outfits?—Yes, if they were going to certain places.

Q. Do these outfits consist of clothing and so on?—Yes.

Q. And what would be the average cost per man?—I could not tell you, sir.

Q. Who would be able to tell us that?—You could get it by the return.

Q. Would it be as much as £2 or, in some cases, £2 10s.?—I cannot say from memory.

Q. Do you recollect the case of some men sent to the farm at Lingfield?—Yes.

Q. Were they provided with an outfit of that kind?—Yes.

Q. Did they sell the clothes and buy drink?—I cannot say anything about what they did when they left the house.

Q. Did these men afterwards come back into the house?—I cannot remember. They would be admitted if they had an order.

Q. You remember the case of the men sent to the farm?—There were several sent.

Q. There have been several instances?—No, no. I said there had been several sent.

Q. Have you no cases where outfits have been given to paupers who have sold them or otherwise got

Mr. Madeley.

8 June.

Mr. Madeley. rid of them, and the paupers have then returned to the house, where the whole process has been repeated? —I have nothing to do with them once they leave the house.

8 June.

(*The Inspector.*) The master has to obey the orders of the guardians. If the guardians choose to give men a second chance that has nothing to do with the master.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I quite agree, but this is an Inquiry, and I must get my information from some one.

(*Guardians.*) Oh! Oh!

(*Mr. Robb.*) Information upon these points cannot possibly be in the possession of anyone but the guardians and officials, and if we are inquiring into the administration of the union, I must have some responsible official to give me this kind of information.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) The guardians will give you information as to that. We are responsible for our policy.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I am simply asking for information as to facts. I have no doubt what he did was under orders. (*To witness.*) Do you recollect any instance of that kind now?—I say several men were sent there.

Q. Do you remember the process of the outfits being repeated after the men had come back minus the first one?—The same men?

Q. Yes?—No.

Q. You don't think that has ever occurred?—(*No answer.*)

Q. When these men are sent off, how are they conveyed to the station?—Do you mean the singular or plural?

Q. These men, for instance, who went to Lingfield. Two or three went on one occasion. They went to London Bridge Station. How were they conveyed to the station?—Probably the officer took them by train.

Q. Do you know that the officer took them in a brougham?—He may have done. Probably more than one man was going.

Q. You know that paupers have been taken in broughams to the station?—(*No answer.*)

Q. My suggestion is that broughams were supplied by one of the contractors?—Yes, if an order was given for it.

Q. I should have thought, myself, that a bus or tram would have sufficed?—It would have cost more.

Q. Even if it were a four-wheeled cab, I should say it was extravagant?—There might have been a cripple amongst them.

Q. I suggest to you that able-bodied men have been sent in these broughams, from the contractor, to the station, and I understand you admit it?—(*No answer.*)

Q. I want to ask you, Mr. Madeley, as late master, a few questions about the provisions supplied. I would like to ask, for this purpose, that Mr. Madeley be handed, in order that there might be no mistake, copies of the tender forms for the period from April, 1906, to March, 1907. (*To witness.*) Will you kindly turn to No. 2 form. Do you find there, under "Butcher" this—"18,330 stones, good English ox beef (fresh killed) consisting of thick flanks, thick buttock, middle ribs, rounds and leg of mutton pieces, as ordered, the whole to be entirely free from bone"?—Yes.

Q. That is in the official form?—Yes.

Q. And I may take it that it was required for the inmates?—And the officers, and the same at Langley House.

Q. Do you also find 13,860 stones of good English wether mutton (fresh killed) all legs and shoulders and loin?—Yes.

Q. Would that be for the same people?—Yes.

Q. And the small legs of pork and best beef suet?—Yes.

Q. Well, now, will you take Nos. 3 and 4, poulterer and greengrocer—"Poultry, drawn and trussed, 1,300 lbs." It is 3,790, altered to 1,300?—Yes.

Q. Who would that be for?—The officers.

Q. "1,850 dozen English best new laid eggs, 8 to the lb." Is that there?—Yes.

Q. Who would that be for?—For the whole of the institutions.

Q. Inmates as well as officers?—Yes.

Q. "Rabbits without skins, 100 lbs." Would that be for the officers?—Yes.

Q. Now turn to the greengrocer. "Best onions, 55 cwts." Who would that be for—inmates?—Yes.

Q. "Best turnips, 55 cwts."—inmates?—Yes.

Q. "Best carrots, 55 cwts."—inmates?—Yes.

Q. And the "fresh cabbages, 450 tallies"—also for the inmates?—Yes.

Q. Then there are "70,000 gallons pure unskimmed milk"?—Yes.

Q. "Not less than 10 per cent. cream"—that, of course, would be for the whole of the institutions?—Yes.

Q. "112 lbs. of the best Jamaica arrowroot"?—That is for the whole of the institutions.

Q. "652 lbs. biscuits, various, Huntley and Palmers, 'in tins'—for the inmates?—For the whole of the institutions.

Q. The "Pat-a-cake" biscuits Mr. Crooks told us yesterday were for the children?

(*Mr. Crooks.*) I was not on my oath, you know.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Never mind, Mr. Crooks, we will accept it.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) Thank you very much.

(*Mr. Robb.*) There is "12,552 lbs. biscuits, fancy 'lunch, Huntley and Palmers'"—for the inmates?—For the whole of the institutions.

Q. "1,428 lbs. Patras best currants"—for the inmates?—For the whole of the institutions.

Q. "614 lbs. of candied peel"?—For the whole of the institutions. The whole of these tenders are.

Q. "6,180 lbs. coffee nibs, best roasted Mocha plantation, whole"—who would that be for?—The whole of the institutions. The whole of these tenders are.

Q. Did the inmates have the best roasted Mocha coffee?—Yes.

Q. Is that usual in workhouses?—I cannot say.

(*Mr. Ford.*) How much is it a lb.?—9½d.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) What is the chicory?—Chicory is 4d. per lb.

(*The Inspector.*) Is this coffee and chicory?—Yes, coffee and chicory.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) (*to the Inspector.*) It is your dietary, you know.

(*Mr. Robb.*) "548 lbs. Cadbury's best cocoa"?—That is for the whole of the institutions.

Q. Would it be possible to obtain cheaper articles than these?—Yes, they could be got cheaper.

Q. I mean, working people don't generally have Cadbury's best cocoa or the best roasted Mocha coffee. "598 lbs. Colman's superfine mustard"—for the whole of the institutions?—Yes.

Q. Can you tell us the price of this Colman's superfine mustard?—11½d. per lb.

Q. "155 bottles Lazenby's pickles"?—That is for the whole of the institutions.

(*Mr. Ford.*) How much a bottle, Mr. Madeley?—8½d.

(*Mr. Robb.*) "593 lbs. pepper, pure ground, black and 'white'"—That is the same.

(*Mr. Ford.*) How much?—8d.

(*The Inspector.*) Were any pickles down in the dietary?—Oh! yes. The pickles were in the dietary.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) Not for the inmates?—No, for the officers.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Why were the pickles purchased in these small pint bottles?—For the officers.

Q. That would make it much more expensive, would it not?—Probably it would.

Q. I mean it is not the most economical way of going to work?—

(*A voice.*) I am anxious to put a question to you (*the Inspector.*) You have already ruled that the master is an official subject to the guardians. If that is so, why are these questions put to the man?

(*The Inspector.*) I disallow the last question.

Mr. Madeley
8 June.

(Mr. Lansbury.) It is all right.

(The speaker.) I like to see the thing done in order.

(Mr. Robb.) "796 lbs. best castor sugar"—That is for the institutions.

(Mrs. Cordery.) What is the price?—2d. a lb.

(Mr. Robb.) And what is the price of the Demerara?—15s. 6d. per cwt.

Q. "153 bottles Lea and Perrin's sauce"—They are for the institutions.

(Mr. Oxley.) They would be for the officers?—Yes.

(Mr. Lansbury.) But in the schools as well—90 officers.

(Mr. Robb.) Then there is our old friend, "234 lbs. Mazawattee Tea, 2s. 6d. quality"—who was that for?—It was 2s. 4d., and for the officers in the whole of the institutions.

(The Inspector.) That would be the actual amount spent for this tea?—No, it is an estimated quantity—234 lbs.

(The Inspector.) The estimated cost appears to be £27 6s.

(Mr. Lansbury.) £27 for the whole of our institutions.

(Mr. Robb.) Is that practically the best tea that can be obtained?—No, not by a long way.

Q. Well, it is a very good quality. No. 10, cheesemonger. Before, we are told margarine has been substituted. "2,700 lbs. best English Cheddar." Is that for the whole institution?—Yes.

Q. 28 lbs. Stilton cheese?—

(The Inspector.) The price of the tender was what?—

(Mr. Ford.) 11½d.

(Mr. Robb.) 86 lbs. Gorgonzola cheese?—For the whole institution.

Q. 75 cwt. best American cheese?—For the institution, £3 4s. per cwt.

Q. When you say the whole institution you mean officers?—There is more than one institution.

Q. And you include officers and inmates?—For the inmates.

Q. 5,136 lbs. of best bacon, Denny's, and so on.—Yes, that is for the institution.

Q. Price?—11½d.

Q. 11½d. a lb.?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) There is a lot of noise.

(Mr. Lansbury.) It is not our friends.

(Mr. Crooks.) It is not the guardians, I assure you.

(Mr. Lansbury.) The master said something important about this bacon question. It is 11½d. a lb.

(Mr. Robb.) £246. Was there any bone?—No, it was all boned and no waste.

Q. That would be an economy?—Most decidedly.

Q. This was the bacon that was actually supplied to the inmates?—Yes. No, I don't say that. I said that was for the officers.

Q. Denny's?—The bacon with the bone out. There are two lots of bacon—7 and 8. That is for the whole institution.

(The Inspector.) The bacon without bone was No. 7.

(Mr. Robb.) Best bacon; Denny's, Matterson's or Richardson's, boned, at 11½d., that was for the officers?—Yes.

Q. For the inmates there was gammon at £3 15s. a cwt.?—Yes.

Q. And £1,012 was spent on that.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Boned bacon was for the officers?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) No. 11 is the soap-maker. I don't want to trouble you on that, except to ask why is it Pears' soap appears on the oilman's goods and not on the soap-maker's?—These tenders are prepared at a special board meeting of the guardians.

Q. Look at oilman's goods, No. 13?—Yes.

(Mr. Crooks.) There is a point there. If you put Pears' soap under soap-maker's and specified you would be entitled to treat the same as oilman's goods.

(Mr. Lansbury.) The point is, you go to the soap-maker for yellow soap, of which you use a large amount, and for the ornamental soap you go to the other man.

(The Inspector.) Where is the ornamental soap—No. 13?—No. 67.

Q. The tender for Pears' soap is for 40 dozen at 3s. 6d. and the total amount is £7?—

(Mr. Lansbury.) That is for Pears' soap.

(Mr. Crooks.) In a year.

(The Inspector.) Would that be for the officers alone?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) This 40 dozen of Pears' soap?

(Mr. Ford.) We haven't finished with No. 11, the soap-maker's contract. Will Mr. Madeley tell us the amount of the accepted contract?—I haven't the total down here.

(The Inspector.) £573 15s.

(Mr. Ford.) The soap contract runs into £573 and Pears' soap into £7.

(Mr. Robb.) We are dealing now with tenders. Later we shall get the deliveries when we get the return. The next item, two boxes Calvert's carbolic. No. 69, Izal toilet soap?—Yes.

Q. 450 gallons of Champion's No. 16 vinegar. Is that the best vinegar?—Yes.

Q. That is their special mark?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) How do you sort out these fancy soaps. Do you allow the officers latitude?—The store-keeper gives them out once a week generally.

(Mr. Crooks.) Do the officers suggest the quality of soap they want?—Oh! no.

(Mrs. Wilson.) Isn't some of that used for the nursery?—Yes.

Q. It is practically the same?—Yes.

(Mr. Crooks.) The vaccination mark is not always there.

(Mr. Robb.) There is just one question on No. 15, the earthenware. There are several items I shall draw your attention to. Sixteen white and gold gravy tureens; five dozen white and gold cheese plates. At the end I take No. 72, three dozen sauce boats. Who has these?—These are for the whole institution, I think.

Q. You are not quite sure as to that?—Yes.

Q. They appear on that list?—Yes.

Q. Drapery, No. 38. 400 yards of damask table linen?—That is for the institutions, 1/9; 60 inches wide, 1/9 a yard.

Q. Item 40, ditto, unbleached, 1550 yards?—Yes, 1/-.

Q. What would that be for?—I could not say whether they would be for the whole of the institutions.

Q. Cover for tables?—Yes.

Q. Do you have damask table-cloths or American cloth?—I don't know what it is.

Q. On the tables?—I don't know what it is. The matron would know something about that.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Might this help. This is a tender for supplies to the schools as well as the house. At the schools we certainly give the children table-cloths. They have table-cloths laid on the table.

(Mr. Crooks.) It would be more home-like if they had it on the floor.

(The Inspector.) What occurs to me is this, that when these items are mentioned, as they must be mentioned, the impression is that they are used for able-bodied paupers, and of course the explanation in a great many cases is that they are used for the children. You may have extravagance in dealing with children as with adults, but it is a different thing.

(Mr. Crooks.) We have taken the precaution, to help the learned gentleman, to display the articles he mentioned yesterday. We have brought the articles here for examination by himself and the public so that they may see these awfully extravagant things we have been buying. We have a basket full outside.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I am bringing an outfit for the girls and boys in the schools.

(The Inspector.) Is this the most expensive thing you have in this line?

(Mr. Crooks.) Yes. That is a deliberate extravagance to keep their fingers clean.

(The Inspector.) What do they call this?

(Mr. Lansbury.) No. 126, table-napkins, twenty-seven inches square; 8s. 11d. a dozen.

Mr. Madeley.

8 June.

(Mr. Crooks.) 3d. a year to keep their fingers clean.

(The Inspector.) The total amount, £8 0s. 6d.

(Mr. Lansbury.) What about the headlines to-morrow!

(The Inspector.) What is in my mind is this: this is not for keeping the children's hands clean, but for the officers.

(Mr. Lansbury.) The handkerchief is one of the Irish cambrics.

(The Inspector.) That is No. 69.

(Mr. Turner.) 3s. a dozen; 36 dozen; total, £5 8s.

(Mr. Ford.) 3d. each.

(Mr. Lansbury.) These go into the children's boxes when they go to service. They have six of them each, and if you want to test it, take the number of children who have gone to service. We challenge the municipal alliance to take that challenge up. That will decide how many of these handkerchiefs we have had.

(Mr. Crooks.) Nice handkerchiefs with the King and Queen in the corners and St. Paul's in the middle for 3d. Look how they could have used their cuffs and got handkerchiefs for nothing. I don't wonder you are looking into it.

(The Inspector.) Now, now! Mr. Crooks.

(Mr. Crooks.) It is a little levity to help us along a bit.

(Mr. Ford.) Might I suggest that we supply you with a couple of these samples out of stock. We haven't got them here, but can send for them.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Send down to the schools.

(Mr. Robb.) Item No. 34. 104 pairs of lace, muslin, or net curtains?—For the whole institution, sir.

(Mr. Lansbury.) How much is that?

(Mr. Turner.) £51; 9s. 11d. a pair.

(Mrs. Wilson.) What is the length?—3½ to 4½ yards. To drape all the windows there with curtains.

(Mr. Lansbury.) What windows?—The officers' windows and sick wards.

Q. Does that include the schools?—Yes, and Langley House.

(A spectator.) These tenders relate to the whole of the institutions. This gentleman is only the master of the workhouse. Consequently he cannot answer for what takes place at these institutions. The proper man to be in the box is the clerk to the guardians.

(The Inspector.) The clerk will not know about the disposal of them.

(The spectator.) The clerk should know.

(Mr. Robb.) Item No. 93; muslin or net for windows, 924 yards?—That would be, I expect, for the whole of the institutions.

(Mrs. Cordery.) That is for the short curtains.

(Mr. Robb.) Items Nos. 82 to 86—2,500 yards in all of linen sheeting?—Yes, that is for the whole of the institutions.

(The Inspector.) Where is that?—83, right down.

Q. In the house have you any other sheetings besides this?—I don't think so. They are the sheetings for the whole of the institutions.

(Mr. Robb.) Item 142?

(Mr. Ford.) Price of 82 per yard?—

(Mr. Turner.) It is the total of five different items. There are 11½ yards.

(Mr. Ford.) And the total amount is what? The accepted tender gives it.

(Mr. Turner.) About £115.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Could you tell us the price of No. 93?—6½d.

(Mr. Turner.) It comes to £25.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Crooks must not forget the cumulative effect of all these small sums.

(Mr. Crooks.) I was not making any remark.

(Mr. Robb.) Item No. 142: 100 yards of art serge, various colours, for draping.

(Mr. Lansbury.) That, too, Mr. Davy, we shall be able to submit evidence is for the schools. It is used for draping the stage at Christmas, after which it is used for curtains. We can give you evidence of that. Here is a sample; I should like to know how much that tender is.

(Mr. Turner.) £8 6s. 8d.

(Mr. Ford.) 1s. 8d. a yard, sir.

(Mrs. Wilson.) What is the width?

(A voice.) Double-width.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Many people in this room have been to the Forest Gate schools when the entertainments are on.

(The Inspector.) This is what is called art serge?

(Mr. Ford.) 1s. 8d. a yard.

(Mr. Robb.) That is all I ask upon tenders.

(Mr. Watts.) Refer to No. 5, please?—Lunch biscuits, sir.

Q. How much a lb.?—Threepence.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Madeley, you were asked yesterday for the officers' in-and-out book. Do you produce it?—I can get it by telephoning for it.

Q. If you will get it, I should like an opportunity of inspecting it. And the card as to the newspapers?—The cards are here, I believe.

(The Inspector.) Give me that card.

(Mr. Crooks.) On pieces of wood.

(Mr. Robb.) You were going to look up for us the question of how the guardians' teas had been charged by way of extraordinary supplies.

(The Inspector.) Witness said he didn't know that. The man who keeps the accounts would know.

(Mr. Watts.) How often do these teas occur?

(The Inspector.) We shall see that after.

(Mr. Robb.) The minute was put in yesterday of the guardians sanctioning tea and bread and butter. I think you told us that cake and ham sandwiches and poached eggs had been supplied occasionally?—Yes.

Q. In addition?—Yes.

Q. Is there any minute authorising that?—I don't think so.

(Mr. Watts.) How often is the tea supplied?—When the tea is necessary.

Q. How often?—The house committee once a fortnight; the settlement committee once a fortnight.

(The Inspector.) Does the settlement committee meet at the same time?—In the morning, and they get a cup of coffee.

Q. How many are there on the committee?—Two or three.

(Mr. Robb.) Did you have a bath fitted up in your house at the workhouse?—I did.

Q. How much did it cost?—I don't know; it is a long time ago.

Q. What kind of bath?—An excellent one.

Q. Anything special about it?—No.

Q. I ask you to look up the cost of it?—You must give me the date.

Q. Who is the maker?—I could not tell you.

Q. Is that bath fitted in any special way?—Not that I know of.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Madeley says it was put in shortly after he was appointed?—The guardians had it put in.

(Mr. Robb.) Would it be correct to say it is a very luxurious bath?—I could not say.

Q. Have you any idea of the cost?—No.

(Mr. Crooks.) It is so rare we get a bath that any bath would be extraordinary.

(Mr. Robb.) Is it fitted with a spray and a douche?—With a spray.

Q. One of the baths with a canopy arrangement?—Yes.

Q. With all those handles you can turn and get sprays and douches, and all sorts of things. Did that bath cost over £100?—I could not tell you, sir. It is years ago.

(Mr. Crooks.) The labour men were not on then?—It was just after my appointment. Seventeen years ago.

(Mr. Robb.) With reference to the assistant master, Mr. Walton, does his wife and family spend Sundays at the house and have his relations there?—Mrs. Walton visited Mr. Walton on duty when I was away.

Q. And the children?—They came with his wife.

Q. And had their meals?—I was generally away.

(Mr. Lansbury.) How old are these children?—The oldest is about 4. One a baby in arms.

(The Inspector.) How many of them?

(Mr. Robb.) It may be a small matter, but it is a breach of the regulations, isn't it. Are officers allowed to entertain their families: officers who live out?—Officers are allowed to have visitors.

Q. And entertain their families?—They are allowed to have visitors.

Q. Is it in accordance with the regulations?—(No answer.)

Q. After this £50 was granted to you, immediately before your resignation, did you and some of the guardians have a little party at your house?—No, sir. Oh! no, sir.

(Mr. Crooks.) I want to know why I had been left out of that.

(Mr. Robb.) Nothing of the sort?—No.

(Mr. Ford.) As a matter of fact, has the £50 been granted to you?—I haven't got it yet, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) About the same time you sent out a special whip to the guardians as to the workhouse visiting committee meeting *re* your pension?—I simply sent a note to say I would be there.

Q. Have you a copy?—No.

Q. I call for a copy then?—I have no copy.

Q. I ask for a copy to be sent. You sent out, I suggest, a special whip to the members of the workhouse visiting committee to be present at the meeting *re* your pension?—No.

Q. Does that committee comprise the whole of the board?—I said I would be there and I went down in case they wanted me.

(Mr. Ford.) I received no invitation.

(Mr. Lansbury.) The same here.

(Mr. Ford.) Mr. Davy has been asked to submit a copy.

(The Inspector.) May I say the pension of the workhouse master depends neither upon the guardians nor upon the Local Government Board. It is the claim which he has under the Superannuation Act to a pension calculated upon a fixed scale, and the only reason for that claim is that he has either served for a certain number of years or has sufficient medical certificates to show permanent incapacity. If that incapacity is not genuine any one can object to the auditor when the pension is being paid. That is the situation. But if he has resigned under discreditable circumstances, by the 7th section of the Act he loses his right to the pension, and that would be a matter for the ratepayers to object to when the auditor came. It is as well to make this statement. What the guardians did in reference to the matter is another question.

(Mr. Robb.) This letter was sent only to certain special guardians?—The letter was simply to say I would be at the house if they wanted to see me.

Q. Who are your members?—The members I said.

Q. Do you charge postage to the union of such a kind?—It might have been.

Q. For private letters?—It was not private. I always paid for my postage.

(Mr. McCarthy.) Have you ever ordered salmon for any guardian?—I haven't.

Q. I have visited the house every day?—Nearly so.

Q. And on two days twice, on certain days, Wednesdays and Sundays, when the inmates were allowed out. Can you give any explanation or did I send any reason why I made particular visits on those evenings?—Yes, because you used to see people coming in.

Q. Nothing else. Didn't I say I wished to see what cards were stopped?—Yes, I say to see how they came in.

(Mr. McCarthy.) I may say, sir, that you made a point yesterday with reference to the visits of myself. I hold a copy of the Local Government Board Circular, dated 29th January, 1895. They are instructions to the guardians to visit the workhouse as often as possible. Perhaps you are not aware of that.

(The Inspector.) Authority was given to a member of the board of guardians to visit the workhouse at any reasonable time when he may think proper.

(Mr. Crooks.) I may help you. Considerable discussion was going on throughout the land as to the master's authority to refuse permission to guardians to go in at all, and in the early days, about 1892, the gate porter's book disclosed a remarkable condition of things when the institution had gone many months without a guardian going to the kitchen or any other part. I could put an old member of the board in the box and ask him if there was any regular visiting. There was no control of the inmates and the result was an Order was sought to give guardians a right to go in; it was only a privilege before. There was a time when the master was a little emperor.

(The Inspector.) Are you alluding to Sir Henry Fowler's Order?

(Mr. Crooks.) Yes. Before that, Mr. Ritchie issued an Order reducing qualification.

(The Inspector.) I am sorry the matter is mentioned, because I find in reference to Mr. McCarthy that in 61 weeks he visited the workhouse on 386 days, an average of 6.3 days per week.

(Mr. McCarthy.) I did not catch that. I accept what you say. That is a proof of my duty as a guardian. Now compare my attendances on guardians' and committee meetings and you will find them exactly similar. I call for those attendances and ask the clerk to submit those attendances for the past two years.

(The Inspector.) The point which concerns me most is whether Mr. McCarthy on those visits took his meals in the workhouse at the cost of the guardians. That would be a matter for blame on the master. The master's reply was that he paid for Mr. McCarthy's meals out of his own pocket and rations.

(Mr. McCarthy.) I don't accept that. If I sat down and had lunch with the master I had a perfect right to do so if he invited me. But the times you mention—

(The Inspector.) The first long day—February 8th, 3.50 to 4.35.

(Mr. McCarthy.) 3.50 in the afternoon?

(The Inspector.) I suppose it is. 7.40 to 9; 10 to 10.30.

(Mr. McCarthy.) I could not have had a big meal. I might have had supper.

(The Inspector.) It is not a pleasant thing to comment upon, but I examined these books. I think that some of the guardians would be as astonished as I was.

(Mr. McCarthy.) I should like to know from you whether you are going to interpret it as a reflection upon a guardian, the number of visits he makes to the house.

(The Inspector.) I make no reflections upon any of the guardians. I bring this as a point in reference to the conduct of the master. The conduct of the master on this occasion has a bearing on the action the Local Government Board may take.

(Mr. Sumner.) What amount has the master paid in towards the superannuation allowance per year?

(Witness.) Mr. Lough will tell you better than I can.

(Mr. Sumner.) I should like an answer from someone.

(The Inspector.) We know it.

(Mr. Sumner.) Yes, but a lot of people don't know it. I would like that question answered?—He is going to get it.

(The Inspector.) I should like to ask one or two questions, Mr. Madeley. There has been a long list put in of newspapers and periodicals supplied to the various parts of the workhouse and officers. You yourself have fourteen newspapers and seven magazines. Will you tell me what becomes of these?—The magazines are bound and sent to the various wards.

Q. May I take it that what happens to the newspapers is that the officers read them first and then they are distributed round the institution?—Yes.

Q. What happens then?—Then they are collected and used for sanitary purposes.

Q. How many inmates are there?—Last register there were 1,800. About 1,500 I should think to-day.

Q. So these papers and periodicals ultimately are for the benefit of the inmates?—Yes.

Q. I don't think we were quite clear as to your rations. Do I understand correctly that you have a right to buy fish, say to a certain amount, as part of your rations?—Fish was allowed in the dietary scale.

Mr. Madeley.

8 June.

Mr. Madeley.
8 June.

Q. Had you any option as to what sort of fish it should be. Had you any choice?—Yes.

Q. So if you had salmon you would have so much less salmon than if you had a cheaper kind of fish?—If I wanted a piece of salmon I had it.

Q. Is that the same system with other officers?—No, sir, they come from the stores.

Q. Can you choose what kind of meat?—I select beef or mutton or pork.

Q. The amount of contribution towards pension which you have paid is returned as £68 12s. 6d. What is the pension to which you would be entitled?—If the guardians gave me twenty-one years, about £126.

Q. That would include service in other places?—Seventeen years' service in Poplar. If the guardians gave me the 21 years, it will be about £126. Out of 21 years I have served 17 under the Poplar Board.

Q. Have you made application for addition of years?—No.

Q. An addition of years has been suggested in the case of the matron?—Yes.

Q. That is not a matter which affects you?—No.

Q. With regard to the direct labour men that are employed in the house, have you time sheets?—Yes. Every man has a time.

Q. Do you look after those time sheets?—They are sent to the office and checked before I pay the money from the porter's box.

Q. Do you do the checking?—No, the clerk does the checking.

Q. If the guardians had not made the change to direct labour instead of the workhouse inmates, you would have had to superintend the work?—That is so.

Q. And the ground of granting this gratuity to you is that the employment of direct labour has put additional responsibility upon you?—Yes.

Q. Am I right in saying that?—Yes: when they did away with the superintendent of the works, as they have done for years.

Q. You have told us that any beer which is consumed by the guardians in the workhouse is paid for out of your private beer?—Yes.

Q. If you could produce receipts of any beer you have bought in recent times?—I will bring all the bills. I can get them.

Q. With reference to the case of Mr. Jacobs, do you leave that where it is or do you prefer to make any other statement?—I should like consideration for the matter in all fairness to you. What has been asked of me has been sprung upon me. I had no notice. I have endeavoured to give every satisfaction. I did not know what was going to be asked. That is all I have to ask.

(Mr. Lansbury.) First of all, Mr. Madeley, do you remember the actual date you were appointed?—Yes, you appointed me in the—I was temporary master in December, 1893. You appointed me at the whole board meeting in May, 1894, and I commenced duties after Mr. Deason left the house in July, 1894, but I took on the work at the end of June.

Q. You were actually appointed master after this transaction which we have heard about with regard to Mr. Jacobs?—Yes, before I was master.

Q. With regard to the point raised as to direct labour and inmate labour, would you say that you could have put skilled inmates on the able-bodied side of the workhouse to carry out the various works which the workmen who were employed in direct labour were carrying out?—We get no skilled labour in the house. We have no skilled mechanics. Poplar contains a floating population and they are dock labourers almost entirely.

Q. It would be quite impossible to put your inmates to do the work that the workmen imported are doing today?—You have no skilled labour to do it.

Q. Do you remember what used to happen in the workhouse before direct labour was adopted?—Yes.

Q. What was the method of cleansing?—You simply put on a coat of white wash. There was not a painted wall or cupboard when I took charge.

Q. During your term of office, do you remember ever any contractors being called in at all. During the early part of your period?—No.

Q. You don't know what happened previously?—No.

Q. Mr. Gillock was appointed before you?—Yes, in November.

Q. Before you took up office did you gain any knowledge how the place was cleansed?—Chiefly by the inmates with white-wash.

(Mr. Peckham.) Wasn't it a fact that the house was running alive with bugs and you had to pull the skirtings down to cleanse them?—Yes, we swept them up with dust pans.

(Mr. Lansbury.) When you took over, Mr. Madeley, what condition were the stores in?—Empty.

Q. Have you a copy of the Inquiry that was held here?—I haven't got it here.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I would like to ask, Mr. Davy, that that may be put in as evidence of the condition of the workhouse. We have it here.

(Mr. Crooks.) Here is the finding of the Inquiry.

(Mr. Lansbury.) But you will have in your office a report of the evidence, Mr. Davy.

(The Inspector.) You are suggesting that Mr. Madeley has had exceptional service.

(Mr. Lansbury.) What I wanted to bring out was the condition of the workhouse at the time the others over there represented—when there were no labour men, when gentlemen representing 35 per cent. of the rateable value of the district were in office.

(The Inspector.) But—

(Mr. Lansbury.) Very well. You asked me what I was driving at. The point I want from Mr. Madeley is the condition of the workhouse after a long period of years of the administration of this gentleman's friends. Is it a fact women had no shoes on their feet?—Yes.

Q. Is it a fact women had no underclothing excepting skirt and petticoat?—Yes.

Q. None of the ordinary things women had to wear were supplied?—Yes.

(Mr. Lansbury.) It is evidence I want. We may have your finding, which may be different from the evidence. Isn't it a fact?

(Mr. Robb.) I was smiling at the remark that the finding may not be in accordance with the evidence.

(Mr. Lansbury.) It may be in accordance with certain people's views. Mr. Davy has told us what he thinks of us before. Mr. Davy and we understand one another. He knows we object to him being there. He knows why we object to him being there.

(Mr. Robb.) You don't object to me?

(Mr. Lansbury.) You! You have added to the gaiety.

(The Inspector.) Keep to the point.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Keep Mr. Robb quiet. He appealed yesterday. I shall have to appeal next to get the Inquiry shifted. The condition of Poplar Workhouse as made out at that Inquiry and as was experienced at the time, was that there was nothing. (To witness.) Isn't it a fact that the stores were absolutely empty when you took charge, and that there was neither clothing nor anything for the use of the establishment?—Quite right.

Q. All the whole place was filthy dirty, and as you just told us it was running alive with bugs. Is that so?—That is so.

Q. During this period of years you have been there has there ever been any charge against you by the Local Government Board Inspectors as to the administration of the house?—No. On the contrary, they have been very pleased and made suggestions.

Q. They come down pretty frequently?—I never know when they are coming.

Q. They pay surprise visits?—All surprise visits.

Q. And gentlemen who are not open to the suspicion of being fed by you?—They come too often for that.

Q. And go to the inmates and ask questions?—Yes.

Q. If dinner is being served the rule is the Local Government Board Inspector walks along and asks if any one has any complaint to make?—They know it as a rule.

Q. They know he is a Local Government Board Inspector?—Yes; they generally come an hour before dinner while it is being cooked.

Q. Has any one of the Inspectors during your period of office found fault either with the stores or the quality of the food supplied to the inmates?—No, sir. The Inspectors on more than one occasion have gone through the whole of the stores and compared deliveries with samples.

Q. Have you got a copy of a return which I hold in my hand of extracts from the books that the Local Government Board Inspectors have written?—No.

Q. It is the visitors' book. 14th August, 1895. The Inspector is Mr. N. Herbert, who is now acknowledged an excellent man. He was Assistant Inspector; he is now a General Inspector. There is nothing against him. Will you please read what Mr. N. Herbert said on the 14th August, 1895?—Yes. "I have to-day visited this workhouse. There have been many improvements carried out since my last visit, and the people appear to me to be better looked after with the exception of the old men in A block. In A block there are nearly 200 old men, many of whom require frequent attention. These are looked after at the present time by two officers only. N. Herbert, Assistant Local Government Board Inspector, August 14th, 1895."

Q. Read on?—This is a two days' visit, dated January 28th, 1906. "Yesterday and to-day I have made an inspection of this workhouse and find it in a much cleaner state than that of my former visits. The entries in the punishment book mostly refer to inmates returning after leave drunk, or bringing spirits into the workhouse. It appears to me that some of the punishments inflicted are slight and that more distinction should be made between the decent old folk who don't abuse the privilege of the leave allowed them by the guardians and those who cannot leave the workhouse for a few hours without returning drunk. The men's infirm wards were in a cleaner state than at my last visit, and the clothing has been greatly improved. I think, however, that the day-rooms could be made more cheerful-looking and comfortable. Many of the old men in these wards are very infirm and should have chairs with sides to them. I think if the infirm women in the old block were transferred to the top-floor of the new block, where the wards are better adapted for such cases, that probably the guardians would be able to increase the number of beds on the female side.—N. Herbert, January 29th, 1896."

Q. That is in 1896?—Yes.

Q. And following on that, did the guardians buy arm-chairs?—Yes.

Q. And did they remove the old people upstairs?—Yes.

Q. And would that lead to an outlay of money?—The arm-chairs did.

Q. And the outlay would be brought about from the recommendation of the Local Government Board Inspector?—That is so.

Q. Then if you would not mind, take another one, for December 30th of the same year, 1896. You need not read the top. It simply says he visited. But lower down you can read it?—"I have this day visited the workhouse and find it in good order, 30th December, 1896."

Q. Then he goes on with an additional report?—I haven't got it; it isn't in the books.

Q. We shall have to have that from someone else. It is a letter from Mr. Herbert—"Owing to the improved administration of this house the number of able-bodied indoor paupers is largely decreased, but there is a small increase in the number of infirm. As the population is increasing further accommodation will probably be needed before long. The guardians take a great interest in the administration of this workhouse. The master informs me that over 1,000 visits have been paid by guardians during the past year. Since my last visit much has been done to improve classification of inmates. Last September I visited this workhouse with reference to accommodation. The two matters referred to in my report which appeared to me to require attention—namely the absence of bathing arrangements and airing courts on the railway side—have both received attention." In 1897, the next year, we have a very distinguished visitor. I should like Mr. Madeley to read what he says?—"14th April, I have the greatest satisfaction in visiting the establishment, which seems to me as ably and well managed as could be desired.—Henry Chaplin."

(Mr. Lansbury.) There are a number of others, Mr. Davy; we shall supply you with a full list. We don't want to waste your time.

(The Inspector.) Can I see those.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Certainly.

(The Inspector.) Favourable report from Dr. Needham. Mr. Hervey, 1898. Mr. Herbert, the same year, "Clean state." Mr. Hervey, 1899, "Pleased to note improvement; house neat and in good order; good discipline." Next two visits, no comments. Favourable report by Dr. Sweeting, and Mr. Gerald Walsh visited the house in 1901 without comment. Favourable report from Miss Ina Stansfeld, 1902. The first unfavourable report is 1902, made by Mr. Gerald Walsh, "Find beds made up in slovenly manner." Begs to call attention to the fact. 1903: Mr. Walsh visited the workhouse. Mr. Walsh, "The workhouse is much overcrowded." He refers to infirm accommodation. There was an extension at the Poplar and Stepney Asylum?

(Mr. Lansbury.) Yes. The Local Government Board Inspectors, when they came, did they visit your stores?—Yes.

Q. Has Mr. Walsh visited your stores?—Yes.

(Mr. Lansbury.) He would be the last Inspector prior to Mr. Oxley. Would it be possible, Mr. Davy, for Mr. Walsh to come here?

(The Inspector.) Yes, I think so.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Has he visited your stores?—Yes.

Q. Has he compared articles with samples?—Yes.

Q. Has he at any time found fault with the delivery of goods?—No.

Q. Any time called attention to any discrepancy between goods received and the samples?—No.

Q. And he has examined your stores?—Yes.

Q. Mr. Oxley has?—Yes.

Q. Has Mr. Oxley examined your stores?—No. Yes, Mr. Oxley has.

Q. And?—He was satisfied.

Q. Were you there?—Yes.

Q. Did he compare the articles. Did Mr. Oxley visit your stores?—Yes.

Q. And examined the articles?—Some of the articles.

Q. And make any reports either for or against?—I believe he said they were all by sample.

Q. That would be quite recently?—Yes.

Q. You have a large number of people to visit the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. Folks come down?—Yes.

Q. Some of the aristocracy?—Several.

Q. Did they have refreshments there?—A cup of tea in my house.

Q. Members of the English aristocracy?—Yes.

Q. Did they get the tea out of the rates?—From my table. Surely I am allowed—

Q. I am serious, Mr. Madeley. Did it come out of rations?—Out of my rations.

Q. That you were entitled to?—Yes.

Q. They did?—Yes.

Q. And you have had large numbers of these people there?—Several.

Q. And you have had other people guardians have taken?—Yes.

Q. As a matter of fact your house has been written about by a good many newspapers?—Yes.

Q. Quite recently?—Yes.

Q. And there has been plenty of publicity about the house?—Always. The keys are always given to visitors. There is not a locked door against anyone.

Q. If inmates wanted to complain, as is suggested, because they were being compelled to eat unwholesome food, there was always a number of people who were going about the house to whom they could complain?—Certainly. They saw the guardians daily.

Q. Other people besides guardians?—Yes.

Q. What is the rule as to going out. Is each inmate allowed to go out?—Two Sundays and two week-days and all the holiday times they go. They see me and spend week-ends with their friends.

Mr. Madeley.

8 June.

Mr. Madeley.

8 June.

Q. Aged and infirm?—Yes.

Q. Not able-bodied?—No.

Q. If that is true, anybody who is getting bad food can go to any friend at least once or twice a week outside and tell them?—Yes.

Q. Or write?—They were found paper and envelopes.

Q. Then with regard to the able-bodied men?—Yes.

Q. How many men do you reckon there are who could be classed as able-bodied?—I should say you would find about three or four dozen out of the whole lot. They nearly all have something mentally or physically wrong.

Q. If a man under sixty had only one arm?—He goes on as partially able-bodied.

Q. And if he has got a bad foot?—Yes.

Q. Or if he is partially paralyzed and under sixty?—He would be on the able-bodied side unless he was a cripple and could not get about.

Q. If he could manage to get about at all?—He is an able-bodied man.

Q. What do you feed these able-bodied people on?—I don't think I can remember.

Q. I take it that the able-bodied men and able-bodied generally in the house are not supplied with such luxuries as Pears' soap, Gorgonzola cheese, or such luxuries as the best bacon at 11½d. per lb.?—No.

Q. You have got the dietary table now?—Yes.

Q. And they do not have serviettes or damask table-napkins, and you don't supply them with Irish cambric linen handkerchiefs. Is that so?—Yes, that is so.

Q. Did you supply the able-bodied in the house with any of the articles that have been read out?—No.

Q. Now, what did the able-bodied have on Sunday?—8 ozs. of bread, ½ oz. margarine, and a pint of coffee.

Q. What is that for?—For breakfast.

Q. What for dinner?—4½ ozs. of meat, 12 ozs. of potatoes and 4 ozs. of bread.

Q. And for supper?—The same amount of bread and margarine with tea.

Q. Now take Monday?—On Monday they have gruel or milk.

Q. How much?—A pint.

Q. If they had gruel they would have more, would they not?—A pint and a half.

Q. And how much bread?—8 ozs. of bread.

Q. What do they get for dinner?—Pea-soup, a pint and a half.

Q. How much bread?—6 ozs.

Q. So able-bodied men have a pint and a half of pea-soup and six ounces of bread. You would not call that very luxurious. What does he get for supper?—Gruel.

Q. How much?—A pint and a half.

Q. Is it true there are men unloading coal at the workhouse on the siding?—Yes.

Q. And wheeling it into the bunkers?—Yes.

Q. Do they do it on this fare?—Yes.

Q. And are these some of the men who were getting beer?—Yes.

Q. And these are some of the men from whom the beer has been taken off?—Yes.

Q. And you have not been able to substitute anything in place of the beer?—No.

Q. So on this kind of fare the able-bodied men would really be coal-heavers at Poplar Workhouse?—Yes.

Q. Now take Tuesday. What did they get on Tuesday?—They got gruel for breakfast and milk at night.

Q. Will you take the breakfast first?—6 ounces of bread and a pint and a half of gruel.

Q. What about dinner?—4½ ounces of boiled mutton and 12 ounces of potatoes.

Q. And for supper?—8 ounces of bread, a pint of broth, and 2 ounces of cheese.

Q. On Wednesday?—For breakfast, 8 ounces of bread and a pint of milk.

Q. For dinner?—3 ounces of boiled bacon, 4 ounces of bread, and 12 ounces of potatoes, or haricot beans.

Q. They can have either haricot beans or potatoes?—No, only potatoes. There was so much trouble with the beans that the guardians only have potatoes.

Q. Then for supper?—6 ounces of bread and a pint and a half of gruel.

Q. Do you mind taking Thursday?—6 ounces of bread and a pint and a half of gruel.

Q. What do they get for dinner?—Boiled beef 4½ ozs., 4 ozs. bread, and 12 ozs. of potatoes.

Q. Or other vegetables?—No, he has no choice there.

Q. He gets 4½ ounces for his dinner?—Yes.

Q. And for supper?—8 ozs. of bread, a pint of broth, and 2 ozs. of cheese.

Q. Now turn to Friday?—He gets 8 ozs. of bread for breakfast and a pint of milk.

Q. And for dinner?—Bread 8 ozs., cheese 3 ozs., and a pint of coffee.

Q. So he gets 8 ounces of bread, 3 ounces of cheese—is that the best English Cheddar?—No, that is American.

Q. He gets 3 ounces of the best American cheese?—Yes.

Q. And what else?—One pint of coffee.

Q. Is it certain that is the food for the mid-day meal for able-bodied men on Friday?—Yes, it is.

Q. 3 whole ounces of cheese, and 8 ounces of bread, and a pint of coffee?—Yes.

Q. That is not a very luxurious food, is it. What do they get for supper?—Bread 8 ounces, broth 1 pint, cheese 2 ounces.

Q. Then on Saturday?—Breakfast, 6 ounces of bread, and a pint and a half of gruel.

Q. Dinner?—Pea-soup 1½ pints, bread 6 ounces.

Q. Supper?—Bread 8 ounces, milk a pint.

Q. Before we go on with the dietary I should like to ask you one other question with regard to the visitors. Have you a committee of local ladies who visit the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. Do you know the number of these?—I think it is twelve.

Q. And how often do they visit?—Weekly.

Q. Do they visit the women and children?—Yes.

Q. Do they visit the aged and infirm men?—With my permission.

Q. But the usual thing is women and children?—Yes.

Q. So that in the case of women having been compelled to eat bad food there is not only the guardians going in, not only friends of the guardians, but there is also an independent committee of ladies belonging to the borough who go in every week?—Yes.

Q. Can we have put in, Mr. Davy, the report of that ladies' committee, which was presented two or three weeks ago. I should like it to come in as evidence. (*The Inspector assented.*)

Q. You have had a report from those ladies each year?—It was sent to Mr. Lough.

Q. There has been a report made of the work?—Yes.

Q. And as far as you remember have they ever made any complaint as to the treatment of the inmates?—No.

Q. Have they universally approved the methods by which the house was conducted?—Yes.

Q. Will you take the dietary table?—Yes.

Q. In the first place what are the able-bodied women doing in the workhouse?—The whole of the laundry, the whole of the cleaning in the infirm wards, and they keep their side clean.

Q. How many inmates are there to wash for?—There are about 1,500 in the house, and about 100 children at Langley House. There would be from 1,600 to 1,900, and about 32,000 articles.

Q. And this is done in the main with the help of machinery in the laundry, and the work is carried on there by the able-bodied women?—Yes.

Q. How many officers are there in the laundry?

(Mr. Robb.) May we have those figures of the laundry again?

(Mr. Lansbury.) Certainly.

(Mr. McCarthy.) The number of articles is about 43,000.

(The Inspector.) How many inmates?—About 1,900 always.

Q. And then you said there are 32,000 articles?—It is between 30,000 and 40,000.

Q. Is that return got out for the purposes of the Inquiry?—No.

(Mr. Lansbury.) We always have it for ourselves. We like to know what is being done in the house.

(Mr. Robb.) It will be interesting to know how many articles it is per person. It is over 20, and sounds like 25 articles for each person. It is rather an extensive wash.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Yes, you have got there handkerchiefs and socks and shirts and undershirts and sheets and pillow-cases, &c.

(Mrs. Wilson.) And things for the babies.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I suggest to you that, of course, it is the little babies' washing in the nursery of the workhouse, too?—Yes.

Q. The whole of that is done and the ironing and the rest of it?—Yes.

Q. You have got a head laundress and an assistant laundress?—Yes.

Q. Have you an ironer now?—I have got two temporary laundresses.

Q. And a man?—Yes.

Q. And apart from these the whole of the work is carried on there by the able-bodied women?—Yes.

Q. So as far as the women in the house are concerned, it would be true to say they are usefully employed?—Yes.

Q. The point I want to get out is that the whole of the washing for 1,900 persons is done in that house, and is done by the five officials and the women?—Yes.

Q. And the scrubbing and cleaning down of the place. Who is that done by?—On the female side by the females.

Q. And on the men's side?—By the able-bodied men.

Q. As far as the women are concerned they have plenty of work?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Do you hire any women helpers at all?—Some years ago. It got very bad one season. We had a few of them to do cleaning and ironing work.

Q. Do you hire women in the ordinary time?—No.

Q. How many women are there in the workhouse?—About 100. The return this morning was 130.

(Mr. Lansbury.) The report I wish to get in as evidence is one presented by the ladies' visiting committee. It is signed by Mrs. Schnadhorst and Mrs. Barge. The date is 1906. I should like it read. It won't be reported but the Press will know to their shame they have not reported it. "Your committee submit the following report of the ladies' visiting committee of the Poplar Workhouse, for the year ending April, 1906,—Ladies and Gentlemen,—It is again our great pleasure to submit to you our annual report. During the year 46 meetings have been held and at each some part of the house has been visited. The year has been singularly free from complaints, all the inmates seeming happy and contented. The nurses in charge are kindness itself and are uniformly good-tempered and active. The whole house is kept beautifully clean and each ward is a picture of cosiness and comfort. At Christmas everything was done to make the inmates enjoy themselves. Every useful aid is procured for the infirm, to help them to move about easily. The sick are kindly tended and the little children's health and comfort carefully supervised. The kitchen is always scrupulously clean and the food plentiful, good, and well-cooked. Every officer seems intent on doing her best, and the whole house is admirably managed. In the summer the committee took 147 infirm women to Theydon Bois for an excursion. The drive was most enjoyable and the people behaved well and enjoyed the lunch which they took with them and the tarts and

lemonade which were partaken of on their arrival. A tea was provided by the committee at 4 p.m., and the tables, with their clean cloths, flowers, cake, jam, lettuce, and rolls, looked very pretty. All enjoyed themselves. Those who were too infirm to go to the excursion were entertained to tea on October 4th. One hundred and thirty-five sat down to their repast of tea, sausage rolls, fruit, and pastry. The committee have been instrumental in getting up two concerts for the inmates. One entitled 'The Dolls' Tea Party,' given by the children of Malmesbury Road, the other given by the children of Culloden Street School. During the year one of our members, Mrs. Rogers, has removed to Leytonstone, and has had to resign. We wish to thank all friends who have assisted us with contributions during the year, and also all the officers of the house for the kindness they have shown us.—(Signed) President, L. SCHNADHORST. Secretary, KATE BARGE."

(The Inspector.) They deserve a vote of thanks from the guardians.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Oh! no, Mr. Davy, we have had that regularly. The point is that whatever has been going on in the workhouse, there has been a large number of people in and out, from the Local Government Board Inspectors on the one hand down to these humble people here, and they have all said one thing. We have never had any complaint from the ladies' visiting committee at all, and these ladies have been in the habit of going practically where they please in the workhouse. (To witness.) Now, if you do not mind, we will go on to the dietary. We had better take the able-bodied women first, classes 3 and 3a, because I notice the others vary a little?—The adults have bread and butter.

Q. That would be margarine?—Yes.

Q. And it would be margarine in the case of the able-bodied men?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) When did the margarine begin?—Just lately.

(Mr. Lansbury.) This is one of the triumphs of our friends opposite. (To witness.) What do the able-bodied women get on Sundays?—Mutton 4½ ozs., bread 4 ozs., potatoes 12 ozs.

Q. Would that be 3 and 3a women?—No, I should have said roast beef 4 ozs., 8 ozs. potatoes and the bread.

Q. Now take Monday's breakfast?—A pint of coffee, ½ oz. margarine, 6 ozs. bread.

Q. What do the women get for dinner?—In the Lady-day half-year they would get a pint of pea-soup and 4 ozs. of bread.

Q. Those are the women who do the laundry and scrubbing?—Yes.

Q. You would not call that an extravagant dinner for women, on which to do scrubbing and so on?—No.

Q. For supper, what would they get?—The whole of the supper right down is the same from week-end to week-end, that is to say, ½ oz. margarine, a pint of tea and 6 ozs. of bread.

Q. That is the tea all through?—Yes, and for breakfast they have coffee.

Q. And in the Michaelmas half-year what do these women get for dinner?—Four ozs. beef, 8 ozs. vegetables, 4 ozs. bread.

Q. That is for the able-bodied women?—Yes.

Q. Would you mind taking the aged men, men over 60, classes 2 and 2a. Their breakfast is what?—Throughout the week ½ oz. margarine, 8 ozs. bread, 1 pint of coffee. In place of coffee they have tea for supper all through the week.

Q. What do they have for dinner?—They get roast mutton 4½ ozs., 4 ozs. of bread, 12 ozs. of potatoes.

Q. That is the Michaelmas half-year?—Always on Sunday throughout the year.

Q. Take the week now, what do they have for dinner?—In the Lady-day half-year they get a pint and a half of pea-soup and 6 ozs. of bread.

Q. And the Michaelmas half-year?—Roast beef 4½ ozs., 4 ozs. of bread, with 12 ozs. of potatoes.

Q. That is your top dietary?—That is about the best dietary—roast beef.

Mr. Madley.

8 June.

Mr. Madeley.

8 June.

Q. It was really the best meal an inmate of the Poplar Workhouse could get who was not on the sick list, viz., 4½ ozs. of beef, 12 ozs. of vegetables, 4 ozs. of bread?—This is so.

Q. That is the tip-top meal for dinner?—That is the best.

Q. And then for his or her breakfast it is 8 ozs. of bread, ½ oz. margarine, and a pint of coffee. That is the best meal an aged person could get?—Yes, that is so.

Q. For tea, it is a pint of tea, 8 ozs. of bread and ½ oz. of margarine?—Yes.

Q. The dietary scale is posted up at the workhouse and is printed in the annual report of the board?—I believe it is.

Q. So that anybody who wished to find out the facts, who were anxious to assist the guardians in the administration of the workhouse, had ample opportunity if they had a copy of the accounts and report, to find out what luxurious food the paupers in Poplar Workhouse received. Is that so?—Yes.

Q. Is this dietary table one adopted on the sanction of the Local Government Board?—It is one you had to adopt by order of the Local Government Board.

Q. Is it true the Local Government Board upset the previous dietary and compelled the guardians?—Yes.

Q. And is it true that not only the Local Government Board but also the doctor of the workhouse has to certify this dietary?—Yes.

Q. So if it is an extravagant and luxurious dietary, one that attracts paupers from all over the country, the people who are to blame with the board of guardians are the Local Government Board and the doctor of the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. They all have to certify to the right or wrongfulness of this dietary?—Yes.

Q. Now the ingredients that go to make up this luxurious food, this pampering of the inmates of Poplar Workhouse, is that set out by the Local Government Board?—Yes.

Q. Have you schedules telling you what each meal is to be made up with?—Yes.

Q. I hold in my hand the Workhouse Dietaries—the Orders by the Local Government Board, issued in 1900. Are they the tables laid down by the Local Government Board as to what the meals are to be made up with?—Yes.

Q. And therefore, if the guardians have fed the people luxuriously, pampered them and forced all these luxuries on them, it will again be true to say that the food is given as prescribed and laid down in the Dietary Orders issued by the Local Government Board?—Yes.

Q. And not only is the dietary table laid down, but also the kind of meat that you shall give the inmates?—Yes.

Q. For instance, you give them mutton?—Yes.

Q. Is it true that the mutton has to be without bone?—Yes.

Q. And is it true that practically the whole of the make-up of each meal is laid down in those schedules prepared by the Local Government Board?—Yes.

Q. So much for the dietary. Have you ever found any over-anxiety on the part of the guardians to attract able-bodied men or other men, or able-bodied women or other women, into the workhouse?—No.

Q. Have you ever received any instructions to entice people to receive the benefits of the Poplar Workhouse?—No, I have not.

Q. Now as to the treatment of able-bodied men. When an able-bodied man is proved to be refractory, and in your opinion a man who should be punished, have the guardians ever interfered with you in punishing such a man?—I have locked him up and have reported him in the punishment book.

Q. Have you been interfered with in doing that?—No.

Q. If you found a man wilfully and persistently did not carry out the instructions he was given, would it be true to say the board backed you in exercising your authority over him?—They did always.

Q. To go back to these able-bodied gentlemen who are in the workhouse and the workshops of the workhouse generally, is it true you have a blacksmith's shop there?—Yes.

Q. Who works there?—A smith and labourer, and I believe he had got an old man or two with him.

Q. Do not all the older inmates prefer to pass their time in that way?—Yes.

Q. Then in the tailor's shop and the bootmaker's shop: are there not inmates at work there?—In the shoemaker's shop we have a master shoemaker and eight or nine inmates doing it.

Q. You have eight or nine inmates doing shoe-making?—Yes.

Q. And they would be doing what?—Making and repairing boots.

Q. Were there any boot-shops there before you became master?—There were no shops there.

Q. They were established by the board that appointed you?—That is so.

Q. And they have been maintained ever since?—Yes.

Q. Have any members of the board of guardians in any way prevented you employing a man according to his capacity as bootmaker?—No, sir.

Q. And the only reward such a man would get for making boots would be the able-bodied dietary that I read out?—Yes.

Q. And his sleeping accommodation?—Yes.

Q. And clothes while he is on the premises?—Yes.

Q. Now in the tailor's shop, Mr. Madeley?—There are a master-tailor and three paid hands, and I think four unpaid.

Q. That is to say, you have a master-tailor and three assistants who are paid, and four other men who would be inmates of the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. And you put in a return I think. Such a return has been prepared?—It has.

Q. There is a return, is there not?—Showing how every man was set to work.

Q. I meant there is a return in the annual report showing the number of articles made and mended in the boot-shop and in the tailor's shop?—Yes.

Q. Will you look at 1905?—Yes, I have it.

Q. You will see at the top of the page that you made 291 coats, 265 vests, 546 pairs of trousers, and in the same shop you repaired 2,201 coats, 2,263 vests and 5,022 trousers?—Yes.

Q. That is a return of work that has been done by the staff of three that you mentioned, with the assistance of the inmates?—Yes.

Q. Then, if you take boots, you will find that you made 949 pairs of new boots and repaired 5,618?—Yes.

Q. And you have one boot man there?—One only.

Q. And the rest was done by the able-bodied inmates?—Yes.

Q. So when it is stated that men attempt to come down there because there is no work for them to do, it is true to say that at any rate some of them are put to actual skilled work and compelled to do it on able-bodied diet, as read out this morning?—Yes, that is so.

Q. Then you have got a carpenter's shop there?—Yes.

Q. I would like to say that this return I have just read appears in the report of the board of guardians and anyone who had that report and who wished to find out the facts could have found them out for themselves without the institution of a public inquiry?—Yes.

Q. That is, facts are there as to what work has been done?—Yes.

Q. With regard to the carpenter's shop, have you any inmate carpenter at all?—I have a special shop set apart for inmate carpenters apart from the paid men.

Q. Mainly old men, are they not?—Yes. There will be three or four there doing the glazing, mending chairs, and little odd jobs.

Q. What is their age—50?—Nearer 60, I think.

Q. You think they would not be quite young, vigorous, active carpenters?—No.

Mr. Madeley.

8 June.

Q. And they are put to this work because it is work agreeable to them and it helps to relieve the monotony of the workhouse?—Yes, that is so.

Q. There is nothing extra paid to them for this skilled work?—Labour on beer.

Q. And they were given beer as an encouragement to do these little skilled jobs?—That is so.

Q. Then, have you any other shops there?—No.

Q. Do you do mattress-making?—Oh! the beds have always been done since I've been there.

Q. You make the beds?—The beds and mattresses for the whole place.

Q. Do you do any mat-making there?—We have done mat-making in the house sometimes. We have done it and supplied the schools.

Q. That depends whether you have a mat-maker in the house?—Yes.

Q. If you have such a man?—We put him on.

Q. You have got a wood-shop there, have you not?—Yes.

Q. You have an extra patent special saw?—Yes.

Q. A kind of treadmill arrangement, only worked by hand?—That is so.

Q. Can you tell us whether the ratepayers make any money out of wood-chopping?—I don't think it is a lot. We have not done so much as in previous years. It is in the report, I believe.

Q. At any rate, we don't lose by it; that means we get the value of the wood back again?—Yes.

Q. Do we get anything for the labour expended on it?—I cannot say. I have not the report before me.

Q. Have you heard anything of the firewood cutters protesting against the guardians selling wood?—They always have done.

Q. They allege it unfair to compete with them in their trade?—Yes.

Q. They think it is rather unfair that we should be selling wood and doing them out of their business?—That is so.

Q. Therefore the guardians have not been anxious to increase the sale of wood?—That is so.

Q. Because they were not anxious to create more paupers?—Yes.

Q. With regard to the men who do the cleaning up and scouring down of this asphalt. Who are the men?—They would be the ordinary able-bodied men.

Q. With regard to the stone-breaking and oakum-picking, did you find you had very much more control over the bulk of the men when you had oakum-picking and stone-breaking as tasks there?—There was no difference.

Q. Do you remember when we abolished stone-breaking and oakum-picking?—Yes, I think it was about two or three years after I was appointed. It may be a little longer.

Q. Would it be in 1893?—I don't think it was abolished then. I was not appointed until 1894. It might be about 1895 or 1896.

Q. Can we have that date when stone-breaking and oakum-picking were abolished. I think there was a resolution?—There is a resolution on the minutes.

Q. While they are searching, I should like to ask—did you find that the able-bodied became more difficult to deal with. Did you have more trouble with the able-bodied?—After it was abolished? No.

Q. It would not be true to say that the abolition of oakum-picking and stone-breaking had led to disorder and disorganisation in the house?—No.

Q. When you were first appointed, do you remember the able-bodied men's room?—Yes.

Q. Do you remember the kind of things that used to go on there?—Yes.

Q. You do. Did they show very much discipline among the young men of the house?—I was simply warned not to go into it.

Q. You were recommended not to go in?—I was warned not to go in.

Q. Therefore stone-breaking and oakum-picking did not lead to very much discipline in the workhouse when these tasks were on?—No.

Q. Is it true that the ordinary in-and-out of the workhouse can break stones quite easily?—Yes, perfectly.

Q. It really isn't a task to him?—I may say I remember a man named Wells who hadn't anything physically wrong with him; he could do his cwt. of stone in two or three hours.

Q. If a man performed his task in a couple of hours his work for that day was done?—Yes.

Q. And he would be a source of annoyance and inconvenience to the rest of the house?—He was put in the day-room by himself and had to stay there.

Q. Under the present arrangements, whether light or heavy work, it is still true to say that the men are employed right on all the time?—Yes.

Q. There is no such thing as lying down for an afternoon's siesta, for instance?—Not in the house.

Q. And in your judgment no great harm has come from the abolition of stone-breaking and oakum-picking in Poplar Workhouse?—No.

Q. I don't know whether you remember, Mr. Madeley, but able-bodied men in the workhouse—the number dwindled after your appointment?—Yes.

Q. Is that so?—They did.

Q. And they increased in the winter of 1904. The numbers went up again?—Yes.

Q. Can you tell us why it was the numbers decreased?—Yes. I brought it to the notice of the board. I considered it unfair that these men should come in at all times and at all hours, and the board passed a resolution that able-bodied men going out of the workhouse on the same day should not be given an order to come in until the following day, and I may tell the public here that I was the first master to encourage that. Although it was perfectly illegal, it had good effect.

Q. Our board were quite anxious to support you in doing that?—They did.

Q. There was no disposition on the part of the board to ask you to deal leniently with people who proved undeserving?—No.

Q. Can you take your mind—but here is a return I shall hand to you. In 1895 it shows that 10,157 persons were admitted into the Poplar Workhouse. In 1905, the people who were anxious to share in the luxurious feeding, &c., and the pampered existence of the Poplar pauper, dropped down to 4,465. We hand that in, Mr. Davy. It is a decrease of 6,000, roughly speaking. They, of course, tell their own tale to anyone who understands Poor Law figures. Then about able-bodied women: are the women in the workhouse to be confined, are they down as able-bodied?—Yes.

Q. They would be numbered with the able-bodied?—Yes.

Q. Therefore if you say you have 150 able-bodied women in the workhouse you have to deduct from those the number who are simply there awaiting an event?—Yes.

Q. That would be true at all times?—Yes.

Q. The number would fluctuate?—Yes.

Q. It has not been introduced, but I expect it to be introduced. Do you find that the policy of the guardians has led to large numbers of women with illegitimate children coming into the house?—No, the numbers have been practically the same year in and year out.

Q. The present tendency of the guardians has not led to an increase in that class?—The same for years.

(The Inspector.) Have you a return?—

(Mr. Lansbury.) We have a return. To go back to broughams. Have you got the contracts there?—Yes; I don't know what is the number.

Q. It does not matter. Take the figure from me. I want the fare to London Bridge?—I should think it is about 3s.

Q. As a matter of fact it is 3s. 6d. You had better look; I want it on the record?—Where do you say? London Bridge. London Bridge, 3s. 6d.

Q. You would send one officer with two or three inmates?—Yes.

Q. And this officer would be responsible for seeing that they did not run away with our clothes and that they reached London Bridge and their destination in safety?—Certainly.

Mr. Madeley.

8 June.

Q. So either they have to be chained to him or he had to have a fence of some sort?—That is so.

Q. Therefore it would not be a very extravagant price to pay for hauling four men from Poplar to London Bridge?—No.

Q. It is the contract price?—Yes.

Q. Then about these men coming back. The men who get rid of clothes and don't make use of opportunities for getting out of the Poor Law life—the life of a workhouse?—They prosecute in all cases.

Q. The guardians have?—Yes.

Q. They haven't encouraged men to sell the clothes and come back for another outfit?—No.

Q. The guardians have occasionally given a man another chance after serving his punishment?—Yes.

Q. That is true?—Yes.

Q. They treated him as though, after all, he was a man, and tried to get the best out of him they could?—Yes.

Q. In regard to men going into the workhouse who are habitual drunkards who ought to be in inebriates' homes, have you any power?—

(Mr. Robb.) That was Laindon.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Oh! my dear Mr. Robb, Laindon is a branch workhouse. You will understand the Poor Law when you have done this Inquiry. I want to get out the point that the guardians have no option but to take in a burglar, thief, pick-pocket, or drunkard if he is destitute?—I am bound to admit with an order according to the Local Government Board.

Q. You have been a relieving officer?—Yes.

Q. You know the law of destitution. If it can be proved that a man has left prison for the nine hundred and ninety-ninth time and has slept in Poplar one night, have the guardians any option to relieve him?—They must relieve him. They must relieve all destitute persons.

Q. No matter what blackguard?—We cannot help that.

Q. So when we are rebuked for taking in men who have so many periods for drunkenness, we only do do what we are obliged by law to do?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) I thought the suggestion was that you had sent these people to Laindon.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Excuse me, Mr. Davy, I know exactly where I am going. I want to point out. The assumption of these gentlemen yesterday was that we sent them to Laindon because they were well behaved.

(Mr. Robb.) I may say—I don't want to be misrepresented—I am sure Mr. Lansbury does not wish intentionally to misrepresent me. I am quite aware there is no power to refuse admission of these persons to the workhouse here in Poplar, but my point was that it was not the proper thing to send persons of that class—persons of known bad character, with convictions against them, to serve as farm colonists. That is a different matter.

(Mr. Crooks.) Please note the point against us was that we did not employ these men usefully. As far as possible, we have shown that we did. To give them useful work we sent them to Laindon. Mr. Robb gives his case away when he talks about character.

(The Inspector.) It is all subject of comment.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Why I want it to come out is because there is apparently in Mr. Robb's mind quite a misconception about Laindon. We wanted Laindon to test whether men would work or not. (To witness.) Were our instructions to you for the first 50 men to pick out the worst men you had?—No.

Q. What was it?—To pick out the best 50 men.

Q. That you could find?—Yes.

Q. And the next?—The same.

Q. And it has been that all the way through?—Yes.

Q. With regard to this man, what was his name?—There are many of them.

Q. No, you only gave us one?—Patrick Sheehan, I think.

(Mr. Robb.) The names I gave yesterday were John Ingles and John Sheehan. I shall put the others in.

(Mr. Lansbury.) With regard to Ingles, do you remember the name?—No. It is done since.

Q. Is it an old name: Has he been in and out?—No.

Q. When you get a man into the workhouse do you get a character from a relieving officer with him?—No.

Q. Is the relieving officer supposed to supply you with a character of the man?—No.

Q. And does he bring you a character from his last employer?—No.

Q. Have you any means of knowing whether he is drunken except from his appearance?—That is all.

Q. It is true, then, that you have no means of judging whether a man is a drunkard or whether he is an imbecile, except from his actions after you get him into the house, and, therefore, to attempt to cast responsibility upon you for the sending away of a worthless man falls to the ground. You have no power to compel a man to produce a character?—None whatever.

Q. When men have been sent to Laindon and have come back without any reason at all and you have had to admit them into the house, what have the guardians instructed you to do?—I generally inform them that they would have to go back, or if they had done wrong they would be punished.

Q. Is it a fact the guardians turned from the workhouse men who they thought had behaved badly after having an opportunity of getting their own living?—How long ago is that?

Q. About three or four months ago?—I think one or two were brought up.

Q. I mean the Evesham men?—They were not to have an order.

Q. One or two got in?—Yes, one.

Q. That man was cleared out?—Yes, the next morning.

Q. When the guardians had a case against a man they took the only steps they had to get rid of him from the Poplar district. That is they broke the law and laid the onus on this man of going to the magistrate to get an order to compel the guardians to admit him?—Yes, I know the case has been up to the Court.

Q. Then about the matter in which you were examined this morning in regard to your work, have you any settled hours?—I usually, when in the house, got down at 7 or 7.30. Not later.

Q. Do the guardians look upon you as a day labourer?—Oh! no.

Q. I mean, are you looked upon as one of the gentlemen who are paid for brains rather than for manual labour?—Brains.

Q. What I mean is, when you are asked how long it takes you to do certain things, isn't it like asking a gentleman who get up briefs how long it takes him to think it out?—Exactly, sir.

Q. You may not be doing any actual work; you may be sitting in your own room, yet sometimes you would be considering as to work going on throughout the house?—Yes.

Q. I mean they would not allow you to sit very long?—There are 1,800 people and there would be many knocks at the door.

Q. You have been asked to say how long it takes you to do certain parts of your work. Do you really allot an hour to this and an hour to something else?—No, certainly not. I am generally supervising.

Q. As a matter of fact, if anything is proved in this Inquiry to have gone wrong in the house, even to the wrong-doing of your subordinates, even then you are the gentleman who is held responsible in the last resort?—Yes.

Q. That is as the orders are?—Yes.

Q. There is no getting rid of your responsibility in the matter whatsoever?—None.

Q. You had a superintendent of works some years ago?—Yes.

Q. Do you remember his salary?—£190.

Q. It was after he was dismissed that you were handed over that particular work. There is only one other thing I want to ask and that is as to the date when stone-breaking and oakum-picking were put an end to?—I think about 1895 or 1896.

Q. It is rather important and I shall rather press, Mr. Davy, that we get that looked up, because one of your inspectors under date December 30th, 1896, wrote: "Owing to the improved administration of this work-house, the number of able-bodied indoor paupers has considerably decreased, but there is a small increase in the number of infirm." That was Mr. Herbert, and it would be interesting to know.

(The Inspector.) What is the date?

(Mr. Lansbury.) 1896, December 30th.

(The Inspector.) I want to verify that.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I suggest to Mr. Madeley that is a report written by Mr. Herbert, the Local Government Board Inspector, and it is important to find out whether that was the judgment of one of the Local Government Board experts after oakum-picking and stone-breaking had been abolished. The books at the house will contain that record?—For the stone it would.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I know we sold off our stock, but I may ask Mr. Lough to find the record somehow or other when that took place.

(Mr. Ford.) May I take it, Mr. Madeley, that everyone who enters the house is classified by the doctor?—Yes.

Q. If the doctor classifies as able-bodied you have no alternative but to put him to duties set down for able-bodied persons to do?—Yes.

Q. I want to ask if it is also a fact that very recently one man classified as able-bodied, a person about 40 years of age, who was supposed to be engaged in cleaning windows, fell down dead?—Fell down, I don't know whether dead or not.

Q. Is it also a fact that there was also an inquest on that man?—Yes.

Q. Can you tell me what the verdict was in the case?—I haven't got it. It was in the journal. Every inquest is reported.

Q. Is it a fact that this man who was classified as able-bodied fell dead while engaged in the operation of cleaning windows?—Yes.

Q. You and the guardians of the Poplar Union were censured by the coroner and the jury for allowing the person who died from heart failure for putting him to that work?—Yes.

Q. I put it to you that neither you nor the guardians knew whether that person was an able-bodied man or not?—Yes.

Q. That is, we have to abide by the doctor's reference in that particular matter?—Yes.

Q. If you had not put that man to some useful employment you would have been neglecting your duty?—Yes.

Q. I want to read this report to you, Mr. Madeley, just to refresh your memory. It is the old familiar title, "A Poplar scandal, grave allegations against workhouse officials. Strong comments." Same title this morning—"Paralysed man sent up a ladder to clean windows." It is in the month of September, 1904: "Grave allegations against workhouse officials in connection with the death of a railway labourer named George Simeon Bragg, 37, were investigated at the inquest at the Poplar Coroner's Court to-day. An inmate named Mason, a helper in the lunatic ward, alleged that the attendant gave Bragg a dose of ammonia and ether, which choked him. The widow said that twelve months ago her husband met with an accident, and was given £60 compensation. Shortly afterwards he was seized with paralysis and had been in Poplar Workhouse for the past seven weeks. An inmate named John Sullivan said that on Tuesday morning last, Bragg was very excited, because he could not go out to see his children. The Coroner: 'Was the deceased paralysed?'—Yes, sir, one arm was 'queer and he used to drag one leg.' These are the people who are classified and described as able-bodied simply because they happened to be less than 60 years of age. 'The Coroner: And yet he was put to clean windows?'—Yes, sir. A Juror: Then I say it is a shame. Other evidence showed that Bragg was ascending the steps to clean the windows when he

"fell backwards. George Woods, attendant, gave evidence of supplying Bragg with two clean dusters to start on his work. Some time afterwards he was called and found him lying unconscious on the floor. The Coroner: I should like to know who gave the orders to the deceased to do this work. The Jury: Hear, hear. The witness equivocated and said he thought it would probably be the labour master, but he was not quite certain. Joseph Mason, an inmate, stated that he acted as helper in the male lunatic ward. He was present when deceased was brought in unconscious, and apparently in a fit. Mr. Page, the attendant, came in and gave the deceased a dose of ether and ammonia, and he was afterwards taken into the padded room and he died soon afterwards. Samuel Ernest Page, lunatic attendant, said he was in the observation ward directly after Bragg was brought in, and gave him a little ether and ammonia to revive him. He did this in all cases of apparent fits. Frederick Barnes, the labour master, said Bragg was in the able-bodied part of the house. Any officer applying to witness for a man to clean windows, &c., would be supplied with one. The Coroner: Did you know he was a paralytic?—Not before the day he died. Coroner: How many men are there in the able-bodied part of the house?—Six hundred. The Coroner: How many clean windows?—About twenty. A Juror: And deceased was specially picked out although we have heard that he couldn't keep one leg still and one arm was 'not much good.' Another able-bodied. I want to call your attention to the fact that we don't intimidate the medical officer to classify these men as infirm.

(Mr. Crooks.) I call your attention to that.

(Mr. Ford.) "Dr. John Lamont, medical superintendent, said the attendant had a right to administer the dose as described. It was only salts. Death was due to the rupture of a blood vessel on the brain. A juror remarked that in his idea there had been great neglect on the part of the officials. The following verdict was returned: 'That the deceased died from cerebral haemorrhage, and that the attention of the guardians should be drawn to the fact that although suffering from paralysis the deceased was ordered by the labour master to go up steps and clean windows'."

(The Inspector.) Do you remember that?—I remember the case.

(Mr. Ford.) You can have no lighter work than that of cleaning windows. It's a house-maid's job. You have a distinct recollection of yourself being censured and the board being censured for allowing that supposed to be able-bodied man to go to work?—Yes.

Q. The date was September 2nd, 1904. I produce that because it shows we don't bring coercion on our medical officer or any executive officer in any shape or form. I want to ask if you can give some idea as to what the number of your temporary staff there is. I am not dealing with workmen now. Temporary officers?—There are two laundresses.

Q. They are accounted for in the five Mr. Madeley dealt with. They do the laundry for Langley House?—Yes.

Q. There is a temporary cook?—One.

Q. A cutter-out?—Yes.

Q. Temporary tailor?—I think that is about all.

Q. May I take it that the average never exceeds eight or ten temporary officers?—Yes.

Q. May I also take it that it is part of the board's policy that no officer in the service—subordinate officers—shall work more than eight hours a day?—That is so.

Q. That accounts to a certain extent for some increase in the staff?—Yes.

Q. It accounts for these temporary relieving officers?—Yes.

Q. It is also a fact, I believe, that sometimes you do have an officer who is ill?—Yes.

Q. Sometimes two or three at a time?—Yes.

Q. And you have to fill their places?—Yes.

Q. You take the responsibility if their work is not done?—Yes.

Q. Your usual custom is to try someone to do the work temporarily and report that circumstance to the next meeting of the committee?—The house committee.

Q. One of these three temporary officers is a cook. I hope you will take particular notice of this, Mr. Robb.

Mr. Madeley.

8 June.

Mr. Madeley. (Mr. Robb.) Mr. Ford, the whole thing is apparently set out in your minutes of the 14th June, 1905. There is a full list; and on other minutes. I see ten labourers, 10d. an hour.

(Mr. Ford.) I discriminate between officers and labourers.

(Mr. Crooks.) You will know an awful lot when you are finished.

(Mr. Ford.) One of those officers is a cook.

(Mr. Crooks.) The cook you sent your officer to, Mr. Robb.

(The Inspector.) Will you ask questions, Mr. Ford?

(Mr. Ford.) It was suggested you kept this temporary cook for two or three years practically doing nothing?—There were 1,800 to cook for.

Q. Is it a fact that she is there because the old cook met with an accident some two years ago, and that she came to relieve the cook until she got well?—No, on account of the increased numbers.

Q. I put it to you as a man of some experience that three women cooks are not more than sufficient to cook for over 1,600 persons?—1,900. 1,800 and the staff.

Q. I put it to you, Mr. Davy: one of the guardians has levelled it against us that we have a temporary cook there—a temporary—permanent officer—for the last two years, and the suggestion is we are keeping her doing nothing. I put it to you Mr. Madeley that these three women have something like about 1,700 to cook for?—Yes.

Q. I understand that I said 1,600?—Yes.

Q. In your opinion, are three women more than sufficient to cook for 1,700 persons?—Just sufficient.

Q. And do you think it would be possible for three women to do the work at all unless they were supplemented by a good deal of inmate assistance?—It is impossible.

Q. How many inmates would you suppose are engaged permanently in the kitchen?—Kitchen and larder, half a dozen or more.

Q. So it would be a fact if we hadn't twelve or fifteen inmates working we should have to have twelve or fifteen extra people?—Yes.

Q. Is it a fact that you have been in a very bad state of health for some considerable time?—I have been under a doctor at the London Hospital and Dr. Kidd and other specialists and I have passed through a serious illness since my mastership.

Q. You have felt the work almost overwhelming?—Yes.

Q. Is it a fact that the real reasons for your resignation are the medical certificates you have put in?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) I refrained from going into that.

(The Inspector.) You do it at your peril.

(Mr. Ford.) I am asking the question.

(Mr. Robb.) You had better leave it alone.

(Mr. Ford.) The fact that Mr. Madeley alleges the cause of his resignation is ill-health—

(Mr. Robb.) I protest against that. I have certain instructions, but I refrained from putting questions and don't intend to put them. If this sort of thing is introduced, it is mistaken kindness to Mr. Madeley.

(Mr. Ford.) I don't want to pursue the matter further. One other question. Is it a fact that you have been commended at times for the manner you have dealt with able-bodied inmates?—Yes.

Q. Handling the rough element of the able-bodied?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Does anyone else want to ask a question?

(Mr. Robb.) Will you put that question? I won't put it myself, because I should not be allowed and we would never get finished.

(The Inspector.) It is my fault. I did not take sufficient care to ask the guardians whether they wished to ask any questions. They are perfectly right and interesting. I should have come to that. I am going to re-examine Mr. Madeley. How many Evesham men were there?

(Mr. Lansbury.) They didn't come from the house?—From outside.

(The Inspector.) The practice, I understand, is that a certain number of cases get beer for encouragement at their work?—The beer is given for objectionable labour.

Q. And that is given on the authority of the medical officer?—All cases.

Q. And is entered, not in the medical relief book, but in the alcohol book?—Yes.

Q. The justification for the beer you give?—Yes.

Q. And the second column of the form in the alcohol book is the statement of the reasons of the medical officer for the allowance. That would be filled up by the medical officer?—Yes.

Q. You have no task work in the house?—Yes.

Q. We have had a good many Inspectors' reports quoted. Did you, Mr. Lough, get a copy of one made by Mr. Walsh in October, 1905, with regard to this labour question? I am afraid you never had it. You would have remembered it, because it deals with the question of task work at considerable length.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Can we have it. I take it that is not a report written in the visitors' book?

(The Inspector.) No. As it has not been sent to the guardians, and as Mr. Walsh is available, I don't propose to read it.

(Mr. Lough.) I cannot find any note on the paper that it was sent in the ordinary course.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I have no knowledge of it.

(The Inspector.) Therefore I won't read it.

(Mr. Lough.) The only report from Mr. Walsh is 30th April, 1905, when he visited Langley House.

(The Inspector.) This was not sent. On this he states: "The guardians are getting out a return showing the number of men who have been inmates for a considerable number of years and their ages. The return was not complete on date of my visit." Was the return sent?

(Mr. Lough.) Yes.

(Mr. Crooks.) Is this a report on the ins and outs?

(The Inspector.) Partly. He says, "I am of opinion that one-half of these able-bodied men will be found to have been in the house five years and upwards." Similar reference to women; 54 out of 138 have been in the house for five years.

(Mr. Lansbury.) What does it say about laundry work?

(The Inspector.) He says the women at laundry work were usefully employed. There is a lot about the men. (To witness.) You remember the Dietary Order was issued in October, 1900, and gave a number of alternative rations or foods out of which the guardians could form their own dietary?—Yes.

Q. And you framed that dietary with the assistance of the medical officer?—And the guardians.

Q. Can you tell me the date when it was brought into operation in Poplar?—October, 1901.

Q. Now the cost of the provisions began to rise since the middle of 1900. That would be the time of Mr. Chaplin's Circular. Had that an effect on your dietary in any way?—The rise in the cost?

Q. Did Mr. Chaplin's Circular have any effect on the cost of your dietary?—I don't know.

Q. You don't remember. Why did the cost of provisions rise from the middle of 1900?—Unless the number—

Q. No, the cost per head. The new dietary is introduced and the cost per head increases steadily in the same ratio afterwards?—I cannot say.

Q. Was the new dietary more expensive than the old one?—No more.

Q. That cost which was 3s. 6d. per head at the beginning of the introduction is now 4s. 0½d.?

(Mr. Crooks.) I should like you to examine me on that. I can give you a satisfactory answer.

(Mr. Lansbury.) We have all the material here.

(The Inspector.) I put that to the master. He knows of no reason?—Because the cost of the provisions might be more.

(Mr. McCarthy.) May I be allowed to hand that to the master? It shows the cost.

(The Inspector.) Is it his own statement?—No; it is my assistant's.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Crooks, have you seen this. It is "Poplar; alterations in dietary, March, 1898"?—

(Mr. Lansbury.) Here you are.

(Mr. Crooks.) What I propose to do is not so much to deal with our own, which are facts, but show pretty conclusively that in every institution throughout the length and breadth of the land the same increase has gone on.

(Mr. Lansbury.) You have a big job in front of you.

(The Inspector.) Yes. I think I have asked as much as the witness knows about this. Do you wish to ask any questions?

(Mr. Crooks.) No, I am not going to ask any questions.

(The Inspector.) Do your nurses work on the eight hours' shift?—Not every one.

Q. Did the lunatic attendants work on that system?—On twelve hours.

Q. I mean when you left?—On the eight hours.

Q. For nursing one lunatic you have three nurses and nursing two lunatics six nurses?—Yes; three for the male ward and three for the female ward.

Q. Six for seven or eight lunatics?—Six for the two wards.

Q. So you would have six nurses to look after six inmates?—Yes.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Would they be on at the same time?—No.

(The Inspector.) What I have in my mind is a report that there are six nurses looking after six inmates.

(A guardian.) At the same time?—No.

(Mr. McCarthy.) For 24 hours.

(Mr. Crooks.) I am in the unfortunate position of knowing a good deal of the nursing in the lunatic asylums and the infirmaries and hospitals. It is not the actual number you have to deal with. It is the number you might have. It is an insurance. There have been 23 patients in the place under the control of one woman. Therefore she is only one person and not three persons, but is on duty at one time. It is not as if the three persons had to grapple with one poor inmate.

(The Inspector.) Shall we have Mr. Jacobs first witness on Thursday?

(Mr. Robb.) I would prefer him now.

(The Inspector.) It is difficult.

(Mr. Robb.) I had him here in response to an invitation. Of course, I have an objection to leave it—the evidence-in-chief. If I had had the privilege of acting for Mr. Madeley, I should like to have seen the evidence-in-chief before the cross-examination.

(The Inspector.) Well, as Mr. Madeley objects I cannot do it.

(Mr. Robb.) I take it no one will see Mr. Jacobs and put any pressure upon him.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I object to that.

(Mr. Crooks.) May we say that we will meet on Thursday and Friday next week?

(The Inspector.) Yes.

(Mr. Crooks.) You understand we have engagements ahead. Can we take it that Thursday and Friday will be fixed?

(The Inspector.) Thursday and Friday will suit very well. I should think we will break the back of it in another two or three days.

(Mr. Lansbury.) It is a caution.

(The Inspector.) I am always hopeful.

(Mr. Crooks.) It keeps us alive, doesn't it?

(The Inspector.) The point I put was this, that the adoption of the eight hours system in the matter of nursing occasionally leads to the comparative absurdity of having six nurses to look after two patients.

(Mr. Crooks.) It is one nurse to look after two patients.

(The Inspector.) I take twelve hours.

(Mr. Lansbury.) You would not say all the policemen in London are on duty now?

(The Inspector.) I am not under examination. Now, Mr. Madeley, did you resign voluntarily or did you resign after pressure to do so?—I had no pressure.

Q. Why do you resign?—As I said yesterday, I felt that after 21 years' service it had become difficult for me.

Q. That will do. Carry your mind to November last. Who was it supplied such things as pails, dust-pans, skewers, &c., to the workhouse?—The ironmonger.

Q. Was it Walber of Millwall?—I cannot remember for the moment.

Q. How do you know the price?—I don't know the price.

Q. Do you know Walber of Millwall?—No.

Q. Do you know the name of the firm?—Yes.

Q. Do you know if they ever supplied the workhouse?—Yes, by contract.

(Mr. Crooks.) That is to say, there are articles that are not in contract?—Yes.

(Mr. Lansbury.) One objection is that we schedule too much. Now it is that we haven't scheduled enough.

(Mr. Robb.) I don't know whether you think it advisable to take the evidence of Mr. Jacobs now. He will be a short witness, and I thought it fair to Mr. Madeley to have him here. I shall have Mr. Jacobs next Thursday for cross examination.

(The Inspector.) Which do you prefer?

(Mr. Lansbury.) I understand Mr. Madeley is going to have legal assistance.

(Mr. Robb.) They will have all the week to consider the evidence.

(Mr. Watts.) Will the legal adviser hear what Mr. Jacobs has got to say.

(Witness.) I would prefer it.

(Mr. McCarthy.) They are hopeful they are going to win and we are hopeful they won't.

(Mr. Lansbury.) You won't go into the question of the employment until this business is finished.

(Mr. Crooks.) My deliberate intention is, supported by my board, that I should have the summing up of the case as put, and I shall myself deal with the industrial and financial position of the district apart from all the details gone into.

(The Inspector.) As an expert or as an advocate?

(Mr. Crooks.) As a matter of fact both. For the moment I represent in more senses than one a good deal of this district. Whatever happens, good or evil, it is all Crooks, and Crooks is going to seize the proper opportunity and moment to place before yourself, the President, and London as a whole, the particulars of the financial and industrial conditions of Poplar. That is what this Inquiry is for, and I claim, inadequate though it may be, that it is part of my function to justify our position and place the industrial and financial condition of the district to account very largely for what we are charged with extravagance.

(The Inspector.) I hope you will carry that out so fully as to render it unnecessary for your colleagues.

(Mr. Lansbury.) You must not rule us all out.

(Mr. Crooks.) I shan't be more than three hours when I start.

(Mr. Robb.) I understood Mr. Lansbury was cross-examiner and that Mr. Crooks will make the speeches.

Mr. Madeley.

8 June.

THIRD DAY.

Thursday, 14th June, 1906.

(The Inspector.) Are you the legal representative for Mr. Madeley?

(Mr. Robinson.) My name is A. A. Robinson of the City of London and Bow. I appear for Mr. Madeley, and I am somewhat at a disadvantage, having regard to the fact that two or three days of the Inquiry have elapsed. I have had an opportunity this morning of glancing through the shorthand notes, and I observe that the Inquiry is as to the industrial and financial conditions of the Poplar Union, its pauperism and its administration. Now, sir, Mr. Madeley has and will, under my advice, give every assistance that you may require in order to arrive at a proper decision on this Inquiry. At the same time, I think it right to say, and I think you will agree with me, that while I appear for Mr. Madeley, I do not do so either directly or indirectly for the guardians, or represent them in any possible way. Having had some experience of Inquiries, if you will permit me to say so, it is my intention to take care, and I am sure you will assist me, that my client in this Inquiry is not made the scape-goat of anybody or any person. I mean by that that the guardians are quite able to look after themselves, and so far as my ability goes I shall protect Mr. Madeley so far as it is right he should be protected, not only against unfair charges, but against his private life being dealt with or investigated at this Inquiry. I mean by that, sir, that suggestions have been made—

(The Inspector.) Had we not better have this point when we come to it?

(Mr. Robinson.) Except that he has been examined on this point. He has been examined as to journeys which he has seen fit to make in his own time to the West End or Frascati's. What they have to do with this Inquiry or with the administration of the guardians for the Poplar district I cannot for the life of me see. If Mr. Madeley, like yourself or myself, in his own time chooses to go to Frascati's or to the West End, it can have nothing to do with anybody. I can only say that with regard to that I shall enter a strong protest at the proper time against any investigation into Mr. Madeley's private conduct.

(Mr. Robb.) There is a matter, sir, which, with your permission, I should like to refer to. I am instructed that there is or has been a book kept at the workhouse called the dressmaker's materials book, that it was kept up to some two or three years ago, when by the instruction of Mrs. Madeley, the dressmaker, I think she is known as Miss Evins, discontinued keeping that book.

(Mr. Robinson.) I object to that and shall continue to do so, and for this reason that if Mr. Robb has a suggestion of that sort to make let him call the matron, as he is entitled to, let him call the dressmaker, and let them be asked the question. I object to these statements being made which get into the press and go forth to the ratepayers, and very often are never substantiated by the evidence. I submit that the proper course is to give notice either to the guardians or to the matron asking that the book may be produced if it is in existence, but don't make statements which may never be proved.

(Mr. Robb.) May I ask if this gentleman represents Mrs. Madeley?

(Mr. Robinson.) Certainly not.

(Mr. Robb.) Then I object.

(Mr. Robinson.) You may keep on objecting.

(The Inspector.) My instructions are to hold an Inquiry into the general conditions of the union, its pauperism, and the administration of the guardians and their officers.

(Mr. Robinson.) Quite so.

(Mr. Robb.) I am instructed to ask for a book which I am instructed has lately been taken away from their official.

(Mr. Crooks.) Excuse me.

(Mr. Robinson.) Any book can be called for.

(Mr. Crooks.) I am going to do all I possibly can to help you and Mr. Robb. Mr. Robb is calling for a book which may or may not contain a record of dress material. That will be produced, but to at once make a request for a book and convey a charge places us in rather an awkward position.

(The Inspector.) I did not gather that there was any charge.

(Mr. Crooks.) He did. (Referring to interruptions in the body of the room) This is not a public meeting. Remember that.

(The Inspector.) I shall deal with those present. You are here interested in the subject of this Inquiry. The Inquiry is very painful and very difficult. I want you to give all fair play, and you can only do that by not being enthusiastic over statements made. Personally, I don't care two straws which side you take. All I have got to do is to get out the facts. But I don't want to be obliged to move this Inquiry—which deeply concerns the inhabitants of the district—to another part.

(A ratepayer.) Will you allow a ratepayer to ask a question of any witness?

(The Inspector.) You can ask them through me. I want to be fair all round.

(Mr. Robb.) I want the dressmaker, Miss Evins, sent for.

(The Inspector.) Do you want her now?

(Mr. Robb.) I want her sent for to day.

(Mr. Crooks.) If you want any book or any person we will produce it or them.

(Mr. Robb.) The difficulty is that my friend, Mr. Crooks, seems to scent a charge in every statement. He has no right to anticipate trouble. I want the book which I understand was kept by a dressmaker and recently taken away from her.

(The Inspector.) Will you telephone for the dressmaker and we shall have her here in half-an-hour or so. Is there any other witness you want?

(Mr. Robb.) It is a fact that a record was kept by the dressmaker in lieu of the book which was discontinued by order of the matron.

(The Inspector.) That, of course, will be gone into.

(Mr. Robb.) Now, sir, I will call Mr. Jacobs.

Mr. A. JACOBS; sworn and examined.

Mr. Jacobs.
14 June.

(Mr. Robb.) I think your name is Alfred Jacobs?
—Yes, sir.

Q. You carry on business in Bow?—Yes.

Q. As a jobmaster?—Yes.

Q. Now, are you a contractor to several institutions?
—I have got Mile End at the present time; I have had Whitechapel, Stepney, Mile End, and Bow and Poplar.

Q. How long have you been contractor for Poplar?—I have had it for nearly 20 years.

Q. Up to when?—Until 15 months ago.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Until when?—15 months ago.

(Mr. Robb.) Has there been any difference between the methods adopted by the Poplar authorities and the authorities of other institutions?—A great deal of difference.

Q. In what way?—Between the officials and the guardians in regard to the way I have done my work and other things that have occurred.

Q. What have been the differences to which you draw the Inspector's attention?—At Poplar it was all right until Mr. Madeley came to be general relieving officer. We served Poplar as we did other institutions, but as soon as Mr. Madeley came upon the scene it had to be altered. It was more expensive to us, and more things had to be done for the guardians and the master as well.

Q. Was the whole thing on a more extravagant scale?—It was.

Q. Can you give any instance of that?—Well, the removal officer previous to Mr. Madeley used to be satisfied with conveyances and one horse, but when Mr. Madeley came on the scene he wanted different conveyances, such as open landaus, which, of course, we had not always kept.

Q. What were the open landaus used for?—You can either close or open them.

Q. Can you tell the Inspector for what purpose they were used?—I suppose they were much better riding and more pleasant in coming back from the journeys.

Q. What class of journeys are you referring to?—To the country, such as Binstead and Leavesden.

Q. Who used to go on these journeys?—Mr. Madeley sometimes, and sometimes his deputy.

Q. And he specified this particular form of carriage?—Yes. It was asked for and there was a bother if we could not get it. We had to hire one if we had not got one.

Q. Was there any other alteration made as to the number of horses?—They were always particular to have two horses. Of course, it was in the contract. We had sometimes to do with one horse and one horse price was charged.

Q. You had previously charged for work done with one horse what you had to do with a pair?—We were very particular to have a pair when Mr. Madeley was going.

Q. Did you point out to Mr. Madeley what this would involve?—I don't quite follow.

Q. Did you say anything to Mr. Madeley?—There was a complaint that it put me to a lot of inconvenience and expense that never existed before.

Q. Did Mr. Madeley say anything with regard to that?—He said "I think you ought to have more money for the job."

Q. Did he suggest you should get more money?—Not at that particular time but after he got master.

Q. We will come to Mr. Madeley as master later on. When he was general relieving officer did you have any transactions with him?—Yes.

Q. What were they?—It happened that I borrowed £3 off him on one occasion.

Q. £3?—Yes.

Q. Under what circumstances?—I think it was one evening my wife reminded me we should have cashed a cheque. He said "I can lend you £2 or £3," and he lent me the money.

Q. Was that after banking hours?—Yes, in the evening time.

Q. He lent you £3?—He did.

Q. And is that the amount of £3 referred to as "Bd."?—I think it was "Bd."

Q. For "Bd. and Com."?—Very likely.

Q. What does "Bd." mean. Is that borrowed?—I should have known it was borrowed.

(Mr. Robinson.) May I look at the cheque book, Mr. Inspector?

(Mr. Robb.) Have you borrowed any other sums from Mr. Madeley?—No.

Q. Have you ever paid him any monies?—Yes.

Q. On that cheque there are three sums of £1 each. What were they for?—That would be in consideration that I got my share of the work. Commission I take it for.

Q. What period would these three items cover?—We were not particular about the time. The method was, I think, so and so would be about right. We agreed ourselves what would be satisfactory on both sides.

Q. Did Mr. Madeley come to your office?—Yes.

Q. Did you have a settlement from time to time?—Yes.

Q. Did you pay him other sums besides these here?—I did.

Q. Can you mention any other particular sums or how often they were paid?—We did not make an entry of them. One cheque I know was for £5 5s.

Q. That was on April 21st, 1894.

(The Inspector.) I beg your pardon. Will you repeat your last answer?—You mean that I paid the five guineas. Is that the question?

(The Inspector.) Yes, thank you.

(Mr. Robb.) That is the cheque, dated the 21st April, 1894, and made payable to W. A. Madeley, or bearer, five guineas. It was altered from four pounds to five guineas. Can you explain that?—I could not at the present time.

Q. Look at that cheque and say if that was the cheque drawn by you.

(Mr. Crooks.) Can we see that cheque?

(The Inspector.) Yes.

(Mr. Robinson.) When I have seen it, Mr. Crooks.

(Mr. Robb.) Does the counterfoil correspond with that cheque. It seems to me that it does not. We don't want another mistake?—It does not. It is the wrong number. But that is what it is for.

Q. Did you write two cheques or anything of that sort?

(The Inspector.) Let me look at that.

(Mr. Robb.) The counterfoil does not correspond. It is a transfer, I suppose. I suppose you wrote two cheques at the same time?—I don't know about that particular counterfoil.

(The Inspector.) Just one moment.

(Mr. Lansbury.) What is the date there?

(The Inspector.) The 21st of April.

(Mr. Lansbury.) When?

(The Inspector.) 1894. The date on the corresponding numbered cheque is the 22nd April. They got mixed up somehow.

(Mr. Robb.) That cheque is dated the 21st of April. When would your cheque be drawn for the quarterly account. About when?—The account due for the March quarter?

Q. Yes?—We finish the quarter on the Saturday following quarter day. As a rule we get the cheque about three weeks after.

Q. So that in the ordinary way it would be received between the 20th and 27th April?—I think that would be so. Generally three weeks after the end of the quarter elapse before we get our cheques.

Q. Was it then that you were in the habit of meeting Mr. Madeley?—Mr. Madeley used to come at that time to give us orders or something.

Q. What does that £5 5s. represent?—What was due to Mr. Madeley.

Q. What for?—The arrangement we made was for a shilling in the £.

Q. Did you pay other sums from time to time to Mr. Madeley?—Not by cheque.

Q. How?—I suppose that would be settled by cash.

Q. Were these sums for the same purpose?—Yes.

Q. Now, all this was when Mr. Madeley was general relieving officer?—Yes, sir.

Q. And then afterwards he was appointed master?—Yes.

Q. After he was appointed master did he receive any kind of consideration from you?—Not in cash.

Q. No?—No, sir.

Q. In what form?—A brougham or something of that sort. If he wanted one he used to have one.

Mr. Jacobs.

14 June.

Mr. Jacobs.

14 June.

Q. I think he was appointed master 13 years ago?—I beg pardon. May I ask a question? I see Mr. Crooks and Mr. Lansbury are looking through my cheque-book. It does not concern them except one page. I am not nervous.

(Mr. Robb.) I think that is a perfectly proper objection.

(Mr. Crooks.) It was a pure inadvertence. Bless my soul, is it possible? What a difference it would be if I had a gown and wig. I have had enough of this kind of thing.

(Mr. Robb.) Well, sir, I don't want to say anything on that.

(Mr. Crooks.) I intend to. I am on my trial. But if I have any more interference and I can identify the person I shall ask you to have him removed.

(The Inspector.) Unfortunately I cannot.

(Mr. Crooks.) We can though.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Until next April this is our room.

(Mr. Crooks.) Is it not insulting.

(Mr. Robb.) I do not intend to be.

(Mr. Crooks.) You do not, but the persons you represent.

(The Inspector.) It is a pure inadvertency on the part of Mr. Crooks.

(Mr. Lansbury.) And then we had a little homily.

(Mr. Robb.) It is not an ordinary proceeding.

(Mr. Lansbury.) None of it is.

(Mr. Robb.) I accept the statement that it is pure inadvertence. Mr. Crooks knows that I am here not to acclaim interruptions. No one desires more than I do that this Inquiry should be conducted with quietness and order. Well now, Mr. Jacobs, you were telling us what happened after Mr. Madeley was appointed master. Between 1894 and 1899 did you supply him with any of these broughams?—I did.

Q. For his private use?—I did.

Q. How frequently?—Well, three or four times a week I should think. I should not like to say every week, but nearly every week there was something.

Q. Has he ever had more than one conveyance in the same evening?—He has had three in one evening.

Q. Three conveyances in one evening?—Yes.

Q. Did he ever pay you for these conveyances between 1894 and 1898?—I have received some from him. Up to 1894, I think.

(The Inspector.) Do you mean 1894 or 1904?

(Mr. Robb.) I was now dealing from 1894 to 1898?—I don't quite understand.

Q. You told us that Mr. Madeley was appointed master in 1894?—I have received some sums since 1894 when he was master. He said "There is something we want. Will you make the account so and so?"

Q. Were you usually paid by cheque?—No, I was not.

Q. In 1898 did Mr. Madeley come to your office and go through an account with you?—I cannot say the date. I know he has been there.

Q. What was done with the account?—I think the matter was settled up to date.

Q. Did he pay in cash?—No.

Q. For what reason did you supply him with these private carriages when he did not pay?—He was general relieving officer, and when master he still had the power to give orders. Two contractors were appointed. I complained to the clerk that I had not my fair share of the contract, when the guardians said it was to be equally divided. I didn't get my share, and nothing near it. I got the longest journeys and the least pay. Mr. Lough told me I should have to go to Mr. Madeley, as he gave the orders out. Mr. Madeley said to me he was doing the best he could. So I had to make a fuss of Mr. Madeley to get my share of the contracts.

Q. That was the reason. Well now, from 1893 to March, 1905, did you supply Mr. Madeley with private carriages, the particulars of which appear in this account?—I did.

Q. And the amount is £49 13s.?—Yes.

Q. Do you know whether during the same period Mr. Madeley was having private carriages from any other contractor?—It has occurred to me. His words to me were "The lightest carriages and the best horses."

Q. Has he ever paid you any account since 1893?—He promised payment.

Q. Has he ever paid it?—Nothing.

Q. Why should he promise payment if it was all commission?—It was a little bit of string.

Q. I think you are suing him at the present time?—Yes, I think so.

(Mr. Robinson.) Don't you know?—My solicitor knows. He has instructions to do so.

(Mr. Robinson.) He says "I think so."

(Mr. Robb.) You will have your opportunity. (To witness.) Now did you ever have an interview with reference to another contractor—Mr. Clark?—I have, sir.

Q. What was the nature of the interview?—Well, to make things more equal, I suppose. If we did it through Mr. Madeley we should have a better chance. We had a lot of long journeys and we were told "Why don't you see the contractor?"

Q. Who said that?—Mr. Madeley. I said unless there was a rise in prices I would "blew" the job. He said "Clark will put the prices up." I said "It is worth more; I am working lower than in any other parish." Eventually a meeting was arranged between me and Mr. Clark at Mr. Madeley's office.

Q. Where?—At the workhouse.

Q. I think this was about three years ago. Was it in the day-time or the evening?—In the evening.

Q. At Mr. Madeley's house?—In the office.

Q. Who was present at that meeting?—Mr. Clark, Mr. Madeley, and myself.

Q. What was said?—The tenders were gone through and the prices arranged.

Q. Whose tenders were gone through?—Mr. Clark's and mine. We had got them with us.

Q. What time of the year?—When the contract time was coming on.

Q. You had the form of tender with you?—Yes.

Q. You and Mr. Clark?—Yes.

Q. Tell the Inspector what occurred?—We went through the tenders for the different items and the prices were put down.

Q. Who put them down?—Mr. Madeley copied them for me on one occasion.

Q. What did he copy them on?—On a blank tender form.

Q. What became of that blank tender?—I think it was returned to Mr. Madeley again. He was particular he should have them back.

Q. What did Mr. Madeley say when he was going through these prices?—The long journeys were especially very low. He was certainly under the impression we should have more money, but that it was no good trying to get more money unless Mr. Clark and I could arrange it.

Q. Yes, I see. Who suggested the figure you should put against each particular item?—The remark was that if we were both agreeable that the prices should be raised that would be all right.

Q. And you were both in accord?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) What date was this interview?—About three years ago.

(Mr. Robb.) This sort of meeting happened more than once?—Yes.

Q. How many times?—I think it was three.

Q. You and Clark met at the master's office?—Yes.

Q. Can you give the Inspector the approximate date?—About 15 months ago the last time.

Q. You met there?—Yes.

Q. What was the object of your meeting Clark in this way?—That we should both be agreeable to the prices charged, so that one should not cut the other out. That was my idea, and I suppose it was the same as Mr. Clark's.

Q. But what assurance had you that your tenders would be accepted. There might have been other people?—Mr. Madeley's words were "I have got the guardians all right. You are sure to get it." He said on one occasion "Mr. Lansbury is the board, and I know I am all right with him." He added the tender would be accepted as it was only between Clark and Jacobs.

Mr. Jacobs,
14 June.

Q. Do you know what variation there was between your tenders in these three years?—Do you mean in the amount. Very little. Just a few shillings. Sometimes Mr. Clark would be higher than me and sometimes I would be higher than him.

Q. Was there any previous debate in preparing the tenders. For instance, I see that from the workhouse to Tooting Bec Asylum—brougham and a pair of horses. Would that be a frequent journey?—When the Tooting Bec Asylum opened it would be frequent.

Q. But there are some journeys infrequent?—Leavesden would not be very frequent, and Darent, we did not go there much.

Q. With regard to these journeys which were infrequent, would you put in a high or a low price?—We would put in a low price for that.

Q. With regard to journeys which were frequent, such as the Forest Gate schools, what sort of price would you put in for that?—I think my tender was 10s. for a pair horse carriage from the union to Forest Gate, waiting there and returning.

Q. What was the ordinary cab fare?—About 4s. I should think.

Q. Now I see, according to your tender, brougham and a pair of horses were specified for most of the journeys, and a brougham and one horse for journeys to various Metropolitan stations.—Yes.

Q. What does that mean. It was suggested on the last occasion it might be an ordinary station cab?—Brougham and a single horse. When I was contracting for Mr. Madeley he would not have a single horse. He would not have it if he could help it.

Q. Can you suggest any reason why an ordinary station cab would not suffice?—I don't see the benefit of having a cab.

Q. I don't think you do?—They would want as much as we should charge and a bit more.

(The Inspector.) I am sorry I did not catch Mr. Jacobs.

(Mr. Robinson.) Mr. Jacobs said it would have cost as much for a cab as for a brougham.

(The Inspector.) Do you know what would be the difference between the cost of a cab and that of a brougham?—One is private and the other is let out for hire. A brougham is supposed to be a bit smoother.

(Mr. Robb.) Were these smart carriages supplied with a driver?—I would say yes.

Q. Fit for the use of anybody?—Yes. That for the master must have a rubber tyre and a man in livery. We were not ashamed of them.

Q. The master insisted on rubber tyres and a man in livery?—Yes.

Q. What was the brake and pair of horses to Forest Gate for?—That would be for taking the children there.

Q. How many children would you take at a time?—We have had a dozen sometimes and sometimes only three or four.

Q. Would the brake be ordered to take only three or four children to Forest Gate?—Sometimes they would not be in a fit condition to go.

Q. Were the brakes used for any other purpose?—No, unless there was an extra number going—lunatics going away and such like.

Q. Did you ever take parties of the guardians about?—They have been about certainly.

Q. Don't be shy Mr. Jacobs. Where have they been to?—Visiting asylums and schools.

Q. Have they ever been to a place known as Basham's?—We have had refreshments at Basham's at Chigwell.

Q. Where is that. What is it?—A public-house—"The King's Head."

Q. It would be a little beyond Claybury in the same way?—About a mile and a half away.

Q. On another road?—It would be on the same road.

Q. Who used to pay for the refreshments for the guardians?—Well I didn't, or don't know who did at the finish. I think Mr. Madeley paid at the time. I didn't. I have never seen any of the guardians pay yet.

Q. Did Mr. Madeley say anything about who paid. Did he say who stood "Sam"?—What they have had Mr. Madeley has paid for up till now as far as I know.

Q. Did you ever pay for refreshments to the guardians?—Very seldom.

Q. You have done so?—Yes, but very seldom. Very often the conveyances would be at my expense.

Q. And the refreshments too, sometimes. At the time you were a contractor?—I have paid sometimes.

(Mr. Crooks.) And they did sometimes. We shall want their names?—I have never had a drink with you, Mr. Crooks.

Q. I am much obliged to you?—You are quite welcome. You are no better than the others, you know, Mr. Crooks.

(The Inspector.) Now, sir?—He seems to be getting at me. He says I shall be nervous.

(Mr. Crooks.) You will admit you did not treat me?—There was not much to get out of you.

(Mr. Crooks.) Make a note of that, Mr. Inspector. Not much to be got out of me.

(Mr. Robb.) As to these private carriages for Mr. Madeley. I don't want to know about the private journeys to the West End. Did he ever have carriages to visit contractors?—My coachman has said so.

Q. What is his name?—My sons—one Alfred and the other Joseph. He drove Mr. Madeley, I believe.

Q. Have you ever seen Mr. Madeley drive to a contractor. Have you ever seen him drive with a contractor named Whitlock?—(No reply was given.)

Q. Amongst your other duties as contractor, did you have to horse the ambulances?—I did, sir.

Q. Was that for the guardians' use?—That was what it was for.

Q. For anything or anybody else?—One of the guardians named Bacon used to require the ambulance to pick up in his neighbourhood and go to Mildmay Park Hospital.

Q. Where is that?—It took several hours to go.

Q. Did the doctor ever complain of that?—I used to complain about having to go out of the district, and the reply was that Mr. Bacon required it, and it had to go.

Q. Were these people under the charge of the guardians?—It was never used for anything else in Bacon's district whilst I had the job.

Q. Were any other institutions granted the use of the ambulance?—I cannot say.

Q. Has the cost of conveyances gone up considerably since 1891?—When I was contracting with Clark my contract came to about £150 or £160 a year, and I think Mr. Clark's tender was about £400.

Q. Nearly £400 a year?—I cannot give the exact figures. I know his tender was nearly £100 more than mine.

Q. Can you give the Inspector what increase of work has occurred for the contractors for conveyances since 1901?—I don't see why there should be any great increase unless there are more lunatics.

Q. Do you know that in 1901 the total cost of conveyances was £540?—(No answer.)

Q. Do you know that the cost of conveyances to the guardians in 1901 was £540?—I could not say.

Q. In 1905?—I never received more than £200, and I was supposed to have half.

Q. I am referring to comparative statements of the expenditure of the guardians. It appears on page 23 of the abstract of accounts for the year 1905. I am asking you this, Mr. Jacobs, because I want you to say what the extra work was. This return is headed "Conveyances, travelling and other expenses."—1901 it was £540; 1902, £656; 1903, £669; 1904, £1,094; and 1905, £1,545. Can you explain why "Conveyances, travelling and other expenses" have risen from £540 in 1901 to £1,545 in 1905?—I don't see why they should have risen. It should not be more, inasmuch as the asylums are nearer now than in the year you mention.

Mr. Jacobs.

14 June.

(The Inspector.) What do you mean by the asylums being much nearer?—There are now new asylums to what there were at that time. There was then Darent and Leavensden, and it cost more money to go there than to Claybury or Tooting Bec.

(Mr. Robb.) Can you tell the Inspector of any large increase of work during that period?—I cannot see why there should have been.

Q. Can you suggest any explanation for the increase?—I don't think so.

(The Inspector.) The heading of the return is "Conveyances, travelling and other expenses." What do you mean by that?

(Mr. Lough.) Railway charges.

(Mr. Crooks.) We will look up the figures.

(Mr. Robb.) The only object I had for putting the question was that there might have been an explanation. Have you ever supplied private carriages for any of the guardians?—Yes.

Q. Free of cost?—Well, I have had a little for it, I should not like to say quite free. There have been cases that I supplied a carriage or two, I think. Mr. Crooks has had one from me. Perhaps he will be surprised.

(Mr. Crooks.) Have I, really?—When you put up for the Council at Canning Town.

Q. I have never put up for Canning Town?—Mr. Peckham will supply you with the date.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Can we have the names?

(Mr. Crooks.) He is not on his oath for thinking?—You had a brougham from me.

(The Inspector.) Who is Mr. Peckham.

(Witness.) I happened to drive over and asked how you were getting on at the election.

(Mr. Peckham.) That is entirely false.

(Mr. Robb.) I don't think that is a fair instance. Have you ever had instances of guardians coming to you and asking for a carriage?—I don't think so.

Q. You cannot say that you have?—No, sir. It used generally to come through Mr. Madeley if the guardians required anything.

Q. Have any guardians ever had a conveyance and horses free of charge for election purposes?—It has occurred.

Q. Who was that?—Mr. Jungblut.

(Mr. Jungblut.) Not me, sir.

(Mr. Crooks.) This is one of your clients, Mr. Robb.

(Mr. Robb.) What election?—For the guardians.

Q. Were you paid anything for that?—They have said that it was owing to me that they got on to the board.

(Mr. Jungblut.) He wanted me to have a 'bus and I would not have it.

(Witness.) I know what I am threatened with. I shall never have another contract.

(The Inspector.) Now, sir.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Can you tell us the date?—You know, when the guardians were elected on the last occasion.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Mr. Crooks and Mr. Jungblut* were unopposed and they did not want a conveyance.

(Mr. Crooks.) May I help you. This ward is within a circumference of half-a-mile of this building. I appeal to you whether it is reasonable to expect that Mr. Jungblut would want a conveyance to convey voters round the corner to this place?—Will you allow me to bring the coachmen to-morrow?

(Mr. Jungblut.) He sent a 'bus down in the evening, and he said if you like I will send you down two or three carriages. It was about six years ago. I said people will rather walk than ride.

(Witness.) Not six years ago.

(Mr. Jungblut.) You tried all you could to try and persuade me.

(The Inspector.) If you like you can go into the box and contradict it.

(Witness.) I can bring the coachman that drove.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you ever been asked to give orders to anyone?—I don't quite follow.

Q. Have you been asked to give orders for any commodity to any persons connected with the board of guardians?—Do you mean tradespeople?

Q. Yes?—It has occurred. A friend of the guardians asked me to buy a piano.

(Mr. Yeo.) I am the only man on the board of guardians who is in the piano trade and I repudiate the statement.

(Witness.) I don't mean you, sir.

(Mr. Yeo.) I am on my honour here. I don't want it to go out to the press. I have never asked the guardians or this man for anything.

(Witness.) I don't say you have. There was a gentleman named Rosewell, who was with the man at the time. He asked me if I had any orders to give him.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Who asked you?—Mr. Rosewell's friend.

(Mr. Robb.) That won't do. I wish to ask you, have you ever been directly asked, or any suggestion made to you that you should give an order to any guardian?—I don't think there is any member who has asked me. I have never been pressed to give an order.

Q. Generally speaking, have you been held at arms' length as a contractor or been on very familiar terms with the guardians?—Up to the last twelve months on very familiar terms. Except Mr. Bacon, and he did all he could to give me trouble. I could not be very friendly with him.

Q. Have you experienced the same sort of thing with any other public institution you have served?—No, I have not.

(Mr. Ford.) Would you allow me, sir, before Mr. Robinson rises to say that I have never been to Chigwell at Mr. Jacobs', or anyone else's expense, never in my life. I want to make that statement public, because it is suggested that a lot of us have been down and had refreshments at someone else's expense. I want to make my position perfectly clear. Never in my life have I been in Mr. Jacobs' brougham.

(The Inspector.) If you like you can go into the box.

(Mrs. Cordery.) We would all like to.

(Mr. Robinson.) I have here the tenders for contracts, those for Clark's and those for Jacobs', for the years March, 1902, to March, 1903, March, 1903, to March, 1904, and from March, 1904, to March, 1905. In the latter year in both tenders there is a considerable increase throughout. That is to say, increase of 1s., 2s., and 3s. on each journey. It is evident that the tenders on the latter date were higher than those on the former date. You know as well as anyone that the price of horses, material, &c., and labour, constantly goes up. I don't propose to follow the examination all through. Now Mr. Jacobs, I think you said you had other contracts up to within a few years ago?—Yes.

Q. For Bow, Mile End, Stepney, and Poplar?—Yes, sir.

Q. Out of that you have lost four. How is that. Is that so?—I have lost four.

Q. How did you come to lose the others?—At Whitechapel I got in touch with a gentleman in the neighbourhood connected with the guardians.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Poor Whitechapel?—I don't think you need to interrupt me. I shall have enough to do to answer Mr. Robinson.

(Mr. Robinson.) I shall get on all right, Mr. Jacobs?—And I am not nervous.

Q. I want to know whether you make any accusation against anyone with regard to these contracts?—No.

Q. And yet you lose them?—I cannot get everything, can I? I will tell you the reason I lost Whitechapel if you will allow me. Mr. Ollis, connected with a gentleman in Whitechapel Union, was interested in a business of Mr. Ollis. He put in and got the contract. That is the reason I lost it.

(The Inspector.) It would be just as well if you did not suggest that tenders are given except on business grounds.

* In the guardians' print Mr. Lansbury was here referred to instead of Mr. Jungblut.

(Mr. Robinson.) Twelve months ago were you friendly with the master of the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. And you visited him at his house?—Yes.

Q. And he visited yours?—When he came to give an order.

Q. He came to the house?—He never had refreshments at my expense.

Q. I never suggested refreshments?—He used to visit.

Q. He would come in and give orders?—Yes.

Q. How long do you say this system of bribery went on?—How long?

Q. Between you and the master?—I should say from two or three years.

Q. When did it stop?—You can see the date from the cheque book.

Q. In April, 1894?—Yes.

Q. At that time he was not the master?—No, he was not.

Q. He lent you more than one sum of £5?—No.

Q. Swear it?—Not to my knowledge.

Q. No?—He might have lent the wife some money.

Q. Are you sure?—That is only for five shillings.

Q. It does not matter whether it was for 5s. or £5. On Wednesday, the 8th March, the master lent you £2. You don't remember it?—Perhaps you can tell me what occasion it was.

Q. Mrs. Jacobs, £1, Saturday, 15th April. You won't deny it?—I will not.

Q. Suppose we see in this book considerable sums of money lent you?—I should say it is false.

Q. Did you not frequently come to Mr. Madeley for money to pay your men with?—No.

Q. I put it to you that this cheque was for money lent?—Well, you can put it, but it is not true.

Q. You know, Mr. Jacobs, of course, that I can take care of myself, but I don't wish to enter into any wordy warfare. If remarks are made to me I can generally hit back?—What remark have I made wrong?

Q. If you please, sir. I may say that shorthand notes are being taken?—I say it is Mr. Madeley's writing on the cheque.

(The Inspector.) You say that the writing "Madeley" is in his handwriting?—This is Mr. Madeley's writing. It is not mine or anyone belonging to me.

Q. You will notice it has been altered. It is made payable to bearer now. When were the figures written?—I think it would be done the same night. It would be the same evening or as soon as convenient.

Q. Do you, or don't you, say that the whole counterfoil was written at the same time?—I do, and that I will swear.

(Mr. Robinson.) And in the same handwriting?—Yes, and in the same writing.

Q. With regard to the other cheque, whose handwriting is that. The cheque for £5 5s. I don't make any point of the alteration. Whose writing is it?—That, I think, would be my writing.

Q. Why did you not put the word "com." on that cheque?—Because I did not think of it, I suppose.

Q. Is that the only reason. I put it to you that it was for borrowed money. Look at that counterfoil. When were the figures making up £6 put in?—At the time I wrote it.

Q. I ask the Inspector to look at it. I don't hesitate to say that the figures making up £6 were never written at the time the other part was. I will submit that to the Inspector. It is totally different ink, totally different handwriting, and written at a different time. That I submit, sir. You say it was written at the same time; I think you will find that the figures are smudged and the other parts are not. It clearly shews that they were not written at the time the other part of the counterfoil was. You will have every opportunity of denying that statement.

(The Inspector.) I am afraid I am not an expert.

(Mr. Robinson.) May I point out to you, sir, what I mean. If you will look at the £3, £1, £1, £1, the figures

are not the same figures as the £6. If you will look at the writing of the name you will find it is different handwriting, and if you look again you will find that these figures are smeared. I think I shall shew you unquestionably that my suggestion is a good one.

(Mr. Robb.) May I say—

(Mr. Robinson.) Don't interrupt.

(Mr. Robb.) I have submitted other documents to Mr. Guerin, the handwriting expert, and I may have to call him. Perhaps it will be convenient to submit this to him.

§ (Witness.) And I say it was not borrowed by me at all events.

(Mr. Robb.) Has Madeley any banking account.

(Mr. Robinson.) Now I will pass to something else. You had no difficulty you say with regard to the carriages until Mr. Madeley became master?—No sort of trouble about them.

Q. How did he make any difference?—I told you just now. He wanted open carriages if he went on a trip.

Q. Did that make any difference in the prices charged to the guardians under the contract?—Not at that time. But it did when we made the arrangements to alter the prices.

Q. Whether he had open landaus or closed broughams, did that make any difference to the guardians?—Not at the commencement, until we had an opportunity of raising the tenders.

Q. Where did you get your sheets for the tenders from?—They are sent to us.

Q. Where from?—From the clerk's office.

Q. Where did you send them after that?—We put them in the box at the clerk's office.

Q. Are they sealed?—They are.

Q. Do you know if the master in any way has anything to do with the tenders after that?—Not that I know of.

Q. You have had a large experience?—I don't know what happens to the tenders after they are put in the box.

Q. Don't you know that they are dealt with in the clerk's office and by the board as a whole?—No doubt that is so.

Q. Do you suggest that the master has anything to do with these tenders before they are dealt with by the board as a whole?—I never have suggested it.

Q. Are you at the present time suing him for carriage hire from the 19th November, 1898, to the 14th March, 1905?—That is so.

Q. You have sent the account. Why are you suing him after the whole of this time has elapsed. Why not before?—As long as I had the job I was promised that I should get the money some time or other.

Q. You thought he was defrauding the guardians?—What do you mean?

Q. By conniving with you to increase the cost of conveyances, though he had conveyances for nothing?—It does not want much thinking about.

Q. And you were a party to that?—Of course I was.

Q. So long as you held the contract you were content to take part in robbing the guardians?—Let me explain. I was appointed with Clark as contractor to the Poplar Guardians when the contracts were divided and the jobs we should receive. I did not get my share and I am complaining why I did not.

(The Inspector.) Who is the man who divided with you?—Mr. Clark. It rested with Mr. Madeley, who gave the orders out.

(Mr. Robinson.) Did you ever complain to the guardians that you were not receiving your fair share?—Every time I met them.

Q. Did you ever complain to them at the board?—I have complained to Mr. Lough.

Q. Why did you keep on tendering year by year?—Because I wanted to live.

Q. Although you did not have your share?—A little is better than none.

Q. And you consider Mr. Madeley is the one who did not give you fair treatment?—He did not redress it.

Mr. Jacobs.
14 June.

Q. And you would have the Inspector believe that, although he was receiving a bribe of a shilling in the £, he was preventing you receiving your fair share of the contract. Is that what you suggest?—I said that Mr. Madeley could have given me a fair share of the work. I had to give him a shilling in the £, and perhaps Mr. Clark did the same. I had to make it right with Mr. Madeley to get my share.

Q. You suggest that you were to pay a shilling in the £ on all money you received from the guardians?—Not from the guardians. From the orders Mr. Madeley gave me.

Q. And did you not think it was coming out of the rates?—Some of the orders came through the clerk.

Q. Then you suggest that Madeley was to receive the shilling on orders that came from the clerk?—No.

Q. Now we are getting at it. Take the orders Madeley had control over. It was his interest to give you two-thirds of the orders, was it not?—I don't know. He might get something from the others.

(The Inspector.) You say that on orders Mr. Madeley was responsible for you had an arrangement by which you gave him a shilling in the £?—I don't say every pound; but that was the arrangement.

(Mr. Robinson.) And all the evidence you can produce about this sweeping charge are the two cheques you produced which applied to the time before he was master?—I can bring witnesses.

Q. Never mind about the witnesses?—My wife was there when the arrangement was made.

Q. You have only produced these two cheques, one dated the 12th February, 1894, and the other the 21st of April, 1894, amounting in the whole to £11 15s. And do you say that that represents the whole of the commission; with the exception of what you put down as "Bd." (borrowed, I suppose)—that is all you paid Madeley?—Sometimes I paid in cheque and sometimes in money.

Q. Why did you pay sometimes in cheque and sometimes in cash?—That was the first two cases.

Q. Do you keep books?—We do keep books.

Q. Did you put the entries in the books?—I cannot say.

Q. Do you keep a pass-book?—Yes.

Q. Have you the book for 1894?—Yes.

Q. I should like to see it.

(The Inspector.) Do I understand that this shilling in the £ was paid to Mr. Madeley as master?—No, before, when he was relieving officer.

Q. And after he was master did you have any arrangement?—That was dropped.

Q. And then you provided him with private carriages?—Instead of the shilling in the £.

(The Inspector.) The statement is that when Mr. Madeley was relieving officer he had an agreement with him to pay him a shilling in the £ for orders he received. On two occasions he paid him in cheques, and on other occasions he paid him in cash. After Mr. Madeley became master the arrangement ceased, and Mr. Madeley got his consideration in the shape of broughams or other vehicles.

(Mr. Robinson.) What I do aim at is this: That Mr. Madeley was relieving officer for five years, and that the only documents produced before you are these two cheques. One for £5 5s., and the other for £6, part of which is admitted by the witness to be for money borrowed. I asked him for evidence that he has ever paid him a farthing in cash?—It might be in the cash-book.

Q. I should like to know. I would also point out that 1894 was the end of Mr. Madeley's term as relieving officer. I ask you for evidence when you commenced these payments?—We did not commence until then.

Q. When he was nearly finishing his office as relieving officer?—That is what I say.

Q. Do you suggest that he was relieving officer for five years and you did not make this arrangement until then, when he was leaving. Is that your answer to the question?—That is my answer.

Q. So that for five years you have not paid him a shilling?—I say we have paid him.

Q. Tell me what you do mean. You say that these cheques represent the commencement of the arrangement. I put it to you that they were at the end of his term of office?—That is as far as I can recollect.

Q. You recollected very well in your examination in chief.—It was a bit easier then.

Q. Now let me go to the other point. Do you keep a book containing a record of the broughams and conveyances you let Mr. Madeley have from 1898?—Of course, we have got the items booked.

Q. You have the items there?—Some of them.

Q. Do they comprise all the items?—All the brougham items. He has had others beside.

Q. Where does that appear?—It will appear in my books.

Q. Do you show the payments he has made to you in your books?—I don't keep the books myself.

Q. Look at July 27th, 1900, in that account?—What date?

Q. 27th July, 1900?—Yes.

Q. Look at that receipt. Is that paid for. I am testing your credibility?—I suppose you make mistakes sometimes.

Q. This is a receipt showing you received from Mr. Madeley the sum of £1 1s. Who signed that?—I suppose I did.

Q. Well?—I suppose that got put down by mistake. It is put down by mistake.

Q. I don't say it is. I say that he has paid you from time to time?—I say he has not to my knowledge.

Q. You have to admit that?—I will admit everything in which you prove me wrong. I cannot afford to keep half-a-dozen clerks. If there is a mistake I am very sorry.

Q. But you are suing him for it. I am going to prove others?—But you are not going to kill me.

(Mr. Crooks.) We will look after you.

(The Inspector.) Is that signature "Alfred Jacobs" yours?—I should say it was.

Q. What was the occasion?—I should say it was when the old people went down. I recollect Mr. Crooks being in a landau.

Q. Is not "King's Oak" a sort of place where people go to picnics?—I suppose that was one of the occasions when Mr. Madeley got subscriptions to take the old people down.

(Mr. Robinson.) I put it to shew that we have paid?—I am very sorry that has occurred. I don't keep my books. My son and daughter keep them.

(The Inspector.) Why should you charge to Mr. Madeley's account broughams which take the old people out?—This would be a private brougham for Mr. Madeley and his friends.

Q. Would that be within the contract?—No.

(Mr. Robinson.) Neither would any of these be in your contract for which you are charging Mr. Madeley nearly £50. Now you are charging Mr. Madeley for these things when you said or suggested that there was an arrangement by which he could have them when he wanted them?—Not to that extent. Three or four in one night. Suppose he had a brougham, I would not mind that so much. But I could not stand to take his friends to masonic lodges, three in one night, and then finish up at Ilford.

Q. I put it to you, if your story is true, you have left these things from 1898, and we are now in 1906, and you have neither got the money or asked him for it?—Decidedly not.

(Some interruption here took place.)

(Mr. Robinson.) I have had some experience in Poplar and experience teaches that whether I am applauded or hissed it makes not the slightest difference to me, except that I shall make my cross-examination more severe than I otherwise would.

(Witness.) I am not nervous.

(Mr. Robb.) Gentlemen should not be so enthusiastic.

(Witness.) I have no axes to grind.

(Mr. Robinson.) I suggest that it is more through spite than anything else you are here to-day. You have lost your contract. You think that you have been unfairly treated?—I do.

Mr. Jacobs.

14 June.

Q. Considering you put up your prices?—We did.

Q. We are coming to that presently, and don't forget that I am a ratepayer?—Then you should thank me for what I am doing.

Q. Mr. Jacobs, we are in the same boat?—I don't wish to be in the same boat.

Q. I take it that you had made no claim against Mr. Madeley from April, 1898, until after March, 1905, when you lost the contract. I mean asked him for the money?—Oh! yes, I did, and my son did too. We never pressed him until Mr. Madeley talked of going away, and then I thought it time to get the money.

Q. We will see about that. When did you issue the writ?—The 8th of May.

Q. Have you taken any further steps since?—I left it in the agent's hands.

Q. The writ was issued on the 8th of May. Have you done anything since?—Not myself.

Q. Nor your solicitor?—I don't know what he has done.

Q. You can take it from me that nothing has been done?—Then I shan't get it, I suppose.

Q. Now, as to the prices. Did it make a bit of difference to Mr. Madeley whether you sent a brake, or two or three broughams?—To take his friends?

Q. I am not speaking about his friends. For instance you have gone away with two or three children. Were they taken in a brake or a brougham?—I never said that it did. My explanation is that there were only two or three children taken away, the others would not be fit to go.

Q. There must have been some object in asking you that question. I want to know from you whether there would be any advantage to Mr. Madeley whether you supplied a brake or a brougham for these children?—No. I don't suppose it would make any difference.

Q. Whether you sent a cab or a brougham?—It would not; but it would if he were going himself.

Q. I am not dealing with that. Did it make the slightest difference personally to Mr. Madeley whether you sent a cab or a brougham?—I don't quite follow you.

Q. Except that according to your contract you had to send a brougham, and he insisted on you carrying out your contract?—May I explain. Previous to Mr. Madeley, a cab was good enough, but when Mr. Madeley came a cab was not good enough.

Q. I put it to you—it is an important question; under the contract were you not bound to send a brougham and not a cab?—After he had the tender altered. It was conveyances before. He said he was going to have it altered. He came to my yard and bullied me because I had sent a cab.

Q. Is it a fact that your contract was for broughams?—Mr. Madeley got it altered afterwards.

Q. Do you suggest that Mr. Madeley can get these things altered and the guardians have nothing to say?—I don't know. He told me he could do as he liked with them.

Q. And you believed it?—I did not think. I proved it.

Q. Well now, tell me how you proved it?

(Mr. Crooks.) Will you be good enough to clear up that little bit as to prices.

(Mr. Lansbury.) As to the broughams.

(Mr. Crooks.) There has been no alteration?—When I first contracted for Poplar, before your time, Mr. Crooks, and before Mr. Madeley came there, it was single and pair horse conveyances, but afterwards when we sent the cab it was said to be a disgrace, and he said, "I will have broughams next time," and sure enough it was broughams.

(Mr. Robinson.) It cost you more to send broughams than cabs?—Yes.

Q. Is that what you complain of?—I have not to go on my knees and thank Mr. Madeley for anything.

Q. Neither has he you. Have you taken the trouble—the figures have been put in—to ascertain what was included in the increased contract prices paid to Clark?—Have taken the trouble?

Q. You have been asked a question as to your contract never being more than £200 or so. Is that right?—I don't think it has been more. I got the contract solely myself one year. Mr. Clark happened to drop out.

Q. Did you have to do van hire?—I have done van hire. I have done the whole of the work for one twelvemonth.

Q. Is it not the fact that the increase has been brought about by including van hire in the contract?—Do you mean for the last twelve months?

Q. I mean during the last two or three years. Is the whole of the van hire included in the contract. Is that so?—I suppose it is.

Q. I want to know, is it?—I don't know. I have done van hire.

Q. So that when we were talking about the matter we were led to believe it was nothing but cabs and brakes and broughams. It includes the van work?—Yes.

Q. The whole of it?—I should say so.

(The Inspector.) I have heard a statement that the contract is higher than when you had it. As far as I can make out from the tenders, Clark's contract is distinctly less than the contract was in 1904. The figures are lower all round.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I don't believe the press hear you.

(The Inspector.) The point is that Mr. Jacobs says he has been informed that the present prices for conveyances are considerably higher than in the last year he tendered. That is not so. The present contract is distinctly lower than last year.

(Mr. Lansbury.) There is also another point.

(Mr. Robinson.) May I ask him one question. (To witness.) I think you said you had been three times with Mr. Clark, the other contractor, to the master?—I am not sure.

Q. I put it to you, it was only once?—Twice.

Q. And that twelve months ago.

(Mr. Lansbury.) One moment, Mr. Davy. There is a question of having supplied broughams for other conveyances. Would you mind telling us, Mr. Davy, whether the tender at present in vogue is headed "Conveyances," and then goes on to specify the kind of conveyance, and whether it is the same form that was in vogue in 1894. I want the headings.

(The Inspector.) The work the contractor is required to perform is the supply of conveyances, with drivers, and then it goes on to say, broughams and other vehicles, and where they are to go to. At the bottom you have—From the workhouse to the Forest Gate schools and back; and lastly comes the van with one horse.

(Mr. Lansbury.) That is at the present time?

(The Inspector.) Yes.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Well now, sir, will you read out the one for 1894?

(The Inspector read the form of tender in 1904.)

(The Inspector.) Did you, Mr. Jacobs, complain that Mr. Madeley insisted on having broughams when he was only entitled to cabs?—No, I don't say that. What I say is that he was more particular than others had been, and he would have a brougham. On the occasion he was going to report me and he said the contract was for conveyances. I don't know why the change was brought about.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Do I understand that at some period, when Mr. Madeley was master, the whole thing was altered?—The whole thing was altered.

Q. It is all right because none of us were here. We cannot be responsible for what was done when the men of ability were here.

(Mr. Crooks.) Will you pay attention to me. When you entered into the contracts from time to time it was after advertisements had been issued?—Yes.

Q. And it turned out from time to time that Mr. Clark and yourself were the only persons tendering?—I believe that is so.

Q. We did not have a very large choice of contractors to choose from for this work?—There have been more tendering.

Q. And sometimes it has fallen entirely to you to do the whole?—Yes.

Mr. Jacobs.

14 June.

Q. And the guardians afterwards shared it?—Yes.

Q. You spoke about india-rubber tyres. Mr. Madeley insisted on these. I think they are a modern invention?—I don't know why you need have them.

Q. I am speaking about when Mr. Madeley was master?—He wanted nice light things to go up West in. He must have rubber.

Q. I am not concerned with that. That is his private matter. I want to know about the guardians. I want to know how much we are implicated in these charges?—You asked me if rubber tyres were ordered.

Q. Excuse me, you yourself hazarded that. You complain that you took a party of guardians down to Basham's. That annoys me?—I did not complain.

Q. I think you did. And we are complaining of the waste of the ratepayers' money?—I have never received the master's money.

(Mr. Sumner.) Let us have the names of the guardians who you say went there?—Mr. Bacon was one. Mr. Madeley can tell you who they were.

(Mr. Crooks.) Will you please listen to me and don't listen to the interruptions. You say you took a party of guardians there. You cannot say whether on this particular occasion they visited an asylum or whether they had to join a party of old folks who had a day at the "King's Oak." Who paid?—The item for the landaus and pair would be when the old people went down. I am giving it from memory. I don't want Mr. Robinson to catch me again. I think it would be the "King's Oak." I never knew we were going to see you there, Mr. Crooks.

Q. Oh! yes. I was there. What I want to know is, is that the occasion for which we have seen a receipt for £1 1s?—Yes.

Q. If any of the guardians happened to be there, I was there, in the landaus; it was not paid for out of the rates?—It appears to be so.

Q. We can take it that we were not indulging at the ratepayers' expense?—I would not think that possible. It would not be to the account of the guardians. It would be very kind of the guardians to go down with the old people.

Q. I am not fishing for compliments, Mr. Jacobs?—You have done so before now. You know you are very fond of compliments.

Q. No doubt human nature is always the same. But we are not wanting compliments. You supply ambulances for insane people outside the district?—That is or might not be a compliment.

Q. You say you were asked to remove some poor old people from the district—from Old Ford into Hackney?—I am not going to say poor persons, because many used it by Mr. Madeley's orders who could well afford to pay. Mr. Madeley knows that I have complained to him that my horses were taken out of the district on other work.

Q. And you never sent in an objection to this?—Mr. Madeley and Mr. Bacon have instructed it. But I have never been paid.

Q. Have you claimed for extra work?—It would be no good.

Q. Did you try?—I did not.

Q. The point is, that when the ambulances were not required here, we gave notice to the asylums board that they would be available on application to the master of the workhouse for persons injured or taken seriously ill in the streets. That, of course, accounts for using our ambulances in this way. It seems so humane to me, I should not have thought that anyone in the world would have objected to it?—Mr. Bacon is the only one who insisted on having the ambulance.

(The Inspector.) But what does a single guardian want an ambulance for?—For his friends belonging to the chapel he attends.

(Mr. Crooks.) You don't suppose, do you, that Mr. Bacon injured people or made people unwell for the sake of giving them a ride?—But he was very compassionate at other people's expense.

Q. Now, 16 years ago, when the master was general relieving officer, he had the cheque the counterfoil of which was dated 12th February, 1894. The cheque was for £6, £3 of it was for money borrowed, and £3 was for commission, and the commission was 1s. in the £. Do you remember how much you took during that quarter?—I do not.

Q. Did you take £26 14s. So you were not acting up to your agreement?—Some of the orders did not come to me.

Q. You were giving him twice as much as you should. Then the next quarter. You have sworn you gave him a cheque for £5 5s.?—Yes.

Q. You have sworn that?—Yes.

Q. You have taken your oath that you paid him five guineas?—Yes.

Q. Do you know how much you took that quarter?—£44 4s.

Q. And you paid him commission on £100. (To the Inspector.) I have no further questions to put to Mr. Jacobs. But I do want to put this to you, sir, a matter of the greatest public importance. Mr. Jacobs has sworn that he paid a commission for the express purpose of securing orders. Now, sir, the appeal I make to you is that you at once, without any hesitation, communicate this proceeding to the Attorney-General with a view to prosecuting Mr. Jacobs. The Act is perfectly clear and perfectly plain, and I think that Act of Parliament, passed though it was by a political opponent, to deal with this class of proceedings, is clear. Lord Randolph Churchill's Act is the Public Bodies Corrupt Practices Act. The first clause reads:—"Every person who shall by himself or by or in conjunction with any other person, corruptly solicit or receive or agree to receive for himself or for any other person, any gift, loan, fee, reward, or advantage whatever, as an inducement to or reward for or otherwise on account of any member, officer or servant, of a public body, as in this Act defined, doing or forbearing to do anything in respect of any matter or transaction whatsoever, actual or proposed, in which the said public body is concerned, shall be guilty of a misdemeanour."

(Mr. Robb.) I don't want to interrupt, but I must interpose. I submit this is being done for obvious reasons, to intimidate other contractors. It is not the time for an application of this kind. You are, sir, well aware of the law, and I suggest an interposition of this kind, is only made for the obvious reasons—for the purpose of intimidating other persons from giving evidence.

(Mr. Crooks.) We have had enough of this intimidation. I myself have been subjected to the most gross intimidation not alone in Poplar, but all over the country. I have been threatened by all sorts of persecution—I have been told—I don't appeal for protection—I am to be subjected to the grossest persecution. In the streets I assure you, it is as if they had discovered I had done a murder. My character will bear the strictest investigation. I ask for no mercy. All I am asking for is that without any opportunity being afforded to slip through, we shall communicate this to the Attorney-General. The words of the Act are:—"A prosecution for an offence under this Act shall not be instituted except by or with the consent of the Attorney-General. In this section the expression 'Attorney-General' means the Attorney or Solicitor-General for England, and as respects Scotland means the Lord Advocate, and as respects Ireland means the Attorney or Solicitor-General for Ireland." It means, having regard to the oath sworn and for which purpose the commission was paid, which he has sworn he paid, and that is the most important part of the affair—it is clear there is a case for the Public Prosecutor under this Act. The guardians claim that this information shall be forwarded to the Attorney-General. It is a matter for your decision, sir. We stand in the same position as the Municipal Alliance. If there is any attempt to bribe we shall side with them to the best of our ability.

(The Inspector.) I know that Act very well indeed.

(Witness.) Give me a drop of water. I should like a drop of brandy after this.

(The Inspector.) I don't know if it is well to go under the terms of this Act. You may rely on me that the matter will be considered. And the Act is widely drawn.

(Mr. Crooks.) Then I may take it that you will not lose sight of the point I have raised.

(The Inspector.) You may be quite certain.

(Witness.) I won't run away, Mr. Crooks.

(Mr. Crooks.) There have been attempts to drive me away. I am ashamed of nothing. There has not been enough money coined to drive me away from Poplar.

(A ratepayer.) May I ask whether the witness has received any financial consideration for imparting this information to any person interested in this Inquiry, and, if so, how much?

(Witness.) I tell you what—

(The ratepayer.) It will have a bearing on the other witnesses following. I think this witness should be asked.

(The Inspector.) We are anxious if any corrupt practices have been followed, persons should come forward.

(The ratepayer.) Is it in order to ask this person?—

(The Inspector.) No, it is not.

(Mr. Robb.) Really, this position is preposterous. Here we are told that the guardians are anxious that everyone should come forward, and again all sorts and pains and penalties are held up and they are told that if they come forward they will be prosecuted by the Attorney-General. I submit it is a most improper thing for Mr. Crooks knowing, as he does, that the whole subject will receive consideration from your Board, to act as he has done.

(Mr. Crooks.) We promise Mr. Robb that every help we can give him in the way of producing witnesses shall be employed. But we cannot get round an Act of Parliament, even as a board of guardians.

(The Inspector.) There is an inconvenience in dealing with an Act of Parliament if you want to get evidence.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Who are the guardians who had broughams provided for them?—I have answered Mr. Robinson.

Q. Where did you drive them to?—I tell you we have been to Basham's on one occasion, and to the schools and other places.

Q. Do you remember taking some down to Darenth?—I am not complaining about that.

Q. Did you take myself and other guardians to Darenth?—Two or three ladies went with us and I enjoyed it very much.

Q. Were they guardians?—Yes.

Q. All the people who went were guardians?—Mr. Poole went and Mr. Lansbury.

Q. Who else?—I think there were five. One sat outside with me.

Q. Two lady guardians and two men?—I think there were three men.

Q. I don't remember the third. I want to know who paid for the refreshments on that occasion?—I had a nice dinner at someone's expense, and I appreciated your kindness to me. It was a great pleasure to me.

Q. Who paid for the refreshments on that occasion. Did you?—I never said I did.

Q. You did not pay for any refreshments. Have I ever had a drink?—I think you are as straight as any one of the guardians. You have never had a drink that I know of.

Q. When did you see me last before you saw me here. Last week?—I couldn't say.

Q. Is it some years ago?—I don't think so long as that.

Q. When was it?—I cannot say.

Q. Would it be a year ago?—Perhaps it would.

Q. My point is this, that the suggestion in your evidence—of course, someone at the back knows better than you—the suggestion is that we have been treated and taken care of sometimes by you and sometimes by Mr. Madeley. I want to get it out how many of us have been on these little excursions?—I couldn't tell you.

Q. Take Basham's. I understand you drove a party to Claybury. They went on to have their food. First of all, how long would it take you to go to Claybury?—I suppose about an hour and a half or a couple of hours.

Q. And how long to visit the institution?—Sometimes they would be much longer than others.

Q. How far is Basham's from there?—About a mile and a half.

Q. And is that as near as you can get?—It is going the other way.

Q. And they went there for their food?—Yes.

Q. And what would they have there?—I don't know, I am sure.

Q. Did they have anything to drink with you?—They had a bottle of whisky. I left their table and went to another one.

Q. Who went there. Mr. Bacon did, Mr. Gillard, Mr. Peacock, Mr. Madeley?—I don't know, I am sure.

Q. You are the witness. What did they go in—a landau or what?—Yes.

Q. It would only hold five?—Yes.

Q. Mr. Madeley, Mr. Bacon, Mr. Gillard and Mr. Peacock. Are they the four?—I think so.

Q. So that there is only one who is now a member of the board?—I don't know what that has to do with me.

Q. But you know there are 24 of us, and they say we want these cheap outings?—I do not know whether they have left the board or not.

Q. At any rate, three of them are Mr. Gillard, Mr. Peacock, Mr. Bacon, with Mr. Madeley. Are you aware whether Mr. Bacon is a testotaller?—He said "Take the whisky away."

Q. So he is the only member of the board who did not have drinks at Mr. Madeley's or at anyone else's expense?—I never said he did. I do not like him well enough to treat him.

Q. So that the case against the board breaks down. We only want to know who is meant?—I only tell you it has been on a number of occasions. I have not always driven myself.

Q. Who told you that Mr. Madeley paid for these things out of his own pocket?—Mr. Madeley did.

Q. Was the landau charged in the ordinary way in your contract?—Yes.

Q. It was an ordinary official visit?—Yes.

Q. And even guardians get hungry?—I suppose so.

Q. I suppose there would be some hundreds of our people at Claybury. The guardians would want some food on their visits. Are you aware that would be paid for in the ordinary way by the ratepayers?—I suppose they have to pay a good many things.

Q. You have sworn that Mr. Madeley paid for this?—He has told me he stood "Sam."

Q. He paid an official visit to Claybury, and that would be paid for in exactly the same way as the landau?—I suppose you guardians would pay. In Mile End they refuse to pay.

Q. That is not here in Poplar. What other outings have the guardians had?—I cannot tell you everywhere they have been.

Q. Private outings, I mean?—We should have it booked.

Q. Have you any recollection of any single case we have had a landau out for the guardians' private use to go for a country ride or that sort of thing?—If they went visiting they would have a drive.

Q. Have the guardians either collectively or individually had any vehicle for their own private use?—Mr. Madeley ordered so and so, for so and so were going out, and it had to be a good lot, because they were going so and so.

Q. And when you have these instructions a visit was paid to lunatic asylums or other institutions?—I suppose they made it an excuse that they were going to an institution.

Q. You have made statements that the guardians have vehicles for their own private use?—I don't see what that has to do with me.

Q. I want to know whether on these occasions they visited institutions?—We can bring up the coachman.

Q. You say that the guardians have had vehicles for their private use?—I don't see why you should make such a fuss about it.

Q. Will you mention the guardians?—Mr. Madeley has specified that it should be rubber-tyre! as so and so are going out.

Q. Will you give us one occasion?—I am not going to make mistakes again. I can bring the letters from Mr. Madeley.

Q. That is all right if the witness brings them after lunch?—I have not time to go home at lunch.

Mr. Jacobs.

14 June.

Q. Bring them to-morrow then—

(The Inspector.) I think your point may be made clearer—that the guardians when they went on these excursions did so with the object of visiting some of the institutions where they had paupers.

(Mr. Lansbury.) That is so. That is my point.

(Witness.) I am not saying that is wrong. I say you must have an excuse to go somewhere.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I went to Darenth.

(Witness.) Do you know we started on one job, and had got no further than the "Princess Alice."

(The Inspector.) Where is the "Princess Alice"?—In the middle of Romford Road.

Q. You refreshed before you visited?—You are making me say these things.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Will you produce the names to-morrow?—Do you want me to-morrow?

Q. I want to know?—I am losing a day, I don't want to lose another.

(Mr. Lansbury.) It is not me. The statement is made that we had these cheap outings at someone's expense. The names ought to be given. There are 24 of us.

(The Inspector.) I suppose the minutes would show the names.

(Witness.) That is not the worst thing you guardians have done. I should think the guardians have almost ruined the master.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Is Mr. Jacobs?—You are saying what I know of Poplar. You know Mr. McCarthy was in a brougham.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Is Mr. Jacobs giving evidence or not?

(The Inspector.) You are asked for the names of the guardians?—Mr. Lansbury is anxious that I should prove everything. I have said they are not all angels. A brougham is ordered to take the master to Cannon Street Station. The matron accompanies him. I can bring my coachman to prove this. Mr. McCarthy is on the station, and comes to him. He says, "Can't you drive me home along the Embankment?" You are asking me all this.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Mr. McCarthy can take care of himself?—Can he deny that.

(Mr. Lansbury.) This is all very well. I want names. He has given us one.

(The Inspector.) Do you know of any occasion where guardians got free rides—on occasions when they have not been doing visiting work at institutions?—I believe Mr. Madeley had instructions, and according to those instructions I would say they have been.

Q. We are speaking about the guardians?—I can say they have been.

Q. It is very easy for a misapprehension to arise. The guardians go to inspect an institution and they are entitled to hire your brougham. Now you might think that was for their own use. They would be entitled to it under their contract. Can you give any instance where any guardian hired your brougham when not inspecting an institution?

(Mr. McCarthy.) I understood you to say that I rode in a brougham with the master and matron to Cannon Street?—No.

Q. What did you say?—I am standing on the word of my coachman. We generally ask in these cases: How did you get on? My coachman said: "I have taken the master to Cannon Street, and the matron accompanied him, and as we turned round, Mr. McCarthy was there, and said, 'I will ride in the brougham.'" That is my son. McCarthy said to him, "Can't you go along the Embankment way home?" I say this from my son's report, and I have no doubt he will be pleased to come—

Q. Do you suggest I had the brougham?—No, you had a ride. How can you hire a brougham when the master leaves it at Cannon Street.

Q. Did your son raise any objection?—Perhaps it occurred too often.

Q. You recollect the one?—I am telling you about the one.

Q. Did your son raise any objection to my using the brougham?—He did to going to the Embankment on that particular day. He said "that is not the way home."

Q. Do you remember the date?—It is in the book.

Q. Then we will have the date?—You cannot expect it now. Perhaps the master can recollect it; I don't know.

(The Inspector.) Are there any other questions?

(Mr. Sumner.) I should like to ask one. Mr. Jacobs makes a statement that he has paid Mr. Madeley a shilling in the pound, and also that he was able to do what he liked with the guardians. Can he explain the reason why he has lost the contract if that is so?—Yes, I am glad you have given me an opportunity of doing so. Mr. Beaumont gets elected a guardian for one of the Bow districts.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Bromley! That's another one of your pillars?—If you don't want to hear me—

(The Inspector.) I am listening?—Mr. Beaumont was a guardian, and had not been elected long. There is a Mr. Clover—a jobmaster in Bow, going out with Mr. Beaumont's daughter, and that is the reason I lost my contract, sir. It is; I can prove it. Mr. Jungblut will tell you. It is a serious matter to me. Not because I neglected my work; I have been a contractor 18 years; but Mr. Clover, a jobmaster in Bow, is walking out with Miss Beaumont. Mr. Beaumont gets Mr. Bacon and two or three more, and says "if you want me to vote for you, you have got to vote in my case." Consequently they threw me out, and said I was not a ratepayer in Bow and Bromley.

Q. Were you a ratepayer?—Yes, I was, and brought my rates and taxes papers. They threw me out, and Clover got the contract.

(Mr. Robinson.) It shows that Mr. Madeley did not carry the board if a new man could do that!—My fault with Mr. Madeley is—

(Mr. Sumner.) That is only one guardian?—But he ruled the lot. He said "If you don't vote for me—"

Q. You said first that Mr. Madeley ruled all of us; now it is Mr. Beaumont?—On that particular occasion.

Q. If it is true that a contractor is only going out with a daughter of one of the guardians, he could not have ruled the whole board. Surely we have a mind of our own?—Have you? You didn't always use it though.

Q. I can tell you this—that I voted against you, and the reason was—?—Thank you.

Q. The reason was that the cattle you put in those broughams ought to have been sent to Harrison and Barber's instead of being in a brougham?—If it is not too late now; I knew I should have those threats.

Q. I cannot understand how the police allowed your cattle to go about?—May I ask my friend what sort of cattle he gets from Clover?

(The Inspector.) No.

(Witness.) Excuse me; there is such a thing as the Royal Humane Society. Inform them of the cattle I keep.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Jacobs, you were asked to produce some evidence of the cash payments that you swore you made to Mr. Madeley, any pieces of paper, and so on?—Yes.

Q. Does it occur to you that any sort of receipt or anything has been given for a payment of the kind?—I should not expect anything from Madeley of course; no receipt, or anything of that.

Q. I think on the last occasion the tenders for conveyances were: Clover, £13 9s.; Clark, £13 10s.; and Jacobs, £12 5s. 6d. You were the lowest, but Clover and Clark were accepted?—That meant only a pound out. The total would be very different. It would come to hundreds in the course of the year. I might say hundreds. There is one instance—

Q. These amounts simply mean the total of a specimen of each job?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Have you got Jacobs' tender there?

(Mr. Robb.) I have got copies of the three prices set out.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Here is Jacobs'.

(Mr. Robb.) So that you set your tender out on that form?—Yes.

Q. You give the price for a number of different journeys, and these figures are the result of the aggregate in each case of those journeys?—Yes.

Q. So that, although you are only about a pound lower than the others, yet frequently it would represent

a large difference in the course of 12 months?—I might explain. Horse and ambulance—that is six days a week. My price is 10s. When I first commenced it was 10s. 6d. when the ambulance first came out. I put it last time at 10s. Clark's is 13s., and Clover 13s. 3d. £52 12s. was paid more than my price. If I had the ambulance—one case only, per hour after a certain time—my price per hour for the horse and man and harness is 1s. 6d.; Clark's, 2s. 6d.; and Clover's is 2s. 9d. per hour. The horse alone will make a difference of £52 12s. I don't know what the hours would be.

Q. It was suggested that it was owing to the wretched condition of your cattle?—Oh, it was only one man, and he didn't understand it.

Q. The guardians have been using this wretched cattle of yours for nearly 20 years?—They have, sir.

Q. Have they ever made a complaint?—No.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Mr. Jacobs?—Well, we get complaints. Eighteen years is a long time with such a lot of guardians as we have had to put up with at Poplar.

(Mr. Robb.) Did you ever have contracts cancelled?—No, never.

Q. Have you ever received any complaints from the clerk to the board?—Not about horses, but, maybe, about time.

Q. Has the clerk, as the official representative of the board, ever addressed any letter to you complaining of the horses?—No, not to my knowledge, but I don't want to commit any perjury again.

Q. Don't you get excited, but deal with the facts. Taking one or two items from the tender: from the workhouse to Forest Gate schools; is that an item of very frequent occurrence?—I should think it would be. It used to be.

Q. What is your price for that?—Omnibus, or brake and pair of horses, 6s.

Q. Do you know Mr. Clover's price. Do you know it was 10s.

(The Inspector.) Clover's is 10s.; Clark's 12s. 6d.

(Mr. Robb.) Is that for single or double horses?

(The Inspector.) The contract is for a pair of horses.

(Mr. Robb.) Take to the workhouse, and any part of the union. What was your price for that?—Half-a-crown, I think.

Q. Is that an item of frequent occurrence?—Yes.

Q. May I ask what the prices were?

(The Inspector.) Both for 3s.

(Mr. Robb.) A van and one horse—any part of the union—what is your price?

(The Inspector.) 2s. 6d.

(Mr. Robb.) And the others?

(The Inspector.) 4s. and 4s. 3d.

(Witness.) That would be every morning, I take it.

(Mr. Robb.) For a driver, horse or horses, with harness, for the ambulance—for each journey, your price is 1s. 6d., I think?

(The Inspector.) Don't let us think. It is at the top of the next page. The ambulance for each journey—Jacobs, 1s. 6d.; Clark, 2s. 6d.; and Clover, 2s. 3d.

(Mr. Robb.) "Out for 8 hours, to be timed from the time of arrival at the workhouse"—was your price 10s.?—Yes, sir.

Q. And the others 13s. and 13s. 3d.?—And that is every day.

Q. And then to the metropolitan stations. The brougham and one horse to London Bridge—is your price 3s. and the others 3s. 6d.?—I think all the railways 3s.

Q. Cannon Street, 3s., the others 3s. 6d.; Holborn Viaduct, 3s., the others 3s. 9d. and 4s.; King's Cross, 3s., the others 4s. 6d. and 5s.; St. Pancras, 3s., the others 5s. each.

(The Inspector.) 5s.

(Mr. Robb.) St. Paul's 4s., the others 3s. 9d. and 3s. 6d.; Paddington, 5s., and the others 5s. and 5s. 6d. For Euston you are 5s. and the others are 5s. and 4s. respectively.

(The Inspector.) No, it is 4s. and the other two 5s. and 4s.

(Mr. Robb.) For Liverpool Street you are 2s. 6d., the others 3s. and 2s. 6d. For Waterloo you are 3s. 6d. and the others are 4s. 6d. So that, Mr. Jacobs, of a total number of 30 items, are you the lowest for about 20?—I daresay I am.

Q. What difference do you say it is. You said "hundreds" just now but surely that is not right?—This would make hundreds in the course of the year. One item alone makes £52 10s. without extra hours, and the hours would be more than doubled. The price on the ambulance alone is £52 10s.—to be paid for one item—more than you would have paid Jacobs with his bad horses.

(Mr. Crooks.) Look at the overtime you would have made! They get back by their time, and your horses never would.

(Mr. Lansbury.) How often do the brakes go to Forest Gate?—They would go about two or three times a week.

Q. How often now?—I could not say. They used to go three or four times a week.

Q. Your last year when you did the work?—I never had Forest Gate work; Mr. Clark had it.

Q. How often?—I was not there.

Q. How do you know he had it at all?—My man would be at the union, and he would, for instance, say, "Clark's brake's there"; he would not tell an untruth.

Q. Will you swear it was more than once a quarter?—I do not know what it was last year.

Q. Your own last year?—I may have done only one a quarter.

Q. Will you swear that brakes went more often than once a quarter to Forest Gate; either when you did it or any one else?—I don't know. I could not tell you. It used to be frequently.

Q. I want to know last year?—Last year I do not know.

Q. You don't want to answer?—I would if I could.

Q. You can't answer it?—I don't know how you can expect me to answer it. We used to go three and four times a week.

Q. I happen to know about Forest Gate, and we made a new regulation?—Well, why ask me?

Q. I ask you because your friends at the back?—I have no friends at the back. They are friends of Mr. Crooks and Mr. Lansbury.

(Mr. Crooks.) I am very much obliged to them whoever they are.

(Mr. Lansbury.) The point is, one of these items is for Forest Gate. There have been new regulations as to inmates of the workhouse visiting the children at Forest Gate, and now it is done, and has been done for some years, once a quarter?—Will you admit, Mr. Lansbury, that if a child was ill—

(Mr. Lansbury.) I am not under cross-examination.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Jacobs cannot know anything about Forest Gate?—I ask Mr. Crooks if three broughams were not supplied from Mr. Clark for Mr. Crooks at the Woolwich Election, supplied by the master's orders?

(Mr. Crooks.) I absolutely and positively deny it?—That you did not have three broughams for your election at Woolwich?

Q. I absolutely deny it?—Will the master deny it?

(The Inspector.) You say something, and it is loud enough for people to hear. Mr. Crooks entirely repudiates it. (Interruption.)

(Witness.) It is not pleasant for me, and the interruptions show that some of them do not like it.

Mr. Jacobs.
—
14 June.

Mr. W. A. MADELEY; recalled, and further examined.

Mr. Madeley.

14 June.

Q. (*The Inspector.*) Your letter of resignation was dated April 5th?—That is so.

Q. And the medical certificates are dated April 10th–11th?—That is so, sir.

Q. I put it to you that some months before the resignation you had communications from the guardians, or some of them, with reference to your domestic relations?—There was something of that.

Q. I ask you whether, as a matter of fact, your resignation was not because you had immoral relations with one of the nurses in the workhouse?—No, it was not, sir; not in the workhouse. She had been a nurse in the workhouse.

Q. She had been?—Yes.

(*Mr. Robinson.*) I don't know whether Mr. Robb wants to ask any questions.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I will put them through you, sir, in a moment. They are very short. Have any goods been moved from the store into your apartments at the workhouse since your resignation?—I have not been in the house.

Q. Have any goods been removed?—Not to my knowledge, sir.

Q. Have a number of packing cases been taken away from the workhouse to your house?—From where, sir?

Q. From your house?—I have not had any packing cases taken.

Q. Was there a pantechicon van there as late as last night?—I was not at the house last night, sir.

Q. Did you instruct anyone to remove things in a pantechicon?—I don't know anything about the house. I can't answer. I am not living there. I cannot answer any questions.

Q. I must put it to you because I shall call witnesses later. Is it true that a quantity of goods has been removed, and that your son and a friend of his did the packing; and that all the inmates of the house were excluded?—I was not at the house, sir. I am not at the house.

Q. That is not a frank answer?—That is all I can give. I am not at the house; I am not the master.

Q. Who do you suggest is responsible?—I have nothing to do with it; I have nothing further to say.

Q. Had you any goods there?—Of course I had, some of my own.

Q. What have you done with those things?—I have got them.

Q. When did you get them?—I could not tell you that.

Q. I want you to recollect as well when you answer me as when you answer Mr. Lansbury?—Oh, yes.

Q. When did you remove your things?—I took them away in a small bag—my clothes; I left my clothes there.

Q. You would not want a pantechicon for that. You have only taken things in a small bag—is that what you say?—In a bag, sir; my portmanteau and bag.

Q. On Monday, May 21, at 7.20 p.m., did Clark's van leave with a dozen large packages from your house?—I believe there were some packages in Clark's van.

Q. You know that now?—I believe it is so.

Q. Who told you?—I was not told so.

Q. Who told you?—I don't know.

Q. What caused you to believe that?—(*Witness did not reply.*)

Q. What is the source of your belief that Clark removed packages on that date. You knew nothing about it just now. Now you believe?—You did not say May 21—be fair. You said last evening.

Q. I asked you at what time since your resignation. My first question to you was, at any time since your resignation. You told us you knew nothing about it except a carpet bag?—I did not say carpet bag.

Q. How do you know that Clark removed something on May 21?—I was there.

Q. I thought you had not been there since your resignation?—I did not say so. I did not live there.

Q. You told us you knew absolutely nothing about it?—You asked me about last night.

Q. When you thought, Mr. Madeley, I had no specific instance you denied it. Now you find I have evidence?—I don't mind what you have.

Q. Where did that van go to?—I don't know.

Q. What?—I don't know.

Q. You don't know?

(*Mr. Robinson.*) Unless it is suggested that goods belonging to some other than my client were taken away, I should certainly advise you, Mr. Madeley, not to answer the question. If it is put to you that you have taken away goods belonging to the union it is a different thing, but what he has done with his own goods is nothing to do with the guardians or anyone else.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I want to know what the packages contained?—I refuse to answer, sir; I don't know.

Q. Do you know where they went to?—No.

Q. Do you swear that?—Yes.

Q. Well, you were there at the time. Do you suggest that all this was done without your knowledge or authority?—(*Witness did not reply.*)

Q. Would this be true—"I have seen blankets, shirts, stockings, bed ticking, ladies' boots, a quantity of household goods, new pots, saucepans, frying pans, and brooms going in the master's house since the date he resigned"?—I have never seen them, sir. Of course, we have things in the house.

Q. What would all these things come in for from the stores, after your resignation?—I have never seen things coming in.

Q. Mr. Madeley, you know all this ignorance won't do. Where is the book that will show what has come into your house from the stores since your resignation?—Oh, you can have the books from the house—the inventory books, &c.

Q. What book will show?—The inventory book.

Q. It should show?—Yes.

Q. I ask that that may be investigated—that book. Is it a fact that in the packing of the van in question no inmate of the house was called upon to assist?—Very probably not.

Q. Was it packed by your son, Frank, and a friend of his, named Harry Wright?—I did not see the packing.

Q. Did Pickford's van shortly before that take away a very large case of things?—I could not tell you.

Q. Now this was May 21. You were there. A fortnight prior to that you were there, were you not?—I daresay.

Q. Do you mean to say you do not know whether Pickford's van took away a large case?—I don't know.

Q. Was that delivered to your son Frank's lodgings in the East India Dock Road?—I could not tell you.

Q. You have told us the matron held duplicate keys of the stores?—She had keys of the stores.

Q. And beer cellar?—Yes.

Q. In fact, every place in the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. Just one other question. Over and above the £50 you told us of for additional remuneration, did you ever get anything further for compensation?—I have not got the £50 yet.

Q. Over and above that—did you get compensation?—Compensation in what way.

Q. For any purpose?—No, only salary.

Q. When the electric light was installed, for instance, did you get anything then?—I believe the guardians awarded me a gratuity.

Q. Did the guardians award you £50 for disturbance when the electric light was installed?—It is in the minutes; I could not tell you from memory.

Q. For compensation for disturbance of your premises you got £50?—

(The Inspector.) I would like to ask you a few questions. Such gratuities as are granted to you are sanctioned by the Local Government Board, are they not?—Always, sir.

Q. Had you furniture of your own?—Some things I brought in—very few.

Q. Did you remove from the workhouse, or cause to be removed, any property of the guardians?—Not to my knowledge, sir, nothing of the guardians. Of course, I brought all my pictures, piano, ornaments, and wearing apparel.

Q. And they belong to you?—Yes.

Q. I understand the matron was living inside the house after your resignation?—Yes, sir.

Q. And you are living outside?—I am living outside.

Q. The furniture was yours?—The pictures and ornaments are mine, and several things.

(Mr. Robinson.) I would like to ask one or two questions. You have saved me the trouble, to a great extent. (To witness.) Has anybody, with your knowledge or consent, or by your direction, taken away from the house anything that was not your own property?—No, sir.

Q. Now just a question as to this morning. Have you ever received sums of money from Mr. Jacobs by way of bribes, as stated by him in the box?—Never, sir.

Q. And with the exception of the items which are in his account from 1898 until 1905, have you paid for the broughams which you have had for your private use?—Yes.

Q. And have those journeys always been in your own time?—In the evening time, yes. Mr. Madeley.
14 June.

Q. Is it true that when the guardians have been out visiting, that you, out of your own pocket, have paid for their refreshments?—No, I have always charged them in a proper and legitimate manner through my cash book, which has been audited and passed.

Q. I suppose it would be your duty to pay the bill, and then it went through the accounts in the ordinary way?—Certainly.

Q. Have you ever taken from any contractors sums by way of commission or bribes?—No, sir, I have not.

Q. I ask you this: before this Inquiry had been thought of or broached, did you arrange to leave England?—I did.

Q. Before the Inquiry was fixed did you take your passage?—Yes.

Q. And voluntarily, of your own accord, without any pressure, did you postpone your departure until a future date in order that you might attend this Inquiry?—I did.

(Mr. Robb.) I shall ask you, sir, to allow me later on to call Mrs. Jacobs and the son, but they wish to refresh their memory by going through the books.

(The Inspector.) The next witness is the medical officer, who desires to be called.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes.

DR. J. LAMONT, Medical Officer of the Workhouse; sworn and examined.

(The Inspector.) What is your name?—John Lamont.

Q. What are your medical degrees?—L.R.C.P., Edinburgh; L.R.C.S., Edinburgh.

Q. Are you the medical officer of the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. How long have you held that office?—Nearly eight years. Eight years in September.

Q. Since 1898?—Yes.

Q. Did you settle the dietary when the new Dietary Order came in?—Well, I was there, and we went through the dietary with the clerk, and guardians, and master of the workhouse.

Q. Was the new dietary in accordance with the Order?—Yes.

Q. Can you tell me whether it was a much better dietary than the old one?—No, it was a similar diet, only under another name.

Q. In many unions practically after the new Order, the old Order was re-arranged in terms of the new?—That was so.

Q. What was the exact date?—1900, I think.

Q. Can you give any explanation of the continuous increase in the cost of the provisions supplied to the workhouse?—There should not have been any increased cost at all, as the food during the past 8 years has not been increased.

Q. The increased cost could only have arisen either from an increase in the cost price of the provisions, or from some increased waste, or some change in the administration?—That is so.

Q. What persons do you put on old and infirm diet?—Formerly, before the Order of 1900, we had a young men's diet and an old men's diet, and that was continued even after the 1900 Order.

Q. That is to say, technically speaking, you had a 1 diet, 2 diet, 1a diet, and a 2a diet?—Yes, it was a young men's diet practically, and an old men's diet—that was, under 60 and over 60. There was no change in the diet at all from that time.

Q. What do you mean. The Order has not been carried out?—There was the young men's diet issued. No man over the age of 60 was to have a young men's diet. That was No. 1 or 1a diet. No man 60, or under 60, was to have a No. 2 diet or 2a diet.

Q. Whose regulation was that?—The orders of the board of guardians.

Q. You are aware that the discretion is yours?—Yes, I know, but it has been disputed by the board of guardians.

Q. Did you receive any direction?—Yes, I had a letter. I can show it to you (letter produced).

Q. This letter is dated April 12th, 1906—"I am directed to inform you that the guardians have had under consideration your letter of the 3rd instant, in which you inform them of your desire to meet their wishes in the matter of the dietary of the inmates of the workhouse. I am to state that you have correctly interpreted their intention that no inmates over 60 years of age should be placed in class 1, 1a, 3 or 3a, for the purposes of dietary, and they rely on your observance of this arrangement." That is signed by Mr. Lough. Would this mean that when an inmate was over 60 the guardians desired you to put him on old and infirm diet?—He was to be placed on that. That was the decision of the board, sir.

Q. Did that regulation lead to any great transfer of able-bodied inmates over 60 from one diet to another to any great extent?—A considerable extent, I think; I cannot tell the numbers.

Q. Before that time did you exercise a discretion as to what diet should be given?—No, previously it was a young men's diet under 60, and over 60.

Q. Your mutton is the most expensive of your meats, isn't it?—I dare say it is.

Q. And yet you give much more mutton than you do beef and pork put together?—The mutton, the sick ward diet, has been given for lying-in women.

Q. Do you consider that mutton is a better form of meat to give to your inmates than other meat?—Oh no, certainly I do not specially recommend mutton.

Q. Have you ever had any complaint of the quality of the meat supplied?—Yes, frequently from the inmates of the house.

Q. Did you investigate it?—Yes, I saw, and they gave me, a sample of the meat provided.

Q. What did you think of the sample?—I thought that the mutton sometimes—I do not say always—was not at all what I should like for sick patients. It was hard in fibre and rather dry.

Q. Did you bring the complaints under the notice of the guardians?—No, I did not.

Q. Why not?—Because I have had some experience of how my orders have been evaded since 1903. The recommendations and orders I have given have been overruled, and since 1903 I have made no order.

Dr. Lamont.
14 June.

Dr. Lamont.

14 June.

Q. Was that the reason for not bringing the complaints to the notice of the guardians?—Yes.

Q. Do you think the samples of mutton you saw were English mutton?—Well, I would not like to say they were not English mutton, but they may have been another quality of mutton.

Q. Can you tell English mutton from Australian or New Zealand mutton?—(Witness did not reply.)

Q. In your report book, under date of October 28, 1903, you say that you are of opinion that the nursery and schools are in an insanitary condition, and that the surroundings are not conducive to the health of the inmates. What was done?—I should like you to look at the infirm wards—about the infirm people. The master's recommendations were accepted before mine on that occasion.

Q. "The infirm wards in the workhouse are overcrowded." Is that what you want. But you make no specific recommendation there?—About the food? Oh, no. Since 1903 there have been no orders. I have made no orders to the board of guardians about food.

Q. Since 1903 you have not carried out the directions of the Order. Why?—Because every report I made was not carried out.

Q. Was the fact that the guardians did not accept your recommendations a matter of complaint with you?—About the food?

Q. That your recommendations have not been carried out?—They accepted the word of the master before the word of the medical officer.

Q. Was that on the occasion of your complaint of the overcrowding of the wards?—Yes, sir.

Q. Do I misjudge you if I say that after that you did not report to the guardians?—No, sir; I saw it was no use.

Q. Have the complaints as to the food been frequent?—I had them the other day. A blind man in the infirm ward was ordered beef-tea and milk, but refused to have the beef-tea and milk because he thought it was of inferior quality, and I had to put him on the ordinary diet.

Q. That is an instance of one of your inmates who complains of the beef-tea and milk?—Yes.

Q. Were his complaints well-founded?—Sometimes, sir; I have seen the beef-tea exceedingly good, and at other times most inferior.

Q. What did you do on those occasions?—Well, if I complained there was a lot of—

Q. "If I complained there was a lot of—"—Friction between the master and myself over the matter.

Q. As to the dietary?—Yes.

Q. On what grounds did you put men on beer?—When I came there as assistant medical officer the men were having beer for ordinary work in the house, and when I was appointed medical officer I had to go on with the old régime there. When I had the opportunity I tried to knock them off the beer, with the result that it caused a lot of friction with the guardians and the master.

Q. When did you try to knock them off?—At the time of the first illness the master had. Mr. Walton, now acting master, was acting at that time.

Q. How long was that ago?—I should say about 1900. He sent for Mr. Bacon on that occasion.

Q. Because you knocked them off the beer?—Yes, because I knocked them off.

Q. How many were on beer in those days?—I dare say a hundred, at the least.

Q. How many lately?—Very few now. I am very pleased to say that all of them will be off this week. At any rate, I do not think there are about 12½ pints of ale each day now.

Q. What is the maximum you got to?—Over 200 it was.

Q. Have you the book there?—It may be there, but I have missed it for several days.

Q. Are you aware, Dr. Lamont, that beer can only be given on the medical officer's orders?—The beer; Oh! yes, I know that; but the beer was simply given for work done, and I put it down for work. I knew perfectly well that

if the master of the workhouse had looked into the Orders properly he would not have served out the beer without further information being put into the books. He gave it for work done.

Q. Are you aware of Article 8 of the Dietary Order which says the guardians shall not allow to any inmate any fermented or spirituous liquors unless in pursuance of a written recommendation of the medical officer?—I gave no medical recommendation at all. It was simply done for extra work—any form of work at all.

Q. And the Order says, "And shall be accompanied by a statement of the reasons which, in the opinion of the medical officer, render such allowance requisite for the health of the inmates." Did you ever fill up that form. It says lying-in wards, sick wards, laundry, kitchen helpers, bath helpers, nursery helpers. All that is in your handwriting?—Some of it is, certainly. The recent ones are.

Q. It is not clear—I put it to you—that you did not carry out the requirements of the Order?—Yes, it is.

Q. Why didn't you do it?—I was simply obliged* by the master of the workhouse and the guardians. I had really to put them on, or else undergo a considerable amount of suffering.

Q. What suffering do you suggest?—They made it hot for me all the time.

Q. They made it hot for you for not putting on the beer?—Yes. Every time I took some person off the beer there was a considerable amount of friction raised by the master, who saw the guardians individually, and informed them I took so-and-so off the beer, or her off the beer; and by that means it caused considerable friction.

Q. Do you think all the beer ordered was drunk by the patients you ordered it for. Had you anything to do with the administration?—No, I simply ordered the beer.

Q. Are you aware of any waste?—I know that a considerable amount of waste was allowed with the beer.

Q. Do you think that is legitimate, from your knowledge of dispensing?—A little is, but not a considerable quantity.

Q. Do you also order brandy and such things?—Yes, for the sick wards and infirm wards only.

Q. You say there is now very little beer?—It is nearly finished now.

Q. Since when?—It will be—perhaps to-morrow or next day.

Q. Do you mean that the cask is running dry?—Yes, it is running dry.

Q. In this case the guardians did not put pressure on you?—In this case they had not put any pressure at all.

Q. What is the date since which you have ceased to order beer?—I mean approximately?—The last year is there, and you will see.

Q. Do you mean you stopped the whole lot?—Yes, I have closed the bills, as it were.

Q. In future you don't give beer, except on medical grounds?—There shall be no more given while I am in the workhouse, except for medical purposes.

Q. In 1905 your consumption of beer was 118 pints a day, of which the waste was 10 to 12 pints; and that waste apparently the Auditor allowed, so that the total consumption taken out of the stores was from 128 to 130 pints a day?

(Mr. Lansbury.) For how many persons?—I don't know.

(The Inspector.) What was the amount of beer you ordered for each person?—From half-a-pint to a pint.

Q. Have you any definite knowledge of why the master objects, or the guardians object, to your knocking the beer off?—In the first instance the master had no command over the inmates of the workhouse unless he supplied them with beer. Secondly, he said that he was not able to have a rise in screw unless he supplied the guardians with beer.

Q. Do you think, when he said he would not get a rise in his screw unless he gave the guardians beer, he spoke in earnest?—Yes, he was.

* This word was printed as "pledged" in the guardians' print of evidence.

Q. And you think that it was for that reason that pressure was put on you to give beer not in pursuance of the Order?—It was.

Q. Do you suggest that the beer was drunk by the guardians?—I do.

Q. Do you know that?—Yes.

Q. Have you seen it?—I have seen it. I am there from 8.30 in the morning until all hours in the evening, and I have seen and heard all that goes on in the house.

Q. Some of the waste was consumed by the guardians?—It was.

Q. I put it to you—it would be rather difficult for you to decide—you might see a man drinking beer, but it would be rather difficult for you to discover what particular beer he was drinking?—Oh! certainly; yes. But I think we had Whitbread's beer. We can tell the quality by that.

Q. This is the alcohol book. The bill was at its high-water level for the week ending March 10th—679 pints. How much did you order each man?—Half-a-pint to a pint a day, depending on his work. The women only got half-a-pint.

Q. On the week ending March 10th the total was 679 pints of beer. The next week it dropped to 383 pints, next to 227 pints; and then it went on several weeks running and dropped to 80 pints. Anyway, it has come to a dead stop?—Yes, and now it will be a cipher.

Q. I put it to you that occasions may arise in which you may think it desirable to order a man beer for medical reasons?—Yes.

Q. You have your sick ward beer besides?—Yes.

Q. To put it technically, you have your alcohol book here for the persons who are inmates of the house, and medical relief list, or your bed card, whichever it may be, for those in the sick wards?—Yes.

Q. Can you tell me approximately how much beer is consumed in the infirmary?—Very few pints indeed during the year, because I do not put them on that as a rule.

Q. Is alcohol entered in the medical relief book?—The medical relief book.

Q. Have you any considerable consumption of alcohol?—Not much alcohol.

Q. Are you suggesting that any pressure was put upon you to order alcohol?—Yes, I have been asked by the master of the workhouse to put more people on brandy in the sick wards than what I had put on brandy. I usually try to keep it down as low as possible, but some people thought it was rather low, and the master suggested that I should increase the quantity.

Q. Are you suggesting that the master was giving you advice as to the medical treatment of your patients?—Yes, he was, indeed.

Q. Did you accept that advice?—I listened to it, certainly.

Q. Why in the world should he ask you to give brandy?—I think he knows; he said Mrs. Cordery likes a little drop of brandy as well.

Q. What would be the amount of brandy that you would order in your sick ward. Half a bottle a week?—You could see by the books; we usually allow three ounces to every sick man or woman during the 24 hours.

Q. There are 20 ounces to a pint, are there not?—About that, sir. I forget exactly the measurement of the pint bottle.

Q. About one glassful?—Yes, about that. We give about three wine-glasses a day in milk during the 24 hours to people who are seriously ill.

Q. Now how is the brandy dispensed?—It is measured into measures. Supposing the sick ward gets three ounces to-day, it is put into a three-ounce vessel and measured and it is then put into a glass by the officer.

Q. Who is responsible for the waste?—I put it on the medical book. Three ounces or four ounces, whatever it is, and the assistant master gives it out from the store each morning.

Q. So that you know nothing about the waste?—Well, on one occasion I did see something happen. I ordered six ounces of brandy, and the officer saw me immediately after, and said he had only got four. I ordered six ounces of brandy and—

Q. It might have been a mistake?—Perhaps it was; I don't know. I immediately altered my book to four.

Q. Is there any consumption of soda-water and such things in the infirmary?—Formerly, soda used to be put on the book by order of the master.

Q. On what book?—Into the medical book. He said he would like a little soda, and the soda was put down.

Q. But the soda-water is a medical extra?—It is a mineral water.

Q. Do you get it in syphons?—Yes, syphons.

Q. Well, now, that would only come in by your order?—I simply put down soda in my book, or lemonade.

Q. Without specifying any quantity?—Yes, in some cases; but I think you will find, on reference to my books, that on some occasions, after I had inquired into the matter, I put down a certain number of syphons each day.

Q. How many would they be?—Two syphons a day.

Q. What did you do that for?—I saw a good number of syphons going elsewhere.

Q. I put it to you that in the first instance you ought to have ordered a definite number of syphons?—Yes, I think I should have done so. I think I should have put a certain number of syphons of soda for the sick wards, and then if there was anything wrong, then it was not my fault.

Q. Do you mean to say you were led to believe that persons other than your own patients were drinking that soda-water?—I do.

Q. And therefore you specified the quantity of soda-water more minutely than before?—Yes.

Q. What do you do now?—There is no soda and no lemonade, practically.

Q. Both soda and lemonade may be required as medical necessities for some of your poor folk?—The assistant master informs me that since I gave out the last order, last year, I think, he has got in a gross for me to put in my books.

Q. So that you did not order them?—I did not order them.

Q. That is 144?—I do not know how much there is now. He said he had got it from the steward.

Q. That was your last order for soda and lemonade?—It must have been last year—you will see that by the books. The entries were made weekly.

Q. Have you sufficient acquaintance with the soda-water business to know whether soda-water would deteriorate if kept in syphons?—It wastes considerably. It loses carbonic acid gas.

Q. Is there in the workhouse a scale of officers' rations?—I believe there is, sir; I once saw one.

Q. You don't have it now?—No, sir; I have not.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Are we to gather that you have been coerced by the master and the guardians into doing things against your better judgment?—Yes, sir.

Q. And that you have actually been coerced by the master and the guardians into breaches of the regulations of the Local Government Board?—Yes.

Q. You have, in fact, been forced to prescribe beer for able-bodied men, whereas it should only be prescribed for medical purposes?—That is so.

Q. Was it prescribed for all the able-bodied men?—Well, for the majority of them, I should fancy. There were a lot of privileges—those working with engineers, and also other people.

Q. They were favourites?—Yes, sir.

Q. Some of the inmates got more beer than others?—Yes.

Q. If you refused to give a man beer would he, in some instances, go direct to a guardian and complain?—Yes, he would.

Q. Can you give us an instance of that?—The inmates I knocked off beer would see the master, or else an individual guardian, about it and make a complaint.

Q. Can you give us any instances of that?—I cannot on the spur of the moment.

Q. Perhaps I can refresh your memory. Do you remember the case of a messenger who saw one of the guardians in North Street?—Oh! yes; I think I can remember that.

Dr. Lamont.

14 June.

Dr. Lamont.

14 June.

Q. What occurred then?—The assistant master—at that time Mr. Walton—came to me and said that Mr. McCarthy saw him and asked him to put a man on beer who was a messenger in North Street. The assistant master met me and asked me to do it. Of course, I demurred at that, as I did not like messages coming second-hand, but, after consideration, I saw that I had to do it.

Q. Did the assistant master say whether or not this messenger had been to Mr. McCarthy?—He said—I found at least afterwards from the messenger—he did not ask for beer at all, but a guardian thought he would favour him by giving him beer.

Q. So he gave it to him without being asked?—Yes.

Q. Now, doctor, you have told us that some of the provisions from time to time were not good, and that you had complained?—I got a lot of complaints from the inmates about the food, and also from the officers.

Q. You have heard the tenders read here, I suppose. Were you here on the last occasion?—No.

Q. You know that the best English ox-beef, and best English wether mutton is prescribed. Do you think that provisions of that high class have been invariably delivered under the contracts?—Well, I would not like to enter on that point, as it is for an expert.

Q. Did you have complaints?—Yes, I had complaints.

Q. And you inspected the meat?—I saw some of the bacon in rashers—sent in in rashers.

Q. Was that bacon that ought to have cost 11½d. a lb.?—No, it was not; I should not pay that for it.

Q. What do you think that bacon could be got for?—From a certain firm in the City at 7½d. per lb.

Q. Did you remember telling the master on one occasion that you could not conscientiously recommend beer to certain of the men?—Oh! yes, I do.

Q. Have you done that more than once?—On the first occasion it was when the master was ill—the first occasion I brought it up; I think that would be about 1900. The master was ill at the time, and the assistant master was acting as master. I had them off the beer on that occasion. The acting master sent for the chairman of the house committee. That was Mr. Bacon on that occasion.

Q. What happened then, doctor?—I was sitting in my room, and he came in and said, "Doctor, you are flying your kite far too high."

Q. That was Mr. Bacon?—Yes, Mr. Bacon said so, and he also said, "I shall see you put out at the gates."

Q. What did you gather from that, in plain English?—That I should have to put them on.

Q. What did you gather would happen if you did not put them on the beer?—That I should have a very hard time of it.

Q. I suppose, Doctor, it is not putting it too high to say that you and some of the other officials have had a hard time?—I think you can see that in myself, now.

(The Inspector.) You are an officer holding a life appointment. The guardians cannot dismiss you without the consent of the Local Government Board?—No, sir, they cannot.

Q. Or decrease your salary without your consent, or the consent of the Local Government Board?—No.

Q. You are practically in a position of independence. How, then, can you have had a hard time?—It would make my life miserable all the time to be nagging at me, and, if I might say it to you, Mr. Davy, Mr. McCarthy said that the Local Government Board had not the "inside" to fight the guardians.

Q. I put it to you that he said "guts"?—Yes, but I did not like to say that.

(Mr. Robb.) That is, before we started this Inquiry. You told us that when you made complaints about the provisions the master seemed to resent it?—Yes.

Q. Do you suggest that he never shielded the contractors?—No, he did not want me to have any say in the business at all. He thought he was master of the whole workhouse, of the whole surroundings of the place, and that I must not say a word.

(The Inspector.) He was, wasn't he?—He may have been, sir; he thought that I should say nothing.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you remember on one occasion a telephone attendant going to the master about the beer?—Yes.

Q. That was one of the arduous employments for which beer was prescribed?—Yes. I think it was when I knocked off about a hundred in one day, and made it into a smaller number than it used to be. They thought they were all knocked off, and one of the inmates approached the master and said to him, "Are we to have beer to-day?" I was behind him at the time—I don't know whether he was aware of it—and he said, "I'll take jolly good care you do have it."

Q. That was the master?—Yes.

Q. With regard to this waste, is the point that you make this—that the master pressed for extra consumption because it meant extra waste to play with?—I do.

Q. The more beer some of the inmates are allowed by you, the greater the amount of waste for other than the inmates?—Yes.

Q. Am I correctly stating the position?—You are correct.

Q. For instance, there is this 10 per cent. waste on beer. In practice, was there anything like 10 per cent. waste on beer?—I don't think so—it is not essential.

Q. That would mean sometimes as much as 70 or 80 pints a week unaccounted for, or written off as waste?—Yes.

Q. Do you know the beer cellar?—I do.

Q. Was it known as the "Madeley Arms"?—Well, it was known by other things; it was known as the "Horn of Plenty."

(The Inspector.) That is rather loose?—The inmates informed me that that was so.

(Mr. Robinson.) This is degenerating into a second-hand arrangement.

(Mr. Robb.) You had better reserve your comments; we are not in the police court.

(Mr. Robinson.) Mr. Davy, what we get now is a statement of the doctor that somebody told him something. According to all the laws of evidence, that cannot be admitted, even at this Inquiry. He is here to say what he knows—not what he has heard.

(The Inspector.) He replies that it was common rumour.

(Mr. Robb.) Was it common rumour throughout the workhouse?—It was.

Q. Have you seen the guardians drinking in the cellar?—I have seen them on their visits—general meeting days.

Q. You have actually seen them in the cellar?—Yes.

Q. Can you tell me the names of any of the present guardians whom you have seen there?—I have seen Mr. McCarthy there and Mr. Ford—I cannot go through all of them.

Q. No, give us three or four names; any ladies?—No, sir; the ladies have it privately, I think.

(The Inspector.) Oh! we cannot have that at all. That is not evidence, and ought not to be said.

(Mrs. Wilson.) I never have it privately, and Dr. Lamont cannot say I do.

(Mr. Robb.) And did you actually see them in the cellar drinking the beer?—Yes, I saw some of them.

Q. Is it true they were drinking from Mr. Madeley's private cask, or from the workhouse beer?—I do not know about that.

(Mr. Ford.) I missed that answer.

(The Inspector.) He says he does not know—he can't say.

(Mr. Robb.) Was there a counter in the beer cellar?—Yes.

Q. With a number of glasses on it?—Yes, a dozen or so glasses there.

Q. Always kept there?—Indeed.

Q. In the cellar?—Yes.

Q. Were any syphons of soda kept there?—The syphons were on the shelf.

Q. Now, was it customary for the guardians to visit that cellar every visiting morning?—Yes; I don't say all of the guardians.

(The Inspector.) Isn't it every Tuesday fortnight?—No; a weekly meeting on Tuesdays.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Which meeting?—The Poplar meeting; I don't know what you call it.

(Mr. Robb.) You have sworn, in answer to the Inspector, on the brandy point, that the master specifically told you he wanted you to put more patients on brandy because he wanted some for a lady.—Oh! yes.

Q. That lady being one of the guardians?—Yes.

Q. What was the general discipline enforced in the house by Mr. Madeley?—I don't think it has been very good during the past five years.

Q. In what respect has it been deficient?—The inmates only worked when they liked, and they could go to the master's room and swear, and use any filthy language they chose.

(The Inspector.) How do you know that?—I have seen them there, because his room is opposite mine, and I have heard them.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you know whether or not they were punished for that?—They were not punished at all.

Q. Have they ever used bad language to you?—Oh! yes; very bad language indeed.

Q. Have you complained?—Yes, I have complained very frequently to the master, but nothing was done.

Q. What would you say as to the amount of attention given to their duties by the master and matron. Were they unremitting in their attention?—Unremitting, I should say, on a good many occasions.

Q. You don't mean unremitting, you mean they were absent on a good many occasions?—Yes.

Q. Wasn't it the matron's duty to visit the sick wards?—Yes.

Q. How often?—Every day.

Q. What is the longest period you can name during which you did not have the privilege of seeing her there?—As much as three months.

Q. She has been absent?—Yes.

Q. Is there anyone else who could speak to that?—I think some of the officers may.

(The Inspector.) But the matron has been seriously ill?—I never considered that the lady got seriously ill at any time.

Q. Are you her medical attendant?—I saw her first of all, but not latterly.

(Mr. Robb.) It has been alleged that the matron was seriously ill?—Yes.

Q. Suffering from a nervous complaint?—Yes, neurasthenia.

Q. Has she been absent a very great deal from her duties and constantly away?—Yes, of course she lives inside the house, and we cannot tell whether she is on duty or not.

Q. Do you know whether or not she was well enough to go away and pay visits to the sea-side?—No, I cannot say.

Q. You have a number of patients in different convalescent homes?—Yes.

Q. Have some of them been there for years?—On the first visit I paid to some of the convalescent homes, some of the inmates had been there for years, five or six years.

Q. Were there people there who ought to have been discharged some time before?—I thought they remained far too long when I saw them.

Q. They were there far too long?—Yes.

Q. At the expense of the ratepayers?—Oh! yes, I suppose so.

Q. You thought that many of them had been kept there subsequently to a period when they might, in fairness, have been discharged?—Yes.

Q. Can you name any individual cases at the moment?—No, I could not mention them at the moment.

Q. Could you find out?—Quite easily.

Q. Did you suggest to the guardians that some of them should be sent back?—I always made a report to the guardians on each visit.

Q. Was that report acted upon?—No, invariably it was not acted upon.

Q. Was any pressure brought upon you in that matter?—I was asked by one of the guardians to keep them down there. As a rule I usually had a guardian to accompany me to see the patients. I was asked to leave them there.

Q. When you said there was no necessity?—Yes, after seeing all round.

Q. Who was the guardian who said that?—Mr. Bellsham.

Q. Was that after you had expressed your opinion as a medical man that they might be discharged?—Yes.

Q. After that Mr. Bellsham approached you to leave them there at the convalescent home at the expense of the ratepayers?—Yes.

Q. Did you ever write a letter or report suggesting that some should be sent back?—Oh! yes.

Q. Are those reports extant?—Yes, sir.

Q. You have spoken about Mr. McCarthy. Was he often at the house?—Yes, he was.

Q. Would it be right to say he was there all times of the day and night?—Yes, all times.

Q. Do you know, of your own knowledge, whether he had any meals there?—Yes, I do.

Q. What do you know?—I know he had his supper there.

Q. Was that a constant thing?—Yes; well, I saw him on one occasion; I called for him and he was in the middle of his supper. I saw him eating it.

Q. You actually saw him?—Yes.

Q. Was that in the matron's room?—In the matron's dining-room.

Q. Who was there besides Mr. McCarthy?—The matron herself.

Q. Anyone else?—No one else.

Q. What do you say generally as to the class of inmates who come under your notice. Do they recur every year, or are they people who come once and you do not see them again?—Oh! no, the same old ones from year to year—"ins and outs" we used to call them.

Q. The same old people?—Yes, ins and outs with a few new ones.

Q. I suppose they go out in the summer-time?—Yes, for probably a day, a week, or a month, and come back again.

Q. Do you know if any of them have money of their own?—They have informed me they can earn money outside, but they use it up and come inside.

Q. Have you heard of any officials selling small articles of any kind to inmates of the house—tobacco or anything?—Oh! yes; tobacco; that is the province of the cook.

(The Inspector.) What do you mean by that?—The cook sells tobacco and sweets—chocolate, &c.

Q. She sells these to the inmates?—Yes, they have a woman who goes round with a little sample box.

Q. So that the inmates have money to make these purchases with?—Oh! yes.

Q. And the cook keeps a shop outside—a sweet shop?—Yes.

Q. And brings stores in and sells to the inmates?—Yes.

Q. Do you consider that sort of thing conducive to good discipline?—No, I think it is very bad.

Q. Now have any cases come under your notice of inmates shamming illness in order to get in?—Oh, yes; any number of them. Of course, I cannot always tell them, but I always give them a second time, or a third time, so as to make sure.

Q. Do you know what is called "Kippers Leg"?—Yes.

Q. How many cases of that came under your notice in the house?—We have had three cases in the house.

Q. What is that?—It is where a man puts some foreign substance on to a sore—such as copper or any bronze coin—and re-opens it again.

Q. It is a form of malingering?—It forms a sup-puration.

Dr. Lamont.

14 June.

Q. That is more or less common isn't it?—There are only three cases I know of.

(Mr. Robb.) Does the question of outfits and pocket money for the inmates when they leave come under your notice?—Oh! no.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Pocket money, did you say?

(Mr. Robb.) It is true, is it not, that outfits and money are given to the inmates when they leave the house?—I don't know about the money, but I know about the outfits.

Q. Have you seen some of these people who have been given outfits come back soon afterwards without them?—I have seen some families where the little children who had left perhaps a week previously with a nice pair of boots come back without the boots; but I cannot say anything further on that matter.

Q. Have you been interfered with by any guardian in the performance of your duties?—Well, I don't think I can exactly say that, because I would not allow them, but they have certainly said things derogatory to my position in the house.

Q. Is the ordinary and proper course of things pursued in this house or not?—No, I do not think it is.

Q. Would you describe it as a model workhouse?—No, I would not.

Q. Do you consider that economy is studied in the administration?—No.

Q. I think you can tell us something?—I have been informed by one of the guardians who was chairman at that time—Mr. Bacon again—that "the more you spend the more the guardians will think of you."

(The Inspector.) There, again, I do not think.

(Mr. Robb.) I submit, sir, this is a statement of policy by a guardian to an official.

(The Inspector.) Yes, it only concerns him.

(Mr. Robb.) I submit that this is relative to the issue before you. (To witness.) At all events, that was said to you by Mr. Bacon—"the more you spend the more the guardians will think of you"—Yes.

Q. In your opinion, has that been the policy of the board generally, as well as Mr. Bacon?—I could not say that.

Q. Have you ever seen any of the contractors at the workhouse having refreshments?—I have seen Mr. Whitlock, the milkman, there on a Tuesday.

Q. He was the milk contractor?—Yes. Mr. Kirk, the lemonade contractor, and—

Q. Anyone else?—Mr. Pyle, I have seen him there occasionally.

Q. He is the ironmonger?—Yes; but not so often as the others.

Q. Were these contractors very friendly with the guardians?—Well, they always spoke to them.

(The Inspector.) Why should not the contractors come to the workhouse. Is it a suggestion that they are feeding at the workhouse?

(Mr. Robb.) My point is, sir, that the guardians, instead of holding the contractors at arms' length, are unduly familiar with them. I do not say more than that for the moment.

(Mr. Ford.) Perhaps you will proceed to prove it.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you seen contractors drinking at the workhouse with the guardians?—No, sir; I have not seen them.

Q. Have you seen any of them in the beer cellar?—I have seen them going there.

Q. With the guardians?—Yes.

Q. Who have you seen going there with the guardians?—The master took them down, or the assistant master took them down.

Q. Even assuming it was the master's beer, do you, as an experienced official, say it is proper for guardians and contractors to drink together in the workhouse.

(Mr. Ford.) I submit Dr. Lamont has not said he has seen them.

(The Inspector.) He says he saw them going into the cellar.

(Mr. Ford.) There is a big range of cellars there.

(Mr. Robb.) Would Mr. Whitlock, the milk contractor, have any business that would take him to the beer cellar?—No, I don't think he would.

Q. I should have thought not. Did you have anything to do with the cancellation of Mr. Whitlock's contract for milk?—No.

Q. Do you know it was cancelled for deficiency in cream?—I heard something of it, but I don't know anything about it.

Q. Are you able to offer any explanation of why, in a few months afterwards, Mr. Whitlock was reinstated as contractor?—

(The Inspector.) He cannot know that?—I don't know that.

(Mr. Robb.) The Inspector asked you on the general question of the provisions and increased cost of maintenance. You know that the cost per head per week has increased from 5s. 2d. in 1900 to 6s. 5½d. in 1905. That appears in the abstract of the accounts?—Yes.

Q. On page 46 for the year 1905. You can take that from me—an increase of 25 per cent. over 1900. I ask again whether you know, as medical officer, any such great improvement in the diet as would account for that increase?—No, I do not.

Q. When did you tell us this last gross of soda and lemonade was ordered?—I think it was ordered during some festive week. The assistant master will let you know. I did not order it at all.

Q. Have you never certified any of it for use?—No.

Q. So that we ought to find that intact?—Yes.

Q. You were asked about officers' rations by the Inspector?—Yes, sometimes the rations were exceedingly short. A great number of complaints have been made to me within the last month or two by the officers—by the night officers—that some of them have actually had to go on duty without having any food at all.

Q. But, doctor, the officers cost, according to the figures, something like a pound a week each?—I actually saw what was left of a large joint of meat, and there were three officers who could be brought forward who never had a supper at all and who had to work all night without food.

Q. Do you know how many officers there are on full board inside?—No.

Q. We were promised last time we would have this. I do not know whether we can get it to day. Can we have the figures?

(Mr. Crooks.) Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) You know, doctor, don't you, that the officers' rations have increased in the last ten years from £1,600 to £5,477?—That would be due to extra officers.

Q. That would include the schools, I know?—Yes.

Q. But even assuming that there are over 100 on full board, that would allow a pound a week each?—Yes. My opinion is there are 79 or thereabouts.

Q. From what you have seen of the rations, ought they to cost anything like a pound?—No.

Q. A pound a week is rather a liberal allowance for ordinary food when supplying a number of people?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) How do you know it is a pound a week?

(Mr. Robb.) We don't know; it is an assumption on the figures. I cannot tell definitely until I get the proportion of the officers on full board.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I suggest you wait until we get it.

(Mr. Robb.) I have asked for it for a week. (To witness.) Do you know anything about the use of the ambulance by Mr. Bacon that was spoken of by Mr. Jacobs this morning?—I did not hear what Mr. Jacobs said. I was not here.

Q. Mr. Jacobs said that the ambulance belonging to the workhouse was used for some private cases in which Mr. Bacon was interested. It was suggested to Mr. Jacobs that, under some arrangement with the London County Council, the ambulance had to be used in any case of emergency or accident. Has the matter come under your notice?—No.

Q. Have you ever had to complain of the absence of the ambulance?—Yes. The officer in charge of the

ambulance often complained that he had to go to Mildmay Park—or some name like that, at Hackney—to do something else for the district.

Q. He often complained of it?

(The Inspector.) Has he done so to you?—Yes, often.

(Mr. Robb.) Did he say by whose directions he had gone?—Yes, by Mr. Bacon's.

Q. Did he say it was a case of emergency or accident?—No, sometimes he said it was an ordinary case that might have walked in without an ambulance at all.

Q. Did the officer actually tell you that?—Yes.

Q. Would it be too much to say that broughams and things of that sort were supplied on the slightest pretext?—

(The Inspector.) Again, how does he know that?

(Mr. Robb.) Do you know anything about the provision of broughams?—No, it is not in my department, but I have heard a great deal.

Q. I do not want what you have heard—only what you know. Do you know anything about the provision of broughams at the stations. Are broughams sent to the railway stations when men are returning from convalescent homes?—As a general rule, the officers who bring the men back from convalescent homes hire a brougham at the station.

Q. But does it take an officer to bring a man back from a convalescent home?—That is the order of the board, I understand.

Q. Suppose the man is not returning to the house, would an officer be sent then?—Yes, to his private address.

Q. Do you seriously say that, Doctor?—Oh! yes.

Q. Suppose you sent a man to a convalescent home at St. Margaret's Bay, Dover, and he is discharged as convalescent, and going back to his own home. Do you mean that an officer is sent from the workhouse to take care of him, and take him to his own home?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Would that be one of your officers—one of the ambulance officers, either male or female. Are they people who are trained nurses in any way?—They have had some amount of sick knowledge.

Q. Have you to provide them. Are they under your jurisdiction?—No; the master's.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you keep a dispensary in the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. What do you keep there?—Oh! a lot of things.

Q. Have you anything particularly interesting in mind—I see you smile—what is there of any particular interest that you keep?—Cough drops, probably.

Q. Have your stores ever been commandeered by anyone?—Well, the general rule was that the officers, from the master downwards, thought they had free access to my surgery. The master had a private key with which he could get in and help himself.

Q. And the mitron has a duplicate?—Yes, and the assistant master has one as well.

Q. In case the master might be out, I suppose. Did they, in fact, help themselves?—The master nearly ended his life there.

Q. How did that unfortunate incident come about?—(Some laughter.)

(Mr. Crooks.) Why do they laugh if it was unfortunate?

(Witness.) He was in the habit of having a tonic in the morning, and I had a bottle of very strong poison—prussic acid—and I put it alongside the bottle I had that he used to help himself to.

Q. A bottle of tonic?—Yes, a pick-me-up—just a tonic.

(The Inspector.) What is there an ordinary person would wish to have out of a doctor's shop?

(Mr. Robinson.) Prussic acid!

(Witness.) He thought he knew all about drugs, and helped himself to this one after having had it previously; he knew the bottle, and I had a bottle which was a facsimile of the one he had been having his tonic from, and he got hold of it. I happened to notice it, or else the man would have been dead.

(Mr. Robb.) He helped himself to some prussic acid instead of tonic?—No.

Q. Prussic acid instead of pick-me-up?—

(Mr. Crooks.) That was knock-me-down then!

(The Inspector.) What is the bearing of this?

(Mr. Robb.) Have you supplied any of the guardians with drugs or medicine, doctor?—Oh! yes; the guardians thought they had a right to have anything out of my surgery.

Q. Claimed the right?—Claimed the right, of course; the surgery was an open door.

Q. Did any come in and help themselves?—Yes.

Q. What did they help themselves to?—Oh, cough drops.

Q. And that was claimed as an absolute right?—Yes.

Q. Who by?—

(Mr. Lansbury.) Might we have the names?

(The Inspector.) I am waiting.

(Witness.) Mr. Bacon, Mrs. Cordery—I cannot name them exactly, sir. I may mention that I have not given anything out of my surgery for a year or two now.

(The Inspector.) But these are small things.

(Mr. Robb.) I submit that the whole of this administration is made up of small things. It is the cumulative effect of these.

(Mr. McCarthy.) May I intervene. It won't take two or three minutes. You have said, Dr. Lamont, that pressure was brought to bear upon you to give inmates beer. That is so?—Yes.

Q. And you have instanced a case where you allege that I influenced you to give some beer to an inmate?—That is so, sir.

Q. Do you know the age of the inmate?—The man is outside now.

Q. Do you know his age?—That doesn't matter.

Q. Yes, it does matter about the age. I want to point out that the man is a messenger, 66 years of age, and I am charged with the terrible crime of influencing the doctor to give him a pint of beer. If I am guilty I am prepared to plead guilty, but I do not remember the particular incident. But this man whom I am charged with influencing Dr. Lamont to give beer to, is 65 years of age, and works from 9 to 5 as a messenger at these offices. I would like to ask you if any guardians have expressed want of confidence in your skill as medical officer of the workhouse?—No, but I think—

Q. Simply answer the question?—They have not expressed it in the board room.

Q. They have not?—Oh! no.

Q. Take your mind back. Did you appear before the house committee previous to the last one?—Where.

Q. The workhouse committee. You can remember when I had supper; you must remember this?—You had so many suppers—I don't remember.

Q. Do you remember appearing before the house committee with reference to the case of sending Nathaniel Hewson to the sick asylum?—Oh! yes.

Q. Do you remember that it was a subject of complaint—rather from the sick asylum—that you had sent this man there, and that he was absolutely discharged from the sick asylum as soon as he got there as quite fit to go to work?—But mind you, Mr. Chairman—

Q. Don't embellish—I will do that?—

(Mr. Robb.) I submit that the witness should be allowed to answer.

(Mr. McCarthy.) I ask a fair question, sir. If the question is improper, you will please correct it.

(The Inspector.) What was it?

(Mr. McCarthy.) Does the doctor remember a case being brought before the house committee with reference to sending Nathaniel Hewson to the sick asylum with alleged fracture of the ribs. That is so, isn't it?—I am not going to answer that unless you ask me to do so, Mr. Davy.

(The Inspector.) You can give an answer, and explain it?—Yes, if he lets me explain it. Yes, I remember the occasion. The man alleged he had been run over by a vehicle outside the workhouse. He came in, and was sent to the sick asylum, and within 48 hours the medical officer discharged him from there; and the guardians thought I had no right to send him there at all. You see, it is a matter of discretion, and I have the discretion to send them anywhere I choose from the workhouse.

Dr. Lamont,

14 June.

Dr. Lamont,
14 June,

Q. What is the date?—It is not long; I think I can find out.

(Mr. McCarthy.) Two or three weeks ago?—I should like to say that the guardians want to get a grip at me. On every little matter they want me to have no discretion in the house at all.

(The Inspector.) But the guardians think very highly of you, giving you this testimonial?—Yes, for last year; I don't know about this year.

(Mr. McCarthy.) I put it to you, that you sent this man to the sick asylum alleged to be suffering from fractured ribs; whether it was fractured ribs or not, you alleged it?—I don't think I did, because I had not proof.

Q. Do you agree that he went to the sick asylum?—He went, no doubt.

Q. And was discharged from the sick asylum on the following day?—I don't know about that, because I have never seen him since.

Q. In connection with the case, do you remember telling a guardian in the committee room that you thought the medical officer of the sick asylum was wanting in courtesy to you in returning the man before six months?—I did not say that. I said that a medical man who discharges an alleged sick patient from any hospital within 48 hours is acting unfair to himself, because it might be something more serious.

Q. Do you remember saying to Mr. Anderson, in answer to Mr. Anderson, that the doctor of the sick asylum was guilty of discourtesy to you in not retaining that man there for six months?—No, it was a sort of *sotto voce*. Somebody behind me said "six months." "How long should he be there for observation?" A guardian behind me said "six months." I said, "Oh! no; it need not be six months."

Q. Then you don't remember making that statement; you don't remember answering Mr. Anderson in the affirmative with reference to the question?—No, I never said six months.

Q. Do you remember Mr. Anderson turning to you then in the committee, and telling you he would not trust you to look after his cat?—No, I do not think Mr. Anderson ever said so.

(Mr. Anderson.) He did.

(Mr. McCarthy.) I will put Mr. Anderson in that chair. Mr. Anderson is a guardian.

(The Inspector.) Is Mr. Anderson a medical expert?

(Mr. McCarthy.) No, but I want to prove that some of the guardians have no confidence in Dr. Lamont as a medical officer.

(Mr. Robb.) Is that a sample of the guardians' courtesy in the matter?

(The Inspector.) I am bound to read this now:—"12th May, 1905. This is to certify the guardians have pleasure in testifying that Dr. Lamont has, throughout this period, carried out his duties in a very satisfactory and efficient manner." (Some applause from the public.)

(Mr. Crooks.) This is a very serious matter, sir; we are not being tried by the public assembled; we shall be judged by the evidence presently. As far as I am concerned, speaking personally, we adhere to that testimonial, but individual guardians may have differences of opinion.

(Mr. McCarthy.) That is what I want to bring out.

(The Inspector.) But this is signed by yourself, Mr. McCarthy.

(Mr. McCarthy.) Of course, you quite realise that in the position of chairman you have to sign—to bow to the will of the majority. I will take the witness to another case. Do you remember Catherine Sullivan?—I know that lady well.

Q. When did you come back from your holidays last year?—I forget. June or July—July probably.

Q. July or August. Anyhow, it is immaterial?—It would be at the end of July or the beginning of August.

Q. We will say the first week in August. This woman was in the sick ward suffering from a bad eye—sent there by your *locum tenens*?—Yes.

Q. And on the 8th August you decided she should go to the sick asylum. Do you remember that?—I remember it well.

Q. Did not an old woman, who was practically blind, beg of you to send her to the body of the house, and did you not say to her that you would not do anything of the sort, she would have to go to the sick asylum or out of the house?—That is not so.

Q. Tell us what you did say?—On August 8th I saw her, and she was suffering from a contagious and infectious disease of the eye, with a suppuration, and the woman might have lost her sight. I ordered that she should be sent to the sick asylum for further treatment. All that was in my power to do.

Q. I do not dispute that?—She said she would not go. I said, unless you go, you can't go into the body of the house.

Q. But the point is, you would not keep this unfortunate woman, suffering, in the sick ward, but rather let her go in the street than go in the sick ward and be attended to?—That is for her to do.

Q. She told you she could not go to the sick asylum because she was waiting for a letter to go hopping?—Nothing of the kind. The woman did not like the sick asylum; she did not want to go to the sick asylum at all. That was why. You will see by another document the diagnosis of the case.

(The Inspector.) Is this Poplar workhouse, or the sick asylum?—That is the sick ward card sent to the medical officer, coming from me—ulcer of the cornea.

Q. Highly contagious?—And, according to the Local Government Board Orders, it must go to the sick asylum.

(Mr. McCarthy.) You say, doctor, that the guardians were putting pressure upon you with reference to giving beer to the inmates and altering the dietary?—That is so.

Q. I believe you attended the committee at the end of March with reference to the alteration in the dietary table?—I did.

Q. And you told the committee this—that you would not carry out their wishes?—No, that is not so. I will just let you know what I said. I told you I would not carry out any illegal order of the board of guardians.

Q. All right; that was in March?—Yes.

Q. And was my statement that the Local Government Board had no guts?—That is what you said.

Q. Was that subsequently to it?—No, it was said several times.

Q. Was that in March?—You said you would never believe in the Local Government Board at all.

Q. That was in March?—Yes.

Q. And that pressure was being exercised on you right up to then. Did you have any correspondence with Mr. Lough subsequent to that date?—I said to Mr. Lough that I should be quite willing to carry out any orders of the board, providing I was able to do so; that is the classification of the inmates.

Q. Let me read to you what you said on the 3rd April when the pressure was being brought to bear upon you:—"Union workhouse, Poplar, E. 3rd April, 1906. Dear Sir,—I should be glad if you could inform the guardians that, upon consideration of what took place at the meeting of the workhouse committee on Wednesday last on the subject of the diet of the inmates, I feel I gave a wrong impression by speaking of diets instead of classification. What I wish to convey was that the Local Government Board Order placed on me the responsibility of classifying all inmates of the workhouse for dietary purposes. However, I understand, that it is the wish of the guardians that all persons above the age of 60 years should be placed in one of the classes for the infirm; and I beg to say that, in this matter I am quite willing to comply with the guardians' wishes. I should like to add that if anything I said under excitement, at the meeting or since, has given offence to any of the guardians, I greatly regret it, and trust that they will accept my apology for the same. Yours faithfully, J. Lamont, medical officer." Was any pressure put on you to write that letter?—No, not to write the letter.

(Mr. Sumner.) I should like to ask the medical officer if he can give any reason why he knocked the men's beer off who were working in the stoke-hole, trimming Welsh coal, and kept the beer on his own men?—

I can do that, because the men working with the Welsh coal were not working at all. I say, Mr. Davy, I have gone through the whole of the workhouse, and have seen what each man individually did; and I found that most of the men engaged at the coal-siding were practically loafing half of the day; and, mind you, Mr. Davy, all the young men are getting an ounce of tobacco at the present time.

(Mr. Lansbury.) That is not true, sir.

(Mr. Crooks.) That is a mistake.

(Witness.) It is only a waggon of coal now and again, and just every other day, or something like that.

(Mr. Sumner.) More than that!

(The Inspector.) He has given an answer.

(Mr. Sumner.) It is not satisfactory to me. But I want to ask the doctor if he remembers the man who was cleaning out boilers in the stoke-hole, and got fixed, and had to be drawn out of the flues by men working in the stoke-hole. He was called upon by the men to attend to the man, and absolutely refused. Is that the position of a medical officer of a workhouse?—Mr. Sumner, was that a pauper?

Q. No?—Then you have nothing to speak about.

Q. For a man to be absolutely dying—and he refuses to go to his assistance. (Interruption among the public.)

(Mr. Lansbury.) It is Mr. Robb's pals. I wish it was a public meeting.

(Mr. Robb.) I am sure no one will join me more heartily than Mr. Lansbury in asking for order, and I ask

of anyone here who is a member of the alliance that they will follow the good example set by Mr. Crooks's friends, and refrain from any disorder. We had a little show of enthusiasm on the first occasion. Mr. Crooks and Mr. Lansbury kindly and properly intervened—we have had none since, and I trust there will be no exhibition on the part of those for whom I appear.

(Mrs. Wilson.) I want to ask, doctor, if you have ever seen me taking refreshments—beer or brandy—in the workhouse?—No.

Q. Do you know if it was supplied to me in a private room?—No.

Q. Did I ever come to the surgery for stuff?—No.

Q. Or tonics?—No.

Q. Or any kind of medicine?—No. Nothing like that.

(Mrs. Wilson.) Thank you.

(Mr. Robinson.) I shall have some questions to ask.

(Mr. Crooks.) Will you let me have my cross-examination to-day, and Mr. Robinson to-morrow?

(The Inspector.) I will adjourn, or I can go on.

(Mr. Robb.) May I suggest, if I am not troubling you, it is now ten minutes past four; we cannot possibly finish the witness to-day; I would ask you to adjourn till to-morrow. From eleven to four of this sort of thing is quite enough.

(Mr. Watts.) I would like to ask, am I one of the guardians who have had tonics in the surgery?—No.

(Mr. Crooks.) I want to know, sir, whether it is possible for us to expedite this Inquiry, because you will see how very serious it is. We have been now three days, and we have not had a chance of dealing with the industrial and financial conditions of the borough.

(The Inspector.) I am glad you have mentioned that subject. This Inquiry interferes greatly with the work I have to do, and it would be good for all concerned that we should get through it as soon as possible. Last week we settled two days' a week for the Inquiry. Don't you think we could put on a third—Wednesday, Thursday and Friday?

(Mr. Robb.) I am sorry I could not attend. I made my arrangements on the basis of the two days, and have an appointment for Wednesday.

(Mr. Robinson.) I hope you won't make it on Wednesday. I shall have to appear for the master; it is serious

for him, and I have regular court days on Wednesday and Friday, and I have already given up Friday.

(Mr. Ford.) I suggest Monday.

(The Inspector.) We will mention it again to-morrow.

(Mr. Robb.) I think three days the week after next will be convenient to all of us.

(The Inspector.) I think really we might do a good deal by quickening up the evidence if we can—asking as few questions as possible—and getting to the real subject.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Couldn't we have copies of the statements, and we could hand in our statements, and you could put the questions straight away.

(The Inspector.) We will consider that. I have no doubt, after what I have said, we shall be able to come to an arrangement.

FOURTH DAY.

Friday, 15th June, 1906.

DR. J. LAMONT; recalled, and further examined.

(Mr. Robinson.) Doctor, I think you told the Inspector yesterday that you had ceased to make any complaints in the complaint books after October, 1903?—That is so.

Q. Was that complaint, speaking from memory, with reference to some sanitary matters?—I think it was.

Q. And I think you said the guardians had taken the opinion of the master as against yours?—That is so.

Q. And for that reason you ceased to carry out the direction of the Local Government Board to make complaints; is that so?—That is so to a certain extent.

Q. Well, to what extent did you make complaints. I understood you to swear yesterday that it was since 1903. To what extent is it so?—The Orders of the Local Government Board are these: Any complaint I make must be made in my report book. I have made no report in my book.

Q. Although there were frequent occasions on which you ought to have done so?—There may have been.

Q. But were there?—I do not say so.

Q. Well then, when did this question of the beer arise?—That has been on since, I daresay, 1898.

Q. But then certainly since 1903 you had things to complain of—the excessive allowance of beer?—Oh, no.

Q. No?—No.

Q. Not since 1903?—You will find that in my book.

Q. Is it in the complaint book. Did you make a complaint?—There are never complaints made about the beer. (Laughter.)

(The Inspector.) Let us have none of that unseemly applause: it is so silly.

(Mr. Robinson.) There is a good deal that is silly about it, but it does not affect me.

(The Inspector.) The medical officer would not complain about the beer because the amount of beer ordered is clearly within his discretion?—Exactly.

(Mr. Robinson.) I take it the whole of the beer allowed to the inmates was ordered by you?—It was not ordered by me.

Dr. Lamont.

14 June.

Dr. Lamont.

15 June.

Dr. Lamont
15 June.

Q. Then I do not quite gather what the Inspector said, because I understood him to say it would be ordered by you?—Have you seen the book?

Q. That is not the question. I understood the Inspector to say that the quantity of beer would be ordered by you?—Has it been ordered by me?

(The Inspector.) It is in the book I suppose?—You will see by the book it is put on for extra labour.

(Mr. Robinson.) Exactly, but I want to know whether you agreed to that?—I did not.

Q. Then why did not you complain?—Who to?

Q. The guardians?—The guardians knew of it.

Q. Very well. How many temperance guardians are there out of 24?—Well, a good number, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) I am going to object. If my friend holds a brief for the guardians, well and good. But this cross-examination is not cross-examination on behalf of Mr. Madeley. It is cross-examination of a general character, going into the administration. If my friend says he appears for the guardians I am quite content. If every person who appears for an individual is going to take his cross-examination into the whole question we shall never be done.

(Mr. Robinson.) My answer to that is that the allegation against my client by Dr. Lamont was that he coerced the doctor into allowing more beer than was necessary. That is the point I am on, and, if that is so, it was the doctor's duty to have complained. I submit that I have never gone outside the province of defending Mr. Madeley. I leave to the guardians their defence, but I submit that my question is a proper one and ought to be allowed. Now, doctor, if you thought that too much beer was being allowed under your orders, you being coerced into it, why did you not complain against the master to the temperance members?—The temperance members rather like the men to have beer.

Q. You say that upon oath?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) That again is a matter for the guardians.

(Mr. Robinson.) I only ask for this reason. The suggestion is made against the master that for some purpose or other he asked for and insisted on having more beer?—That is so.

(Mr. Robinson.) I am glad you confirm what I am putting to the Inspector. Therefore, I am entitled to ask Dr. Lamont why he did not object to it. I won't prolong this Inquiry I can assure you, because I am a busy man.

(The Inspector.) He said he did not, any way.

(Mr. Robinson.) No, he did not. (To witness.) Did you ever complain to the Local Government Board Auditor that too much beer or brandy was being allowed to the inmates?—I have never seen the Local Government Board Auditor.

Q. You could have seen him if you liked?—I do not think so.

Q. And you did not complain to the Local Government Board?—Certainly not, but remember that I sent a letter in last year asking to see the Local Government Board Inspector relating to these matters, and I have only seen him now.

Q. Who did you send it in to?—The Local Government Board.

Q. Well, you cannot complain to the guardians about that?—Oh no, but it was referring to the general matters of the house.

Q. And the Local Government Board did not think it was necessary you should see him?—No.

(The Inspector.) We sent down two Inspectors specially to interview Dr. Lamont.

(Mr. Robinson.) Quite so, sir, but he says he was not allowed to see them. But that does not much matter. Now with regard to the extra brandy you were coerced by the master into allowing for the inmates. How much do you think that would amount to in a week?—I cannot give it to you offhand, because I have not my books. The books will give that.

Q. We have got it from you that your usual allowance was from two to three ounces for a man or woman per day?—Three ounces per day is allowed by the medical profession for a sick man or woman.

Q. How much more beyond those who were actually sick did you allow?—You will see that by the book.

Q. In what book would that be?—The medical relief book for several years back.

Q. Will that show you how many more ounces you permitted to be asked for over and above what was required?—Nothing was granted unless I thought it was essential.

Q. Well, but then, doctor, really I am astonished, because you certainly gave everybody the impression yesterday that the master had coerced you into allowing brandy more than sufficient for what was required?—That is not correct.

Q. Well, I am glad to hear you say so?—The master asked me to put them on, but I did not do it.

Q. Surely, but you suggested that you did yesterday. I have no shorthand notes unfortunately, but it is in my memory that you did suggest that the master coerced you into doing this?—He tried to do so, but I did not allow him.

(The Inspector.) He did not say those words, he said "used pressure."

(Mr. Robinson.) With the greatest deference, sir, in answer to Mr. Robb, he used the word "coerce."

(The Inspector.) That was referring to the guardians, not the master.

(Mr. Robb.) I have got a note here. What he said was that the master pressed him to put additional patients on brandy because a certain lady wanted more.

(Mr. Robinson.) He said "I have been coerced into committing breaches of the Orders by the master and the guardians."

(The Inspector.) Now, Mr. Robinson, what is the object of all this? The man has been dismissed and his pension has gone.

(Mr. Robinson.) Well, sir, but he has been attacked very seriously.

(The Inspector.) He has, but what is the use in these circumstances of pressing minute details like this?

(Mr. Robinson.) I submit the whole evidence consisted of minute details which when examined come to very little, but, if you say the master has been judged already before this Inquiry, it is useless for me to stay here wasting my time and his money.

(The Inspector.) It is not a question as to whether the master has been judged. It is a question whether he comes under section 7 of the Superannuation Act.

(Mr. Robinson.) Surely he has got a character beyond the mere question of pension.

(The Inspector.) You can say what you like so far as the master's character is concerned. We prefer he should have something said for him. But it seems to me this is pressing this sort of question on the witness in a way that will lead to very little.

(Mr. Robinson.) With great deference I submit to you this. That the whole course of the examination yesterday by Mr. Robb was directed against the master, and that the doctor showed the greatest animus against him. There is a reason for that because I believe they have not spoken for months.

(Witness.) I have no animosity against the master; I never had.

(Mr. Robinson.) Never had any animosity against the master?—No.

Q. Well, your attitude yesterday was a signal contradiction of that.

(Mr. Robb.) Will my friend confine himself to the master.

(Mr. Robinson.) If you say, sir, it is useless my doing anything on behalf of the master, I shall at once sit down and take no further part.

(The Inspector.) If the master desires evidence to rehabilitate his character I have no intention of putting the slightest obstacle in the way.

(Mr. Robinson.) That is a question for the master. I will have a talk with him afterwards. I will finish with the doctor and then consider the question with him, because I am not going to waste my time or his money in taking part in this Inquiry, if it is useless. (To witness.) You stated yesterday that the master permitted swearing in his room. That is an attack upon the master. Why do you suggest that he permitted the inmates to swear in his room?—Because he was afraid of the inmates.

Dr. Lamont,
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15 June.
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Q. Why was he afraid of the inmates?—He had no discipline. He did not know how to treat the inmates properly. That was why he could not order them back as he should have done as master of the workhouse.

Q. So you suggest that the master was intimidated by the inmates. Was that it?—I cannot say that, but the inmates used any language towards him and he could not do anything to them. He could not act as he ought to have acted—to have charged them and sent them to Arbour Square.

Q. Can you give me any reason for that, doctor. Can you give me any reason why you make that statement?—If an inmate swears to any officer, it is right of that officer to have him charged immediately.

Q. Do you suggest really that every inmate that swears in the workhouse should be charged at Arbour Square?—In a certain way he ought.

Q. What do you mean by a certain way. Supposing a dozen men swear in one day, do you suggest that they should be taken to Arbour Square?—What sort of swearing do you mean?

Q. That is a question for you. Do you suggest that every man who did that should be sent to Arbour Square?—I should give them 60 days' hard.

Q. You say, yes?—Yes.

Q. I should like to know what would be said of the master if he took up five or six or ten men each time?—I do not care if there were 100 men.

Q. I see, you do not care if there were 100. Did you ever point out to the master the character of the meat you objected to?—We have often spoken about it.

Q. Did you point it out to him. What do you mean "Often spoken about it." That is not an answer. Did you point out your objection to the meat?—I have often said the beef tea was not of quality.

Q. But I am talking now about the meat and the inferior quality of the meat you spoke about yesterday. Did you call the master's attention to it?—That was not mentioned yesterday.

Q. Your memory is very bad?—I have a very good memory.

Q. "I notice the meat was sometimes hard in fibre and coarse." Do you say you did not mention that yesterday?—The meat was hard in fibre.

Q. Will you answer either way. You have just made a direct contradiction. You now swear you did not mention the fibre and the quality of the meat yesterday?—I did not put it that way.

Q. I took your answer at the time?—That I said meat?

Q. I certainly say meat?—Yes.

Q. "I have inspected the meat"?—What sort of meat?

Q. You were asked by the Inspector about mutton, whether there was any meat more expensive than that?—Now you have mentioned mutton.

Q. Is not mutton meat?—No, it is not meat.

Q. What is it?—It is food.

Q. Well, now, doctor, do you really mean—I mean your evidence has to be accepted that mutton is not meat but food. But it is not really worth while wasting time about it. Is that the way you have got up your evidence?—You have wasted the time.

Q. Yes, no doubt I have because no doubt you know a great deal more than I do; but this class of evidence—mutton is not meat but food—I put it to you, you said this meat was sometimes hard in fibre and coarse; did you call the master's attention to that?—Why should I?

Q. That is not the question. I ask you whether you did. You were the medical officer?—But I had nothing to do with the food in the house.

Q. Why did you inspect it if you had nothing to do with it?—Could I not look at things?

Q. Certainly you could. But you must have looked at it with an object?—Oh, no, I never look at things with an object.

Q. Not even a patient, I suppose?—Oh, don't I. I am not going to give myself away on that point.

Q. I am not asking you to give yourself away. I am asking you to do what you have volunteered to do just now, to give the truth?—What do you want to know about the meat?

Q. I want to know with what object you inspected the meat. Was it to know whether it was up to quality or not?—I will let you know that. I think it will satisfy the Court. As I was making my round I saw people sitting down eating. I could not help observing what I saw.

Q. Very well, and you have found it hard in fibre, coarse and so on. Did you point that out to the master?—Why should I?

Q. Was it fit for the inmates?—I am not going to say that.

Q. You won't say?—It is not in question.

Q. But, I beg your pardon, was it the master's duty?—We have not attacked the master on that point.

Q. Was it his duty to see that the meat came up to standard?—It was.

Q. Very well. Why did you not say to the master—"This meat is not fit for the inmates because it does not come up to the standard"?—Was it part of my duty?

Q. If you inspected it, yes?—I did not say I inspected it.

Q. Well, you won't go further than that. Just one moment and then I shall have finished. About this prussic acid. Do you really suggest that the master was nearly taking prussic acid?—Why should you ask me?

Q. I am entitled to ask you?—I do not see why.

Q. I do not mind whether you see or not. In what sort of bottle was it kept?—In a poison bottle.

Q. And you caught him in the act, about to drink from a poison bottle?—Yes.

Q. Can you give me any reason for that?—Well, I was making up my mixtures. He was in the habit of coming in to see whether I had made up my mixtures or not.

Q. Well, now?—Listen, please.

Q. Oh, yes, I am?—And while I was making up these mixtures he came to help himself to his usual mixture, but happened to catch hold of the prussic acid bottle, and I looked round and saved his life.

Q. Oh, I see. And was the usual mixture in a bottle similar to the prussic acid bottle?—They were both poison. He was in the habit of taking one marked "poison."

Q. Do you mind telling me what that poison was?—It contained morphia.

Q. And it was of the same character as the other?—But not so strong.

Q. And yet you suggest that he took prussic acid in that poison bottle?—He did not ask me to give it to him, but I just got hold of it in the nick of time, or he would not have been here to-day.

Q. Now, doctor, let me ask you one question. You said yesterday, you know, that you had carefully watched the house because you were there from half-past ten in the morning, I think you said, to all hours in the evening?—I did not watch the house at all.

Q. Well, you observed it?—No, I did not.

Q. Oh, you did not observe?—

(*Mr. Robb.*) The doctor said he could not help seeing.

(*Mr. Robinson.*) Then, if you could not help seeing, you did not observe. How many inquests did you attend in the course of the year?—I have it in black and white. The average number of inquests was nineteen during the past four years.

Q. How many during last year?—Nineteen during the past four years.

Q. Nineteen each year?—No, that is the average during the past four years.

Q. Well the average would be nineteen a year?—Nineteen.

Q. Then if you use your average that would be nineteen a year?—For each year.

Q. I said so. Nineteen a year. How long were you away on these as a rule?—Oh, well, why should we discuss that?

Q. But I want to know. You were away from the house?—And why should I not be away from the house when I like?

Q. That is a matter for you and the guardians to discuss?—No, it is not at all.

Dr. Lamont.

15 June.

Q. Did you get a fee for the time you attended inquests?—Why should I tell you that?

Q. You are the champion of the ratepayers and I want to know what becomes of those fees. I am entitled to ask you what becomes of those fees?—They go into my own pocket.

Q. Although you receive a very good, I won't say large, but a very good salary, from the guardians?—An exceedingly small salary, Mr. Robinson, for the work.

Q. How much?—£330 a year.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Lough, is the medical officer entitled to receive the fees?

(Mr. Lough.) The matter is under the consideration of the guardians at the present time.

(Witness.) Mr. Lough does not know: I have legal advice on the matter.

(Mr. Robinson.) As a matter of fact the guardians have demanded payment of them?—They may demand it, but they will never get it.

Q. That may be?—Yes.

Q. Once more that shows animosity in your evidence?—There is no animus at all.

(The Inspector.) With reference to the statement as to the brandy, that you made yesterday?—Yes.

Q. I think you said pressure was put upon you to order brandy for the benefit of one of the lady guardians?—Yes.

Q. Did you as a matter of fact, order that brandy?—I did not order it.

Q. How then did you know that it would be for the benefit of that lady guardian?—The master said that Mrs. Cordery was in the habit of taking it.

Q. Was Mrs. Cordery there?—No, she was not.

Q. Then what you said was really not evidence at all?—It is only what the master said.

Q. The sole effect of what you said then was evidence against the master?—Yes.

Q. As showing that the master put pressure on you to order brandy?—Yes.

Q. As far as Mrs. Cordery is concerned there is no evidence whatever?—No, sir, not at all.

(Mr. Crooks.) I want to ask one or two questions about the management of the house so far as it affects the guardians. I suppose that sweeping allegation yesterday about the guardians taking no notice of you would not apply to me?—Mr. Crooks, I must say this about you, that you have always been a gentleman to me.

Q. And every time you have had cause of complaint, I have always done my best to deal with it?—Yes.

Q. I thought it was rather a sweeping thing to say, because whenever there has been anything very serious the matter I have always said to you, "Well, you can come to me as chairman of the board and I will see what I can do in the matter," and from time to time we have arranged such things?—Unfortunately when there was anything of a nasty nature on you were not always there, Mr. Crooks, you see, or I know there would have been other suggestions made.

Q. As a matter of fact, when that little incident did happen, I think I did come and see you about it and smooth matters out?—About the beer?

Q. About the beer?—Oh, yes, you came over and saw me and then we arranged matters, and you promised to come over again but, unfortunately, you did not come.

Q. But, as a matter of fact, you know perfectly well, my sympathies were entirely with you with reference to the beer?—Yes, I cannot say anything about that.

Q. There was one admission yesterday which was rather a reflection on the guardians. I think you said it was of little use your making any reports to us, that we did not take action in the matter. I think that came out. As far as 1903, the last entry in the book, is concerned, we won't quarrel about it, but it was some time ago since you made an entry in the book with reference to the convalescent homes. I do not know whether you know, but you were asked to go there because the guardians would not trust to their own knowledge as to whether a case ought to come back or not?—Yes.

Q. And we sent you, but it was not reckoned within the four corners of your duty to go there?—Oh, no.

Q. You have made several reports, have you not, about convalescent patients, and invariably your reports have been acted upon?—Yes.

Q. So it was rather a mistake to say we took no notice, when we acted upon your reports?—I heard afterwards there was a good deal of discussion about my sending them back rather early, you know, Mr. Crooks.

Q. Yes, but as a matter of fact, we did carry out your wishes?—To a certain extent, yes.

Q. I have got extracts here from the report you made, "I am of opinion a further stay at the seaside is required for" patient named. In another case, "I should give this patient a further stay." And then certain patients had to return; in every case we accepted your reports?—I do not go against anything I have written out.

(The Inspector.) Can I see that book, Mr. Crooks?

(Mr. Crooks.) Yes, sir. (To witness.) I want to ask you about the dietary, if you please. You have been long enough with us to know there have been several alterations in the dietary scale since you have been medical officer?—Yes.

Q. Dr. Downes, I think, came and settled the dietary scale just before you came, somewhere about 1897 or 1898. And that dietary it was pointed out by him at the time was 2½ times more than was given to the British soldier?—Yes.

Q. What happened then. There was another Commission held in 1900 at which Mr. T. W. Russell presided?—Yes.

Q. And then the dietary scale was again amended. Do you remember that?—Oh, yes, I do.

Q. And, as a matter of fact, the amended dietary was a little worse than the one that had been in existence before?—Well, I do not know. You see there were a lot of varieties brought in at that time. The last one gave the guardians a variety to choose from.

Q. That is it gave us various things, but we did something that even the new Order did not allow, that is to say, we knocked the old people's afternoon tea off?—Oh yes, but then we had it put on again.

Q. Yes, but after, well, I will come to that in a second. I want to ask you whether you really think, quite apart from cost, our people are too well fed?—Is that a direct question?

Q. Oh, yes?—Well, they may not be too well fed, I don't think they are, Mr. Crooks. I think they are having enough.

Q. Because it will be put to you about the prices. You have nothing to do with that?—No.

Q. Do you think they are too well clad?—They are well clad. They are simply well clad—comfortably I think.

Q. You would not, as a medical officer, advise us to in any way lessen the clothing they get?—Oh, no.

Q. Nor the food?—No.

Q. Now do you remember an additional Order that was issued authorising tea or coffee and sugar and milk being supplied to the infirm, in addition to the ordinary diets?—I remember that, but I was very sorry it was thought of because it has made a lot of meals in the afternoon. We are having the meals rather frequently.

Q. As a matter of fact, it was a Local Government Board Order?—It made a lot of them ill drinking tea.

Q. And naturally caused additional expense?—Oh, yes, certainly it did.

Q. Yes. Well then, we were speaking about mutton yesterday. In June, 1904, there was an amended dietary scale substituting roast beef for barley soup. Do you remember that barley soup?—Well, yes, the soup was put on on my orders, and I learnt afterwards that the chairman, Mr. McCarthy, altered the diet without asking me about it, and the people were having roast beef a long time before I knew it.

Q. You see that would render us liable to a surcharge by the Local Government Board?—Well, it was so.

Q. But did it get the approval of the Local Government Board?—Afterwards it did, but I was not aware. I only found out a long time after they were having it, because the Monday diet was soup.

Q. Just now you said you did not think they were too well fed?—Oh, no, I do not think so, but I think the soup was nice for them.

Q. There was one answer you gave to the Inspector or to Mr. Robb yesterday, to a question as to whether you thought the present dietary ought to cost more, and you answered you did not think it ought to cost any more?—I do not know the exact prices at all. It was known by quantity.

Q. As a matter of fact, it cost £1,239 more?—Yes, that may be so.

Q. That was the additional order we got to allow that to the aged and infirm. Now I want to take you to another point. It will seem a little hard perhaps for a temperance man to ask you this question, but about persons over 60 who were originally on the able-bodied diet?—Yes.

Q. Are you aware work was done on the infirm diet?—I do not think we had an able-bodied diet formerly. Are you speaking of before 1900?

Q. I am speaking of the course of a year. A little while ago you complained about pressure being put upon you to put a person above 60 on infirm diet and not keep them on able-bodied diet?—That is since 1900.

Q. No, no, it was this year?—Yes, I mean since 1900.

Q. Did you put persons over 60 on infirm diet this year, this week or to-day?—Yes.

Q. How many of the persons above 60 were on able-bodied diet?—I was aiming at this. I thought it was not fair for the guardians to tie my hands in the case of diet for the inmates of the house. I could put them on anything I liked, independent of the guardians, so far as it was honest, but the guardians tried to tie my hands, and say you must do this, and that was a thing I could not stand.

Q. That is only in reference to people above 60 years of age?—60 years and upwards.

Q. And more because you put a man on infirm diet and he asked to go back to able-bodied diet?—The man was ordered milk and beef tea; it would be a sick diet.

Q. Now about the beer. You know my sympathies have always been with you, but the consumption went up to something like 300 pints did it not?—I cannot give it to you exactly. It was a considerable quantity.

Q. As a matter of fact, we have 1,500 inmates?—Yes.

Q. The average would come out to about 200 pints. Some were put on for work and some were put on for medical comforts. Was that so?—There were exceedingly few put on so far as medical comforts went. But what I was sorry about was this, and I think I have often expressed it to you—if all the favourites are to have beer, why should not the whole of the old people have beer?

Q. Yes, I think there is good argument in that, much as I should like to see the whole lot done away with?—Either all should have it or none at all.

Q. There is one observation I do hope you will qualify or say it was a mistake. That was that nearly all able-bodied men were on beer; surely that cannot be true. If it is, I think it is a misfortune?—The able-bodied? Well, there were not three; with the exception of a very few all of them had very slight ailments. Often we are asked to say what is an able-bodied man.

Q. I know. I do not want to go into that for a minute because about 400 persons are classed as able-bodied, but we know the lame, the halt, and the blind, the paralyzed, and the wooden-legged man are classed as able-bodied if under 60. What I wanted to bring out is that almost all the able-bodied men you incidentally remarked were on beer. As a matter of fact the maximum ever reached was 300 pints. That leaves a very small margin. You say there were 400 able-bodied men and 300 pints. What became of the sick and infirm. Did not they get any?—They got a little of the beer, certainly, but not much. In the sick wards we used more brandy or wines than beer.

Q. With regard to men on beer. There were four men, I suppose you would call them able-bodied, in the tailor's shop?—Yes.

Q. One 77, one 74, one 59, one 54?—Yes, I saw them all.

(Mr. Crooks.) I do not think I have anything else to ask you.

(The Inspector.) Is there anyone else who would like to question the doctor?

(Mr. Ford.) I think you will admit that you and I have always been on fairly friendly terms?—Except in the committee room.

Q. That is a very good answer. I am pleased to have that answer because the board was there—in the committee room, I mean. But personally and individually, however much we may have differed in the committee room, we have been on fairly friendly terms?—I want it to go forth to the public that I have nothing against the guardians in the way of animosity, nothing at all.

Q. I think you will also admit that, personally and privately, I have never in any possible shape or form tried to coerce you?—Well, of course, I get my—

Q. Leaving the committee room out now?—I get my orders sometimes second-hand, you know; you go down to the engine room and say—

Q. Now, don't let us have a second-hand answer. Have I, personally, ever endeavoured to coerce you?—Oh, no. I must admit that.

Q. That is right, thank you. Have I ever interfered or endeavoured to interfere with you, in any possible shape or form, in the carrying out of your duties as a medical officer?—Except in the committee room, that is all.

Q. That is a matter of opinion, is it not?—Yes.

Q. Yes, that is so. Is it a fact that you have on many occasions invited me to accept your hospitality?—In my house?

Q. Yes?—Certainly, sir; I think it is but natural one should do so.

Q. That is so, thank you. And on many occasions have I availed myself of your generosity?—We do not want the public to know that.

Q. But I do not mind it going out, sir?—I do not think it is in dispute, you know. I would not press it.

Q. You will admit you have accepted me, on your invitation, as your guest, in your house, at least on two occasions?—That is not in dispute.

Q. But I want to get at this, doctor, that when I have been in your house you have entertained me with refreshments?—Yes.

Q. And you would not, of course, think there was anything improper about that?—Oh, no. That was simply on friendly terms.

Q. What was the most recent occasion on which I have been in your house, doctor?—I should say about the New Year time.

Q. Since the resignation?—Oh, yes. You saw my wife, and not myself, except for a minute, and then I was called away.

Q. Do you remember what time I was in your presence?—Yes, about five minutes, and then I was called away.

Q. Well, I think I may claim we were friendly enough for you to be able to present me with your photograph, doctor?—Oh, well, there is nothing in that.

Q. The point I want to make—the admission I want to get—is that as an individual I have never endeavoured to coerce the doctor in any possible shape or form. Is that so?—Would you like to see the photograph, Mr. Chairman?

Q. It is in the wig and gown. I think you gave me that when you got your degree?—

(Mr. Watts.) Is that impounded?

(Mr. Ford.) You cannot see anything improper in my accepting your hospitality on one or two occasions?—Oh, no, no.

Q. Would you see anything improper in accepting the master's hospitality on one or two occasions?—Whereabouts?

Q. Anywhere?—In his private house?

Q. I have never accepted it in his private house?—Why not?

Q. Because I have not felt inclined to do so?—Where did you go?

Q. That is not the point. You are cross-examining me now. Would you see anything improper in my accepting the hospitality of the master?—Oh, yes, I would.

Q. More so than yours?—Yes, most certainly.

Q. Where would you draw the distinction?—I had nothing at all to do with the contractors, nor with the guardians. You had and the master had. Therefore it was a breach of discipline for you to be with the master so frequently as you have been.

Q. You think so?—Yes.

Dr. Lenoir.

15 June.

Dr. Lamond.

15 June.

Q. I think you said you had seen me in the beer cellar?—I have seen you there, and have seen you go there every day during the past seven years up till recently.

Q. Every day during the past seven years?—Up till recently.

Q. Every day during the past seven years, doctor?—Yes, sometimes more than once.

Q. You have seen me go in that direction, I understand you to mean?—Yes.

Q. Are there any other stores in that direction?—Yes, there were some important stores there.

Q. Yes; but, of course, you are alluding to the beer stores. Let us be perfectly frank?—That is where you went to.

Q. That is not the point. I am going to candidly admit that, so we don't want to thrash that point out. Are there any other stores down there?—There are one or two, but I don't think any of them would cause you to go down there.

Q. That is not the point. Are there any other stores down there?—There is the ice store. I don't know whether you go there or not; there are also the potato stores and the coal stores.

Q. What other stores?—And the clothing stores. The matron's clothing.

Q. Any dry-goods stores there?—Yes, there is the matron's stores.

Q. Oh, I do not mean the matron's. Is the hardware store down there?—Oh, yes.

Q. It would, therefore, be within the bounds of possibility that I might be visiting some of those other stores?—Yes; but, unfortunately, I have seen you going up to the beer store.

Q. Yes, that is all right. Have you seen me in the beer store drunk?—I won't say drunk.

Q. With the door open?—With the door closed.

Q. Were you inside the door?—No, but I had occasion, as you know yourself—

Q. I have already admitted that. Have you seen me drunk in the beer cellar?—I have seen you with a glass in front of you. Whether you were drinking or not, I cannot say.

Q. Was the door open or shut?—The door was always shut when the guardians were there.

Q. How can you explain?—I had to go in to see Mr. Walton, or the master, about something or other.

Q. That is how you came to see me?—That is so.

Q. On how many occasions would that be?—I cannot enumerate them. I have not got any book. I was not a spy.

Q. There are a lot about. Some are not paid and some are. Well now, doctor, do you suggest that I ever drank any beer that was paid for at the ratepayers' expense?—I cannot say that.

Q. Will you tell me what is the class of beer allowed to the inmates of the workhouse?—Well, I do not know whether it is S.S.S. or bottled. It is black stuff.

Q. Is it porter or stout?—It is black stuff.

(The Inspector.) What do you call "black stuff"?—I do not know what you call it—black liquor.

(Mr. Ford.) I take it the doctor has prescribed this. He should know?—Yes, but I did not see this.

Q. Is it black porter?—No, I think it is called stout, S.S. or S.S.S.

Q. Now, doctor—

(The Inspector.) I see the guardians contract for two sorts of ale—in barrels, 36 barrels, clear of grounds. Is that for the officers?—The officers get no liquor, sir.

Q. Then there is "stout S.S." for the house and the sick. Which did you use in the infirmary?—Only one kind.

Q. Is it stout or ale?—Stout, not ale, sir.

(Mr. Ford.) It is in contract and called for only once—at Christmas. Now, doctor, I want to ask you, would you take my most solemn assurance that I never drank a glass of stout or porter in the workhouse in my life. Will you take my word for that?—I don't think I can.

Q. I shall have to give that evidence on oath, sir. I can do it. I want to make it perfectly clear. I have never drunk a glass of stout or porter in the workhouse

in the course of my natural life, and as for the doctor seeing me go there daily for the last seven years, it cannot be correct. You have got my record of attendances there, and it is not every time I went into the house that I went into the administrative part. I think, therefore, you will admit that one part of the doctor's account cannot possibly be true. He says he had seen me there every day for the last seven years.

(The Inspector.) In that I think it is quite clear the doctor must be misinformed, because the average number of your attendances during the last six months was four and a half days a week.

(Mr. Ford.) That would be equal to nine in two weeks.

(The Inspector.) Equal to nine in two weeks.

(Mr. Ford.) So that my average visits to the workhouse all told for all purposes, was nine a fortnight. It would not be possible for you to see me down there daily for the last seven years?—When you were, of course, I mean. I could not see you if you were not there.

Q. You don't suggest I drank if I was not there?—You went down several times with any other guardian that would go down. You were always willing to go down with any other person. I am not putting it strong, you know.

Q. I ask you once again if you can take my word that I never drank a glass of porter or stout in the house?—Why did you go down there at all?

Q. That is immaterial just for the moment. I am putting that one question?—I shall leave you to say that in the box.

Q. Have you had any reason on any other occasion to doubt my word in any statement I have ever made?—I don't think it is in dispute at all.

Q. Do you question my word?—It is only wasting my valuable time.

Q. Now, doctor, you have stated that a good deal of coercion was brought to bear upon you both by the master and the guardians, and that you absolve me from any personal coercion?—Are you for the master now or yourself?

Q. I am speaking to you.—But are you for yourself or the master?

Q. I am speaking for myself at the present moment because I happen to be on my feet, and you made a statement yesterday that the master was compelled to give beer to the guardians in order to get his salary increased?—What about that?

Q. That was your statement?—What about it.

Q. You admit you made that statement?—Yes, I do.

Q. Would you like to suggest you have invited me and other guardians into your house and entertained us. Would you like it suggested that that was your object?—Oh! no, I never got any rise in my screw. It was always cut down.

Q. I see. When were you appointed?—1898.

Q. And what was your salary when you were appointed?—It was even more than it is now.

Q. What was your salary when you were appointed?—£100 a year.

Q. What is it now?—£300.

Q. Thank you. And we have not increased your salary?—Listen now. You have been taking off fees.

(The Inspector.) I do not think this is of very much importance. The witness says you have not increased his salary, which was formerly £100, and is now £300. There is clearly a mistake somewhere—the salary was with emoluments. Now it is without emoluments.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Yes, house, rent, gas and coal.

(Mr. Ford.) When you were appointed you were appointed at £100 a year as a residential officer, and your apartments then consisted of two rooms?—

(The Inspector.) Are you suggesting this increase of salary was due to the hospitality given by him?

(Mr. Ford.) Not at all. I want to utterly repudiate the suggestion as only a suggestion emanating from the doctor.

(The Inspector.) I have to suggest how the evidence will read.

(Mr. Ford.) And I have got to consider the suggestions based upon the doctor's statements. He has just made a statement that his salary has not been increased, but that it has been decreased since he has been here?—I have not said decreased, so be careful.

Q. You did say decreased just now?—Be careful.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Will you put us clear on that point, Mr. Davy.

(The Inspector.) I do not quite understand Dr. Lamont. On the 10th June, 1900, he got £300 and unfurnished apartments, and on the 28th April, 1902, he commenced a salary of £330, and then he had no emoluments. It would appear from this your salary increased £30 on 28th April, 1902?—On paper it is an increase, but formerly my fees were more.

(The Inspector.) I think you need not pursue the suggestion that the guardians may have given Dr. Lamont £30 more because of his hospitality.

(Mr. Ford.) I want to go further because it has been asserted we have been harsh and unfair to the doctor, that coercion was brought to bear upon him, that his salary was not raised, and a lot of things have been alleged against us. So I am going to endeavour to prove that the board have been very generous indeed with the doctor, that if we have been extravagant at all it has been in the direction of the medical officer. (To witness): You admit that when you were appointed you were appointed at £100 a year?—Yes.

Q. As resident medical officer with two rooms?—Yes.

Q. You were a single man then?—Yes.

Q. You are a married man now?—I am.

Q. I think you will admit that the guardians spent something like £5,000 in buying a piece of land for a house for residential quarters for you?—Which was not worth it.

Q. That is not the point. You will admit they did spend something like £5,000 in buying this land?

(The Inspector.) You are not suggesting that the Poplar Guardians would go to the extravagance of spending £5,000—

(Mr. Ford.) I am going to admit we have been very extravagant in the doctor's case.

(The Inspector.) But you are suggesting this is for the personal benefit of the medical officer?

(Mr. Ford.) Yes, sir, I do.

(The Inspector.) It is a most unfortunate admission.

(Mr. Robb.) I should like to know whether Mr. Crooks agrees with that?

(Mr. Crooks.) I certainly do not.

(Mr. Ford.) Well, I have got one admission, the admission that his salary has been increased, and we have given him every consideration. (To witness.) It was also part of our contract to find your wife and family a residence. We have always done it, have we, or have we not?—It was your duty to supply me with a house according to contract.

Q. I am not so sure about that?—But I have it in black and white.

(Mr. Watts.) I want to ask one question with regard to the convalescent homes. I suppose the doctor knows patients sent to the convalescent homes stay there a good time. I think he stated, yesterday, some years. Does the doctor know that for some time past the guardians have had a committee which goes thoroughly into these matters to see the patients are not staying there over their time. I am asking from the point of view of administration?—I notice recently you sent some back without asking my opinion about it. Formerly I used to be sent down, now I am not, so of course I cannot enter into it.

Q. We are bringing them back?—You are bringing them back.

Q. Formerly the patients were down there for a number of years?—For five or six years.

Q. Yes, and now we are bringing them back after a suitable time?—I suppose you are suiting yourselves. Of course, I don't know anything about it.

(Mr. Anderson.) You know me, doctor?—I do.

(Mr. Anderson.) And I know you.

(Mr. Crooks.) Do not do that; ask a question.

(Mr. Anderson.) Well I am going to ask a question. What I was going to ask was if ever I brought any coercion to bear on you?—Well, the only thing I can say about you, Mr. Anderson, is this: You did not treat me as a gentleman in the committee room on the last occasion.

Q. Perhaps I had reason to do that?—I don't know, but you must always remember I am a gentleman.

Q. I always address a gentleman when I see one?—Well you saw one there on that occasion.

(The Inspector.) Now, now.

(Mr. Anderson.) I did not intend to be personal, simply to tell the doctor I knew him and he knew me. It may be there is some little ill-feeling between the two of us?—I have no ill-feeling now.

Q. In consequence of a remark I passed in the committee room. I had my reasons for doing it, and I am still of that opinion?—And why should you say it, although you don't know me.

Q. What I want to ask you is: Have I ever, at any time, come to you to bring pressure to bear on you to deviate from the ways you laid down yourself?—I don't know why you passed the remark you passed yesterday, because I did not know you, so far as that goes. I have seen you, certainly, and I do not see how it—

Q. I say it honestly and conscientiously now?—He does not know me either as a doctor or anything else, except by sight—

Q. Yes, I do?—And yet he said I was not fit to cure a cat.

Q. It was in consequence of what you told me at the committee room?—No.

Q. We will clear that matter up. Do you remember what you said at the committee that evening?—I remember everything.

Q. Do you remember saying when you were asked why that man was sent to the sick asylum you were sure you were right in doing so?—But I am always right when I send people away.

Q. You are always right in your own estimation?—Well!

Q. Other people have their opinions?—No other person must have an opinion.

Q. What did you tell me when I asked you what you thought about the other doctor sending him back again, seeing he was not a suitable patient?—I told that to Mr. McCarthy yesterday.

Q. Well, you do not mind telling me, do you?—Would you like me to tell you again and the general public.

(The Inspector.) Tell me, don't tell the general public?—Suppose, sir, that a man meets with an accident, as he alleges; is it correct for a medical man to discharge him within 48 hours except at his own risk, because there might be something more serious in the case than what was seen at first.

Q. What was it all about?—The man was run over across the abdomen. It might have been a ruptured spleen, a fracture of the ribs or a ruptured liver.

(Mr. Anderson.) What was your diagnosis?—Injuries caused by being run over. You will see it in print.

Q. And what was the diagnosis of the other doctor?—I have nothing to do with it.

Q. It is very important because it all has some bearing on the guardians' opinion of your capabilities as a medical officer?—

(The Inspector.) We are not going into that now.

(Mr. Anderson.) Did not you say in that committee room that if he had any professional courtesy in him towards you he would have kept the man there two or three weeks?—No, they are not the exact words.

Q. What did you say?—I said the man was foolish in discharging a man alleged to have met with an accident within this time because it might have reflected upon his medical reputation.

Q. Was it not rather the other way about?—That is the correct thing.

Q. Was it not rather the other way. Did not you talk of professional?—No.

Q. Did not you say there was professional discourtesy?—There is no courtesy between medical gentlemen at all.

Dr. Lamont.

15 June.

Dr. Lamont.
15 June.

Q. Is there no such thing as professional etiquette?—Oh! no, we want to do what is right.

Q. You have got an attendant, have you not, doctor?—Whereabouts?

Q. To attend on you?—Where? Give the specific charge.

Q. Have you got an attendant or not?—I don't know about an attendant. I have got a messenger, if that is what you mean.

Q. Call him a messenger if you like?—Yes.

Q. What is his dietary scale?—Now, at the present moment?

Q. Yes, up to recently?—The ordinary house infirm diet.

(The Inspector.) Class 2?—Class 2.

(Mr. Anderson.) Since when?—Since four or five years back.

Q. What is his age?—Sixty-six, or something like that.

Q. Would you consider his duties attending on you any more arduous than those of the poor old chap at the telephone from 9 in the morning until 11 at night?—No, I do not think they are. I am not very hard on my men.

Q. Oh, no, I give you every credit for that. I do not think he is over-worked. I will give you credit for that. But is it not a fact that he has beer?—He has had beer since before I came here. All the messengers have.

Q. And you continued it?—Yes.

Q. Do you think it was right and proper?—You will see by the book it is right.

Q. Why did you continue it. Did you agree with it or not?—You will find by the book.

(The Inspector.) Is the man there now?—Yes.

Q. Has he had beer all the time?—Yes.

Q. But he is over 60?—Yes. He is suffering from some form of disease. He cannot eat the ordinary meat of the house, and he is now on the special diet.

Q. What is the matter with him?—Rheumatism and dyspepsia.

(Mr. Anderson.) And that is why he cannot eat the ordinary diet of the house?—He can eat mutton sometimes.

Q. Is beer a good thing for rheumatism?—We are not going to enter into that.

Q. I want to know whether beer is good?—You want to know too much, Mr. Anderson.

Q. I think that is rather an important question?—I wish you would not ask that.

Q. But I want to know?—I decline to reply.

Q. You decline to say whether beer is good for rheumatism or not. Do you think it is a fit thing to order beer for a man suffering from rheumatism?—Why should I not. I can do what I like.

Q. Of course you can. I am conceding all that to you. I want to know whether you think it is the right thing to prescribe beer for rheumatism?—You are wasting my time, really.

Q. Of course, the Inspector will take note of your opinion, and possibly your opinion that beer is good for rheumatism may have some bearing on the remark I passed in the committee room. I do not want to labour the question of the convalescent homes, but you might tell us at once, was it not at the guardians' direction you went to the convalescent homes to see if there was anybody who should be sent back?—It was a written order from the clerk.

Q. Do you blame us for doing that?—Well, I don't blame you at all.

Q. Do you think it was extravagance on our part to send you down there?—Oh! no, I thought it was exceedingly good of you to do it, because I could bring in my medical skill down there.

Q. What do you think our object was in sending you to examine these people?—I cannot go into that because I do not know the secret minds of the board.

Q. You don't suppose we sent you there for the benefit of your health?—I only go by order.

(Mr. Lansbury.) What was the order?—I got directions from the clerk to go down and see the people down there and send a report back.

Q. As to what?—As to whether they should be sent back or not. Of course, I cannot enter into it.

Q. That was your order, the written instructions of the board?—Yes.

(Mr. Anderson.) We ask you to go down and report on the cases with a view to finding out if there were any sufficiently well to come back?—Yes.

Q. Do you think we were doing this to waste money, Don't you think we were trying to save?—I do not know.

Q. What other object could we possibly have had?—A servant must never think when he gets an order. He must act.

Q. There has been a great deal of thinking lately?—When I was asked to go there, of course I had to go.

Q. Can you tell me how many people you recommended to come back that we have not brought back?—It is in black and white.

Q. You made a statement here yesterday, and I want to know how many people you have recommended to come back which we have not brought back?—It is in black and white. I made no statement so far as that goes.

(Mr. Lansbury.) The report shows.

(Mr. Anderson.) I want to know how many were not brought back?—I do not know how many were not brought back.

Q. Do you know whether there were any who did not come back when you recommended they should?

(The Inspector.) You would not know if they did not come back into the workhouse?—Sometimes I did not see them at all.

(Mr. Anderson.) You say you do not know whether they came back or not; do you think you are a man to be believed when you make a statement the same as you did yesterday, that they were not brought back when you recommended they should be brought back?—Did I say that?

Q. Most decidedly you did?—I give it up.

Q. I think you ought to?—

(Mr. Robb.) My note is that the doctor said he was pressed to keep people at convalescent homes who ought to be discharged.

(Mr. Anderson.) I have a distinct recollection of the doctor saying his recommendations were not carried out; that he recommended men to be sent back and they were not sent back?—Your recollections are not very perfect since yesterday.

Q. But I am as much interested in the questions as you are.

(The Inspector.) I have got it down that he said the paupers were kept at the homes a great deal too long and his report was not acted upon in all cases.

(Mr. Anderson.) His report, I say, was that some of them should come back and that his report was not acted upon. I ask you whether I am right or whether the doctor is right. I am directing my questions for the express purpose of questioning his capabilities, Mr. Davy. I am not going to mince matters. (To witness.) When did you first have any coercion put upon you?—Where?

Q. I say, when did you first have any coercion in any shape or form brought on you by any of the guardians?—You will have to mention a specific case. That is a general statement.

Q. You made a general statement—I am asking a general question?—I think he should make a specific question of it.

(The Inspector.) I think you can answer it. You are asked when coercion was first brought to bear on you for beer or anything else. Let us say the beer?—When Mr. Bacon was holding sway in the house.

(Mr. Anderson.) When was that?—When he was chairman in 1900 or 1899.

Q. You don't suggest Mr. Bacon brought any pressure to bear on you about the beer?—Well, I think I gave it in evidence.

(The Inspector.) He not only suggests it. He says so.

(Mr. Anderson.) Are you aware that Mr. Bacon is a life-long abstainer?—I do not know. Of course that is something out of my authority. I am not going into personalities. I don't wish for any personalities at all.

(The Inspector.) You are asked whether Mr. Bacon is a life-long abstainer, and you say you do not know?—I do not know anything about it.

Dr. Lamont.
15 June.

(Mr. Anderson.) Yes, it is all right. Of course you are opposed to any extravagance in policy on the part of the guardians. You have constituted yourself, evidently, the champion of the ratepayers?—Oh! no, I have not.

Q. And you intend to keep down all expenses wherever you can, is that so?—Oh! it is not so, because I have simply minded my own business.

Q. Yes?—That is all I have done.

Q. As a matter of fact, did you ever make any complaint about the guardians until about the early part of last winter?—What about?

Q. As to being coerced. You had been interfered with in the exercise of your duties. Did you make any complaint prior to last winter?—I said since 1903 I have made no report at all.

Q. Then you have not been carrying out your duties?—I always have carried out my duties.

Q. But why should you not report?—Why should I report?

Q. Are we to infer that because something you wanted done was not done in 1903, you have thrown the sponge up, to use a common phrase?—But if I had nothing to report?

Q. Oh! that is the point. But you are leaving us to infer you have had reports to make which have been neglected?—I have made no statement to that effect.

Q. Really your opinion is rather different from most. What we want to ask you now is, as a matter of fact, when was the first time you asked for that stove to be fitted up in the hall of your house?—Some years ago.

Q. How long?—Since the house was built.

Q. How many applications have you made?—I have made a lot of applications.

Q. How many?—Well, I have made them to the master of the workhouse.

Q. How many direct applications to the committee have you made?—I should say three or four.

Q. Do you think that was a necessary thing, to have a stove fitted in the hall of your house?—It was a most necessary thing to my health.

Q. Were you going to sit down there or what. Did not you get a fire and fire-place in all the other rooms of your house?—Yes, but I did not want to waste the ratepayers' coals.

Q. Oh! that is why you wanted another stove, because you did not want to waste the coals?—No, we wanted one fire so as to save half a dozen fires.

Q. And a fire in the hall obviated the necessity for a fire in the sitting-room?—No, it would have warmed the whole house.

Q. A fire in the hall?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Are these questions put to test the credibility of the witness? I tell you they won't have much effect upon me.

(Mr. Anderson.) I want to show the animus inspiring the doctor, because he could not get a stove fitted in the hall of the house?—I have got a stove.

Q. Well, then you have no business to have it, and it is against the orders of the board?—Listen, my dear sir, and I will tell you the history.

Q. I want to know?—I will let you know the history of this stove.

(The Inspector.) Answer the question. You have got the stove, now give the explanation?—I saw Mr. Pyle and ordered a gas stove valued at £1 1s. It was not, I think, a very expensive stove. I got the stove sent in and a week or so afterwards I saw Mr. Pyle, and I said to him, "Please send my account for £1 1s. for that stove." He said, "Why the stove has been already paid for by the master." So I said, "Well, that is rather good business."

(Mr. Anderson.) When did you get the stove?—Only the other month or two; I ordered it myself, valued at £1 1s.

Q. Do you think that was an honourable thing to do?—What to order a stove?

Q. Knowing that the board had had this matter of the stove before them and had refused to allow you to have it; do you think it was right to accept that stove

from a contractor, under the conditions, knowing the board did not intend to allow you to have it?—Why should I not have a stove in my private house?

Q. That is not the point?—Well, what is the point?

Q. The point is this: You make an application in a straightforward manner to the committee and the committee tell you quite straightforwardly they would not grant it?—Why?

Q. Because they did not think it necessary?—No, it was not that.

Q. What was it?—Prejudice on their part.

(Mr. Robb.) They are putting things on to you. Don't you say more than you know.

(Mr. Anderson.) Now, I ask you. Do you think that was an honourable action on your part, when the committee had told you point blank they would not grant this stove, to accept the stove under the conditions just mentioned?—Should I order a suit of clothes without asking your consent?

Q. Certainly, but I should expect you to pay for it?—I offered to pay for it, but it had already been paid for.

Q. You know now that stove has been paid for at the ratepayers' expense?—I am willing to pay for it now.

Q. That is not the question raised?—It was paid for by the master. Whether it—

Q. You don't care so long as you got the stove?—Listen, whether it had been sanctioned by the committee I do not know.

Q. You don't know. My suggestion is the doctor is prejudiced against the board because certain things he has asked for have not been granted. We have refused him several things. The stove is one instance, and now—I don't know whether the remainder of the board know this—but this matter of the stove wants going into a little further?—The stove is only £1 1s.

(The Inspector.) The situation is perfectly clear, as he has said. He wants a stove and applies for it. You say "No." He makes it again. He must have a stove, so orders one, intending to pay for it. When the stove comes in he tenders payment, and the contractor says himself he is paid for it already. "All right," he says.

(Mr. Anderson.) If he takes exception to the extravagance of the board, why did he not report that case to us?

(Mr. Robb.) May I make this suggestion?

(The Inspector.) May I make a suggestion. The guardians are in an unfortunate position. This Inquiry goes on. Statement after statement is made, widely beyond the question, and a bad impression is created about the guardians. The guardians' time for answering will come. Now, what I do want individual guardians to do is, not to put questions of this sort, which go into the Press and create an unfavourable opinion which cannot but be unfair to those other guardians, for some of whom I would willingly go bail myself. That is what I think of such an episode as this stove. It will be the laughing stock of every newspaper in the country.

(Mr. Anderson.) Yes, but little things like that influence some people. That is my point. One other question and I am done.

(Mr. Robb.) What I want to ask is this: Instead of wasting all this time discussing a stove, let us have a return showing not only the stove, but all the other articles, outside the contracts, that have been purchased from Mr. Pyle and other contractors. Let us have a proper return of these articles on the same lines as at West Ham. It will save an enormous mass of evidence if you will say the tenders, the contracts, the deliveries and the extras outside the contracts for the last three years shall be thoroughly investigated on the part of the Court.

(The Inspector.) At the present moment I do not propose to make any further suggestion.

(Mr. Robb.) That would cover the stove and anything else.

(Mr. Anderson.) I do object—

(Mr. Robb.) Because I understand other matters will be inquired into afterwards.

(The Inspector.) As to the extras, I am not sure whether we could get them.

Dr. Lamont.
15 June.

(Mr. Robb.) I am only anxious to save time, because if I am to call individual contractors we shall never be done.

(The Inspector.) I have already a clerk in the outside room getting these things out, and we will have a conference as to what we can actually get from the books. In that, I am sure, I shall at all events get the support of Mr. Crooks.

(Mr. Crooks.) Hear, hear.

(Mr. Anderson.) What I suggest is that the questions I am putting do not involve a waste of time. My name was mentioned during the Inquiry yesterday, and I am speaking as a guardian, and to be told by the gentleman who criticised us—

(The Inspector.) I beg your pardon, but I don't think you were mentioned except in relation to the cat.

(Mr. Anderson.) Yes, that is so.

(The Inspector.) That is the sole question.

(Mr. Anderson.) But I am included in the general reference to the board of guardians.

(The Inspector.) I do not want to say anything further; put your question.

(Mr. Anderson.) What I do object to is the gentleman who is imported from the Temple, while we have very able solicitors in the district, telling us we are wasting time. I want to ask the doctor one other question, and then I am done. (To witness.) Just after you came to this house, was there not a question raised by you as to where your washing should be done?—Is that the point.

(The Inspector.) I did not catch the question?—I was asked about my household washing.

(The Inspector.) Dr. Lamont's household washing?

(Mr. Anderson.) Yes, my question is this—as to whether he did not raise the question that his washing ought to be done in the house laundry?—And why should not it have been done in the house?

(The Inspector.) Answer the question, doctor. Did you raise this question?—No, I simply asked whether we should have it or not.

(Mr. Anderson.) When you were refused what did you say?

(The Inspector.) About what date was this?—That was when we entered into the house.

(Mr. Anderson.) Two or three years ago?—Since 1900.

(The Inspector.) What was the result of your negotiations about the laundry?—The guardians said: No, you must send it out to be washed.

(Mr. Anderson.) We thought you had sufficient salary, with fees, to pay for your own washing?—That is what you thought.

(The Inspector.) You do not know what they thought?—I asked for the washing and it was refused.

(Mr. Anderson.) And you asked again several times, did you not?—I do not know.

Q. Didn't you speak to certain guardians personally about it and say you thought there would be no harm if you got your washing done in the house?—I do not answer the question.

Q. You won't answer the question. Of course the Inspector will draw his own inference?—He may.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I only want to ask two questions. The first one is with reference to the kind of malingers there; are there many in the house?—Well, we have about three, I think.

Q. About how many?—About three, I think; three cases of the same form.

(The Inspector.) That special form?—Yes.

(Mr. Lansbury.) What I want to get at is, are there any other forms of malingering?—We get a lot of lazy people, I know, that are apt to be behind and won't do anything at all.

(Mr. Robb.) Before you call Mr. Haswell, sir, I am anxious to do all I can to shorten this Inquiry. After the information from you this morning, I do not propose to ask for the matron. I understand Mr. Crooks acquiesces in that. Of course, it might have been necessary, but after what we have heard this morning I think it would perhaps be harsh to press the matter further. But there is one matter I want to refer to, because it would be necessary for me in the ordinary way to go into the question of the

Q. How many inmates are there?—Altogether?

Q. Yes?—The average is 1,500.

Q. Well now, in that number, are there more malingers than you would find amongst the same number anywhere else, do you think?—Of course I do not like to speak about other places, because I only know our own workhouse. We have a number of men in the house, but it is a difficult question to answer. We have a number of men in the house and officers who are always behind all the time.

(The Inspector.) Have you ever been in charge of a prison?—No.

Q. Or another workhouse?—No.

Q. Are you astonished there should be three or four or five malingers in the workhouse out of 1,500?—No.

Q. Does it astonish you there should be a certain number of lazy folk there?—No.

Q. Too many about round there?—Yes.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I only want to ask whether he is aware that the able-bodied people, whom we know of, are detained for the longest period the Local Government Board's regulations allow us, namely, 168 hours. The point I want to make, Mr. Davy, is that the board does restrain a large number of the "ins and outs" by compelling them to give the longest possible notice?—I do not know.

(The Inspector.) He would not know that.

(Mr. Lansbury.) But yesterday we had a lot about the "ins and outs," and I thought that ought to come out.

(The Inspector.) We have official knowledge of that, because we have got the return. Does anyone else want to ask a question?

(Mr. Bundock.) I want to ask the doctor whether he has seen me go into the house and drink?—No.

(Mr. Robb.) I think I ought in fairness to say this: Mr. McCarthy has been referred to, and if he does not exercise this opportunity of questioning the doctor it will be my duty to comment later.

(Mr. McCarthy.) I quite forgot it. I understood the doctor to say I altered the dietary scale?—That is what I understood in the house.

(Mr. McCarthy.) Of course that is absurd. The question is absurd. I could not possibly do such a thing.

(Mr. Robb.) I had not in my mind the dietary scale. Certain evidence has been given and it is not challenged.

(The Inspector.) One of the points of the new Dietary Order is that the medical officer should have discretion whether men above 60 are able-bodied or not?—Yes, the thing was left entirely in the hands of the doctor.

Q. Your complaint is that that discretion of yours has been curtailed?—Taken away altogether.

Q. Now last night you said, in answer to a question which I see is reported in the newspapers—the answer you gave was this, "No, the ladies had theirs privately." Now, at that time I said, "That is not evidence," but in the laugh that followed it was not reported. I ask you, if you have any knowledge beyond hearsay, if that was so?—Oh! no, I cannot say I saw any of the lady guardians having drink at all.

(The Inspector.) I am much obliged to you, doctor.

(Mrs. Wilson.) In spite of the protest made yesterday, it is in four newspapers that the lady guardians did have refreshments, and I repeat that I have never had brandy, beer or anything else.

(The Inspector.) I hope the Press will take notice of this.

(Mrs. Wilson.) I never had anything in the workhouse; only tea once a fortnight.

(Mr. Beaumont.) I want to ask the doctor whether he has ever seen me in the beer cellar?—No.

provisions in detail, for the purposes of comparative analysis. Now, in the accounts of the Poplar Union last year, page 19, the expenditure on in-maintenance is grouped in one item, £24,802 1s. 5d. Now, sir, if it were possible to have a statement of the analysis of that, showing how much is spent on meat, how much on tea, how much on coffee, and so on, it would be most useful for the purpose of this Inquiry, and I think it would save calling evidence.

(*The Inspector.*) Anything that will shorten the Inquiry is welcome. Now, for instance, here's the sort of thing we have for the year ended 1904 (*reading from a document*): milk, how much a gallon, quantity consumed and the cost.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Yes.

(*The Inspector.*) Number of inmates and so on.

(*Mr. Robb.*) That would be most useful to us. If we could have a copy of that, and the guardians at the same time, it would probably save calling witnesses.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) That is your Auditor's statement?

(*The Inspector.*) This is the appendix to the Auditor's report.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) (*to Mr. Robb.*) We have no objection to you having a copy of that.

(*The Inspector.*) I believe it gives all the increases and decreases in the years 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, and 1905, and separates the different institutions.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) That is essential, is it not.

(*Mr. Robb.*) There is one other matter. There are a number of out-relief cases that I have been investigating, and it will be necessary for the relieving officers concerned to go into the box, but we are quite unable in some cases to locate the particular cases of the particular officers. Would it be possible between this and next week, on application to Mr. Lough or the relieving officers, to get the information?

(*Mr. Crooks.*) If you give the address we know the relieving officer at once, and you can have it at a minute's notice.

(*Mr. Robb.*) And you will furnish us with that?

(*Mr. Crooks.*) Oh, certainly.

Mr. J. HASWELL; sworn and examined.

(*The Inspector.*) You are porter at the workhouse?—Yes, sir.

Q. How long?—I have been in the service of the guardians eleven years.

Q. What were you at the start?—Labour master.

Q. And then?—Ambulance attendant.

Q. And then?—I am now porter.

Q. And live inside the workhouse?—I lived inside seven and a half years as labour master. Since then I have lived out.

Q. When did you go out?—Three and a half years ago.

Q. How many porters are there?—Three.

Q. Do you always take the same time in the day?—No, sir, we change about alternately.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Mr. Haswell, you were first of all labour master?—Yes, sir.

Q. For seven and a half years. During that time was any alteration made in the work or tasks of the paupers?—Yes.

Q. What was that alteration?—All the labour or hard work was put off; that is the stone-breaking and oakum-picking.

Q. Did you have any directions on that or any particular occasion from any of the guardians?—On several occasions. Soon after my going there several of the guardians came to me and told me they did not want the workhouse to be a convict establishment, and I was not to put men breaking stones or oakum-picking, but to find them some other work.

Q. Can you name any particular guardian who told you that?—Mr. Lansbury was one and Mr. Crooks was another.

Q. Did you carry out those instructions?—I was obliged to.

Q. With what result?—With the result that I believe the proper discipline was not maintained.

Q. Has there since that alteration was made been sufficient work for the able-bodied paupers?—I don't consider there is any inmate of the workhouse to-day or for years past that has done more than half a day's work.

Q. And you say that has a bad effect on the discipline?—I should say so, decidedly.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) We want to know the case you are investigating because we may want to investigate it. Personally I do not mind the out-relief part of this Inquiry. I am extremely anxious it should be dealt with very fully, but I do suggest to you, if the Municipal Alliance wish us to give them the particulars of any cases, then we should have the liberty of going round to these cases and getting—I suggest, Mr. Davy, there should be no secrecy about it. Mr. Broadbank objects to giving us the name, I understand.

(*Mr. Robb.*) What I want to know is, if I name a particular street, shall I be told the relieving officer.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) Certainly.

(*Mr. Ford.*) Subject to—

(*Mr. Robb.*) I quite agree if I want information about a particular place I have got to disclose the case.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) But we may bring the case here.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) They will be all in a book. It will be no trouble to give it to you.

(*Mr. Ford.*) There is just one point. Mr. Robb will give us the streets and also the date, because there has been considerable change, and we don't want to put the wrong officer up. Give us the date and we shall be able to produce the right officer.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Very well, I think that will shorten the matter. But I understand the districts have been increased from eight to twelve and that book is not reliable.

(*Mr. Ford.*) That is the reason I asked for the dates, you see.

(*The Inspector.*) May I make one more appeal to the guardians not to put questions to the officers that are not strictly necessary. Let us try and get through this part of the Inquiry. Let us get into more open country.

Q. Has the conduct of the inmates come under your personal notice?—Frequently, and always as labour master.

Q. What do you say as to their conduct?—It was exceedingly bad.

Q. In what respect?—These men would speak to us in a most rude and filthy manner, and, in fact, we had no control over them in that respect.

Q. Did you report them?—I have frequently reported them.

Q. To whom?—Mr. Madeley, the master.

Q. With what result?—That in many cases there was no notice taken of it, but I was told this was the sort of thing I would have to put up with.

Q. Had you any experience of other workhouses?—I have had experience in four other workhouses.

Q. Have you had to put up with this sort of thing in other workhouses?—The thing has occurred, but on being reported to the master the inmates would be punished, and, as a matter of fact, it simply did not exist, because they knew the consequences.

Q. What were the other workhouses?—Manchester and Liverpool (Toxteth Park), Stoke-on-Trent, and Maidenhead in Berkshire.

Q. On the question of discipline only: for the moment comparing these four workhouses with Poplar, what do you say as to any difference existing between them?—I should say that Poplar was merely a home for people to go when they chose to. I may say the Manchester workhouse was double the size of Poplar, with a staff of 220 officers and nurses, and there was no such thing happened there as I have seen frequently happen at Poplar.

Q. In the way of insubordination?—Yes, in the way of insubordination.

Q. Was this insubordination an occasional thing or frequent?—Very frequent.

Q. Did I understand you to say your complaints to Mr. Madeley were not acted upon?—Quite useless.

Q. Have you ever heard of the inmates being insubordinate to the master himself?—Oh, yes, on several occasions.

Mr. Haswell
15 June.

Mr. Haswell.

15 June.

Q. What have you heard. Give us an instance?—I heard one man, to my utter astonishment, curse and swear in the master's presence in the most abominable and filthy manner. He took his discharge and told the master—he did not ask—John Roach told the master he was going out and wanted a new suit of clothes. The master said: "You have had sufficient from me; you will not have any more."

(The Inspector.) That is a charge against John Roach?—No, sir, I am speaking of discipline.

(Mr. Robb.) Go on, he was not to have a new suit of clothes?—He told the master he was taking his discharge and wanted a new suit of clothes, and the master said: "You have had all you will get from me," and he shut the little window at the enquiry office in his face, and he stood there and in a volume of the foulest language swore at the master and said he would have the clothes, and, more, he would have something besides.

Q. What happened after all?—Within an hour the master sent for me and told me to send this man Roach to his office and I did so. He said I need not wait, but afterwards I found the man got his suit of clothes and also half a sovereign.

Q. Was it customary to supply paupers with clothes on their taking their discharge?—It was a thing of frequent occurrence years ago, but it came in the opinion of the guardians that the cost of supplying the clothes was rather heavy, and it has recently been very largely discontinued.

Q. Did any instance come under your personal notice of men who had these outfits returning to the workhouse again?—Oh yes, many.

Q. With or without the clothes?—Most frequently without them.

Q. Would they in that case be again fitted out?—Yes.

Q. Have instances of that kind come under your personal observation?—Yes.

Q. Do you think these people had always been out a sufficiently long time to wear out a suit of clothes?—Oh no.

Q. What do you suggest had become of them?—They had sold them or pawned them and got their old ones and come back again.

Q. You swear from your personal knowledge they were again fitted out?—Yes.

Q. Shortly after you had this dispute—may I call it—about the tasks, was there any friction between you and the guardians about these tasks, when you were told to put the men off stone work?—I don't know there was any friction. I simply acted upon their instructions.

Q. Did you express any view about it?—I did.

Q. You didn't think it desirable, did you?—I did not. I thought for a certain class of men stone-breaking and oakum picking was the only proper task of work to put such men to.

Q. Shortly after that were you removed from your position of labour master?—No, some years after.

Q. Was a man Frederick Barnes appointed in your place?—Yes.

Q. Are you able to say of your personal knowledge whether Mr. Barnes was a gentleman of any experience, or not, in Poor Law work?—He had previously been with me in the mess room and from conversations that took place there on various occasions I found out that Poplar was the only institution he had been in.

Q. He had sufficient experience to take the appointment of labour master in your view?—He had acted as assistant labour master although not in direct charge of the men. The department he took was, he took charge of the linen.

Q. Were you appointed from public advertisement?—Yes.

Q. And you say you had experience in four other Poor Law unions?—Yes.

Q. When Mr. Barnes was appointed was there any advertisement?—No, sir.

Q. Was the post thrown open to competition?—No, sir.

Q. What did Mr. Barnes receive to start with—the same salary you had left off with?—The same salary I had left off with after seven and a half years' service.

Q. Then you were ambulance attendant?—Yes, sir.

Q. Now has there any matter relative to this inquiry come under your notice as ambulance attendant?—Yes, sir.

Q. Tell the Inspector?—The ambulance being used frequently for cases for Mr. Bacon, as we understood, and that is unfair with our usual work. On several occasions I have been as ambulance attendant sent away to Mildmay Park and also to Hampstead Heath Sanatorium, and also to a small hospital at Lewisham.

Q. With cases for Mr. Bacon?—With cases that we understood were for Mr. Bacon.

(The Inspector.) I don't understand this about Mr. Bacon. Mr. Bacon was a guardian?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) Who went in the ambulance?—This was on behalf of a charity which exists in the neighbourhood of Bow, called the Mildmay Mission, and cases that were going into their hospitals or infirmaries or going into similar institutions, I take it, were removed in the ambulance conveyance.

Q. We were told that the arrangement with the London County Council is that the ambulance is to be used for outside cases of accident or emergency. Were these cases of that description?—No. We always had a post-card from a certain lady—a lady visitor or of that description—to Mr. Madeley, and it was passed on to us, that we were to go to a certain address and remove the patient to Mildmay Park or elsewhere as the case might be. There has no case arisen in my experience when the ambulance was called upon for urgent cases.

Q. I mean if this particular institution had the use of the ambulance in that way, is there any reason why every similar institution should not have it?—That is not for me to say. I am a subordinate. Other guardians might have asked for the use of the ambulance.

Q. Now, do you know anything about this alleged drinking of beer by guardians in the workhouse?—Yes, sir.

Q. What took place?—

(The Inspector.) Stick to what you actually know?—What I know is this. I have on many occasions happened to be in the beer cellar and have seen guardians drinking—several of the guardians.

(Mr. Robb.) Can you name any of them?—Yes. I have seen Mr. Peacock, who is not a guardian now. I have seen Mr. Smith there.

Q. Don't be afraid?—I am not afraid. I am just thinking. The names don't always occur to me. I have seen Mr. Anderson there and also Mr. McCarthy.

Q. And Mr. McCarthy?—Yes.

Q. Do you pledge your oath you have actually seen them drinking beer in the cellar?—Yes.

Q. Have you ever seen any guardian the worse for drink on the workhouse premises?—Yes, sir.

Q. Who have you seen?—I have seen Mr. Anderson on several occasions.

Q. Anyone else?—And Mr. Smith.

Q. And anyone else?—And Mr. McCarthy.

Q. Do you swear that you have actually seen these guardians the worse for drink?—I do.

Q. Recently?—Recently.

Q. I mean you realise the gravity of the circumstance?—I do.

Q. Are there any other guardians you have seen in these circumstances beyond those you have named?—No others occur to me just now.

Q. Are you able to say whether or not any guardians have had meals or other refreshments in the workhouse?—Yes, sir.

Q. Will you please tell the Inspector what you know?—Well, I had occasion to go to the master's quarters and have seen the guardians sitting down to table eating their food, most frequently after the committee—the house committee. On one occasion I had reason to speak to the assistant master as store-keeper in reference to our rations, and the matter cropped up in conversation, and I told him then that the guardians had no right to partake of refreshments in the master's quarters. I believe, and I think I am right, there is now an Order of the Local Government Board that guardians shall not partake of refreshments in the master's quarters. Apart from that, even if there is no such Order, it was not

conducive to proper management and it did not appear the proper thing to do for the guardians to be so familiar with the master.

Q. Is that a conversation you had with Mr. Walton. What did Mr. Walton say?—The master had a right to do what he liked with his own rations.

Q. Is it possible the master could have supplied all these refreshments out of his own rations?—I should think not.

Q. That would be rather extensive?—

(A ratepayer.) Does this witness know the amount of the master's rations?—Yes, sir. 16 lbs. of meat a week; 16 lbs. of bread, I think. To be brief, it is about double what the other officers get.

(A ratepayer.) Can you admit that answer of his?

(The Inspector.) We can find out. It is not the best evidence.

(A ratepayer.) Will you disallow that answer?

(The Inspector.) It does not matter. The best evidence is the book. I may say at once that the doctrine of the Local Government Board is that rations are given to the officer for his own consumption, and if he cannot consume them himself personally he must return them to store.

(Mr. Robb.) Would the master's rations include such things as salmon, eels, and so on?—The diet list includes fish and I suppose salmon would be got on that account.

Q. Are you able to say, again on your personal knowledge, whether special articles of diet were ever sent for?—Yes.

Q. Can you name anything in particular?—Oysters come to my mind: that they have been sent for.

Q. For whom?—Well, I knew that guardians were in the house at the time, and these were sent out for in the evening, and I can say no more.

Q. Who were the guardians in the house at the time?

(The Inspector.) This is the sort of thing one has to watch. This witness does not know the guardians did not buy them?—That is so.

(The Inspector.) Eels may be in the workhouse illegitimately, or most properly and regularly.

(Mr. Robb.) Were the guardians in the habit of having supper in the workhouse?—Yes, sir.

Q. Was it the usual thing?—Yes, it was very usual with some.

Q. Was it usual that the guardians were in the house when the oysters were sent for?—Yes.

Q. Who were those guardians?—Usually the chairman of the house committee.

Q. Who was that?—That would be Mr. Bacon and Mr. McCarthy.

Q. Were these oysters sent out for about supper time?—About supper time, sir.

Q. Is there any other special item in that way that came under your notice?—No sir.

Q. Mr. Haswell, can you tell us anything about the stores and the method of receiving and weighing goods?—The stores coming in, sir?

Q. Yes. Have you any duties in connection with it?—No, not with the stores.

Q. Is there a weigh-bridge at your office?—At the lodge there is a weigh-bridge.

Q. What is that used for?—For weighing in the stores as they pass the lodge.

Q. Does the porter do that?—Yes.

Q. It is your duty, then, to weigh in stores when they arrive?—When I am on duty, yes.

Q. Then they are sent into the stores?—Yes.

Q. Have you ever had to complain of their weight?—Yes, sir.

Q. Can you give one instance by way of example?—The potatoes were always an item that was one that seemed to be short weighted.

Q. Did you draw anyone's attention to that?—Yes, sir.

Q. Who was it?—Mr. Walton.

Q. Did he do anything in the matter?—Well, he came down and inspected the weigh-bridge book and said that my weight as entered there was wrong and wished me to alter the figures.

Q. Wished you to alter the figures in your book?—Yes. I told him I should not do so; whatever the weighing was in that book would have to remain.

Q. Was there anything else with reference to that?—We were disputing that matter at the time when Mr. McCarthy came in about dinner time, and we were speaking rather loudly and he asked me what was the matter. I told him it was over the weighing of the potatoes and that it was a curious thing that it was the potatoes that were always wrong in the weight, always wrong. Mr. McCarthy said, "Come along, Mr. Walton, we'll weigh the potatoes in the stores." He went and I heard no more of it just at the time. When Mr. McCarthy went out, he said to me: "That is all right, Haswell, your weights are right. I have been to the stores and we found most of the bags three or four lbs. short." So altogether there was a matter of between two and three cwt. potatoes deficient. I made a point of thanking Mr. McCarthy very emphatically, because I thought it was important that the matter should be noticed.

Q. Do you know whether that matter was ever brought under the notice of the contractor?—I am not aware that it was.

(Mr. Walton.) What was the date?—I cannot tell you. The weight is in the book.

(The Inspector.) Was it this year?—No, sir, it was last year.

Q. What time of last year?—It would be probably about ten or twelve months ago.

(Mr. Walton.) May I ask a question?

(The Inspector.) Put it through me.

(Mr. Walton.) Did I call for the contractor to come and weigh the potatoes?—Not to my knowledge.

(The Inspector.) Do you know he did not?—I don't know that he did.

(Mr. Walton.) I wrote to the contractor.

(Mr. Robb.) Hadn't we better have this later on. Now, as to the stores generally. Do you know that, again of your own knowledge, do you know that there have been serious shortages found in the stores?—I don't know.

Q. It is on record?—I believe so.

Q. There is a report?—A report, yes.

(Mr. Lansbury.) What?

(Mr. Robb.) There is a report on the supplementary agenda of 28th June, 1905, dealing with shortages.

(Mr. Crooks.) That is the out-relief stores.

(Mr. Robb.) Is there any matter in connection with the stores to which you wish to draw the Inspector's attention, germane to this Inquiry?—I can only say this: on many occasions, as labour master, the meat has been simply unfit to be served.

(The Inspector.) When did you cease to be labour master?—Three and a half years ago, and I have absolutely refused to serve it. I had frequently complained to the master about the meat not being fit to serve, and on this occasion it culminated by my putting down my knife and fork and going out of the dining hall and refusing to go in again that day.

(Mr. Robb.) If the meat had been good in quality that would have been insubordination on your part?—Undoubtedly.

Q. Were you ever reported for that?—No, the master said it was committee day and I should be taken before the guardians, but I said "Don't forget; one time you asked me not to go before the board."

Q. Not to go?—Yes, when I had a complaint and made a written application to Mr. Lough. I had a written application in my pocket, which I gave to the master that I might have an opportunity to make the complaint, and the master sent for me and begged of me not to press the matter, and I consented to burn the application.

Q. You are referring to another matter. What had that reference to?—That had reference to the weighing of the meat. I was charged with excessive stocking in the dining hall, and the master said I had five or six stone of meat more than was due to me.

Q. What is the approximate date of that?—That would be in February, 1896.

Q. That is a long time?—

Mr. Haswell.

15 June.

Mr. Haswell.

15 June.

(The Inspector.) That is only an ordinary incident in the administration of a large workhouse. These things will happen occasionally?—I never had them happen to me before.

(Mr. Robb.) Would this be double the ordinary allowance of meat?—Not at that time. I challenged the master as to how he knew I had four or five stone more of meat than I should be allowed. He said the meat had been weighed, and I found out the meat hadn't been weighed.

Q. Did it come to this, that there was meat missing?—That was, no doubt, what was in the master's mind.

Q. That had to be accounted for. You were charged with having it?—Yes.

Q. You say you challenged the master to take you before the board?—I wrote out an application and gave it to the master to go before the board, and he begged me not to press the matter.

Q. Let it drop?—Yes, let it drop.

Q. If it was an ordinary incident would it be his duty to bring it before the board?—Undoubtedly.

(The Inspector.) About that other matter when you left the dining hall, how long ago was that?—Five years ago.

(Mr. Watts.) Was that in connection with the inmates' food?—Yes.

Q. You mean the carving knife and fork?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) Was that meat prime English ox beef?—I should think not.

Q. Do you think it was of the quality that was specified in the tender forms?—No.

Q. Are you able to give any other incidents of provisions not being to sample?—The officers' rations were on many occasions very inferior.

Q. We have been told that these luxuries were ordered for the officers?—I should like to have had them, sir. We were allowed six eggs. We had five eggs in the men's room. Five eggs were cooked in the morning and on breaking the eggs to probably fry them, as many as four out of five have been bad.

Q. But the best new laid eggs are specified?—I cannot say more than that they were perfectly black and putrid.

(Mr. Lansbury.) When was the date of that?—It was a very frequent occurrence.

Q. When?—During the whole time of my residence up to the time I was discharged from labour master.

(Mr. Robb.) Three-and-a-half years ago?—

(Mr. Lansbury.) That is why we changed.

(Mr. Crooks.) Three-halfpence for a good one is better than having a rotten one.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you remember a rather important incident about the milk on one occasion?—Yes.

Q. When was that?—That would be some time ago; probably four years ago or five years.

Q. What was that?—There was a great complaint in the dining hall at breakfast time and the men refused to drink their tea because there was a quantity of some substance floating on the top of the tea. There was a perfect hubbub and with difficulty this was quieted, and I told the men I should report the matter to the master, and I did so when the master came about. In the meantime I had gone into the kitchen and there were three galvanised baths with great lumps of fatty substance—that were full of this substance taken out of the copper where the tea had been boiled.

Q. How much would there be in weight?—It would amount to probably about 12 or 15 lbs.

Q. Twelve or fifteen lbs. of foreign fatty substance. Who was the milk contractor?—I believe it was Mr. Whitlock.

Q. He is the contractor to-day?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Is there any suggestion that complaint was made to the guardians?

(Mr. Robb.) Did you make any complaint to any one?—I left it to the master.

Q. Did you draw his attention to it?—Yes, I drew his special attention to that particular matter because I have definite memory of saying to the master that the substance supplied as milk could not be milk at all.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Might we clear up the point about the eggs? (Handing book to witness.)

(Mr. Crooks.) One you will see is Dan Leno fresh eggs; the others are new-laid and they are 2d. a hundred cheaper when they are fresh.

(The Inspector.) This is the tender for March, 1902.

(Mr. Lansbury.) You see we didn't contract for best new-laid eggs.

(The Inspector.) Best country eggs, eight to the lb.; 8s. 6d. a hundred last half year.

(Mr. Robb.) Are we comparing the same time of the year?

(Mr. Lansbury.) The tenders are for a year.

(Mr. Robb.) The whole year or half-year.

(Mr. Lansbury.) The whole year.

(The Inspector.) To 29th March, 1902; best fresh country eggs, and on this occasion English best new-laid eggs.

(Mr. Lansbury.) What is the price?

(Mr. Crooks.) One is 8s. 4d. and the other 8s. 6d.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Mr. Davy, this is a little important. The point was at that time we were contracting for best new-laid eggs. Dan Leno will tell you anything is a fresh egg.

(The Inspector.) It is a small matter; the fact that this officer got a rotten egg.

(Mr. Robb.) He got four out of five.

(Mr. Crooks.) Some people get a small gas-works for their money.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you know anything about the distribution of tobacco to the inmates?—As labour master I had to serve out the tobacco, a weekly supply.

Q. On what principle was that distributed?—All men over 60 after being a month in the house received one ounce of tobacco in a week, with the addition that able-bodied men doing work also received one ounce of tobacco.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Lough, I suppose there is an order of the guardians authorising this?

(Mr. Lough.) Yes.

(The Inspector.) Is it in existence now?

(Mr. Crooks.) Here it is. Clear it up at once.

(Mr. Lansbury.) That is what happened.

(Mr. Robb.) Is there any other matter in connection with the distribution of tobacco that you want to refer to?—Oh, no.

Q. I am referring to the work done by these able-bodied men; were they ever put on unloading coal?—It was certainly given for work that any man ought to have done as an inmate of the workhouse without expecting extra remuneration in the shape of getting tobacco.

Q. Did the unloading of coal come under your notice?—No, the siding has been put in since.

Q. Did the matter of the master's bath ever come under your notice?—Yes, sir.

Q. What kind of bath was it?—Well it was a most luxurious bath, and it took some time to fit it in the bath room. Personally, I thought it was not necessary.

Q. Were you told the cost?—I was told it cost £120

Q. Who told you that?—

(A guardian.) That was fitted before any of the present guardians were in office. Is that so?—No, sir.

Q. When?—It was fitted up since the time I went there, and the present board of guardians, or the majority of them, were there in March.

(Mr. Lansbury.) No, no?—I went in 1895.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Crooks and I were there.

(The Inspector.) Since then?—It was fitted up about 1897.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you seen in your previous experience of workhouses anything approaching that supplied to a master?—No, sir. As a man who has worked in that particular trade in the West End, I should think there are very few houses where such a luxurious bath is supplied. I have worked in Grosvenor Square, Belgrave Square, and the best parts of London.

Q. And seen nothing better?—No.

Mr. Haswell.
15 June.

(The Inspector.) Generally—I want your view as an officer—has the administration of the workhouse since you have been there been conducted on economical lines?—I should think not. I know the master has had three new chandeliers in his room in three successive years.

Q. And is that typical of the sort of thing that goes on?—Quite, sir.

(Mr. McCarthy.) I want to ask two questions only; the remainder will come from Mr. Crooks. You say you have seen me in the beer cellar, Mr. Haswell?—Yes.

Q. Do you know whether I was drinking the master's beer or the inmates' beer?—I didn't ask.

Q. What beer was it?—I have no knowledge.

Q. You say you have seen me go into the workhouse drunk?—No, sir, I didn't.

Q. You said the worse for drink?—I said I saw you in the house drunk.

Q. In the house drunk?—Yes.

Q. Not go into the house drunk?—No.

Q. What date was that?—The date can be found from the porter's book, and that was when you came into the house after midnight with the master and remained there probably an hour.

Q. Yes, well, that is one instance?—Yes, sir.

Q. I should like the other porters subpoenaed?—They would not be on duty.

Q. If this had occurred more than once someone else must see it besides yourself?—

(The Inspector.) He can only speak to what he saw.

(Mr. McCarthy.) I should like them to corroborate him if possible.

(The Inspector.) I don't think that is what you mean.

(Mr. McCarthy.) I should like further corroboration of this statement, because personally, I can safely say, I don't believe I have ever been drunk in my life.

(The Inspector.) Was this long ago?—No, sir.

Q. Can you fix the date?—I cannot, but it is in the books.

Q. Would it be within the last six months?—Perhaps longer.

Q. Within eight months?—Yes, sir.

Q. You were on night duty at that time?—Yes, sir.

Q. The exact date could be fixed?—It could be ascertained from the books. The entry is there. The time was past midnight when Mr. McCarthy came in the house, and he remained somewhat over an hour and went out the worse for drink.

Q. Did you see him when he came in?—Yes, sir.

Q. Did he come in the worse for drink?—It didn't appear to me that he was.

Q. Who saw him out?—I did.

Q. Anybody with him?—No.

Q. Anybody about at the time?—No, sir.

Q. By what signs did you judge that he was drunk?—The manner in which he walked and the manner in which he spoke to me.

Q. Did he speak to you?—Yes.

Q. What did he say?—He wished me good-night.

Q. Wended his way out by himself?—Yes.

Q. No one about?—No one at all.

(Mr. Sumner.) Does this officer remember coming to my house?—Yes, sir.

Q. What was that about?—That was the time when I met with an accident to my leg and broke the muscle. It is a thing that will never be mended, and there was at that time an effort made to get me to resign, and I came to your house to ask you for support when the matter was brought forward before the committee or the board.

Q. You were the ambulance attendant?—That is so.

Q. Wasn't there a question at that time about you interfering with some boys?—No.

Q. Eh?—No.

Q. Didn't you come and ask me to protect you at the meeting of the committee?—No.

Q. I distinctly say yes?—It was over my leg.

Q. That was at the time you were ambulance attendant and afterwards were put on the gate?—It is nothing of the kind. I say it is a deliberate falsehood.

Q. I say it is absolutely true.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I point out the difficulty. You have Mr. Haswell's word against Mr. McCarthy; in this case you have Mr. Sumner's word against Mr. Haswell's.

(Mr. McCarthy.) But we will go further.

(Witness.) I was off duty sixteen weeks with my leg and that is the reason I was put from ambulance attendant to porter.

(Mr. Crooks.) Pay attention to me please?—Yes.

Q. When you became labour master in Poplar, the men were given stone-breaking and oakum-picking?—Yes.

Q. How many men were stone-breaking at that time?—There would be probably twenty or thirty a day.

Q. Twenty or thirty men?—A day.

Q. In the stone yard?—Yes, and thirty or more picking oakum.

Q. Don't worry about oakum. The men were put on stone-breaking, about twenty or thirty a day in the stone-yard?—Yes.

Q. Are there as many as twenty or thirty berths?—There were at that time.

Q. We can count them now?—No, because some have been removed.

Q. The partitions?—The partitions have been removed.

Q. And you think there were thirty?—Between twenty and thirty; and some broke them outside.

Q. How much had they to break; there was a task?—The task, I believe, was five cwt.

Q. Yes?—But I cannot speak of that with certainty. I think it was 5 cwt.

Q. It is not necessary for my argument. They performed their task, whatever it was?—Sometimes.

Q. Some of them did it earlier than others?—Yes, sir.

Q. How early?—Well, it was very early. On occasions a man would have done his work by about dinner time.

Q. And the rest of the time—dinner time is 12 o'clock—they would do what?—They would not do anything.

Q. Loaf about?—Yes.

Q. That was very helpful to the discipline of the house?—That is only one instance; and the weight of stones might have been increased so that they could be kept busy the whole day.

Q. Please don't laugh. You know a good deal about Local Government Board Orders and you know that with tasks of stone the weight was given. You could not give a man two lots in one day?—The Order could be altered as it has been in other places.

Q. By whom?—By the guardians.

Q. The task for oakum-picking is the one laid down by the Local Government Orders. As you know men are clever enough to get finished by dinner time or two o'clock?—Not if they get half a ton. For certain men it would be best to increase their task.

Q. I want to get you to assume the men on their task?—Yes.

Q. And they had considerable time about the house?—One man.

Q. They had time?—One man.

Q. All right. Never mind whether it was one man or six. It was impossible for you to put them to additional work?—Men is many, but man is one man.

Q. It is a question of task. Wasn't it at that time of day customary for the guardians and the master to say if you found a man was adept at breaking stones—that is to say if it was not deterrent, if he could break it easily—that you should reverse the positions and give him oakum?—No.

Q. You think stone-breaking and oakum-picking are very desirable things?—I do for certain classes of men.

Q. And do you know the ins and outs at that time were much more frequent than now?—I am not aware that they are.

Q. I thought you had been so diligent. The ins and outs at that time numbered considerably over 1,000 a year and since the alteration they only muster four or five hundred?—I don't think that is quite correct.

Mr. Haswell,
15 June.

Q. All right. Dropped to about half.

(Mr. Robb.) They don't come out at all now.

(Mr. Crooks.) That is clever for anyone who don't know anything about it. I am counting the ins and outs. The Poor Law is curious; everyone understands it except those connected with it. So when we suggested—Mr. Lansbury and myself—that the house was not quite a convict prison, you also remember—I hope you will remember—that we also pointed out to these men, insubordinate in the early days, although it was not a prison, it was certainly not a hotel, and if they did not like it they could leave it?—I remember that.

Q. That should be set down to our credit?—I don't see what you mean by that.

Q. I mean it works both ways. We did create discipline in the house?—I should hardly take it in that light.

Q. You would not take it in that light?—No.

Q. Do you remember when the young men dined in the big hall?—Yes.

Q. And there were two or three riots?—Yes.

Q. They were in the early days when discipline was exceedingly strong?—I did not say it was.

Q. You had stone-breaking and oakum-picking, which were repressive?—No, sir.

Q. It kept them in order?—No, the tasks were not sufficient.

Q. Don't let us quarrel about it. We only want to get at the truth?—That's right.

Q. You know the guardians had to go in and separate the tables. We widened them out to make a big gangway. The gangways in the dining hall were at the edge and not in the centre, where it is now?—That is an alteration of mine.

Q. It is helpful. Do you remember the young men standing up and hooting me?—

(The Inspector.) Did it occur?

(Mr. Crooks.) That was because I was so easy with them and gave them comforts?—I don't know what it was. I don't know what the reason was.

Q. I certainly helped you and everyone to maintain discipline in the house?—I don't know, sir, that you ever came directly in contact with me in that respect.

(The Inspector.) The able-bodied men did boo Mr. Crooks?—Yes. They booed the chairman of the house committee quite recently.

(Mr. Crooks.) At that time of day it was no uncommon thing. We were trying to protect the old men from the young ones, who used to steal their food, and it was with difficulty we did so. We were greeted with the remark: "You call yourselves Labour men and you treat us in this manner." We replied, "Yes, we are for labour, but not for loafing." When Mr. Haswell came about 1896 we tried various methods of dealing with the able-bodied men, improving them and making them go out. You remember that we passed an order, Mr. Haswell, that no able-bodied man who took his discharge in the morning should be allowed back in the same day?—Yes.

Q. That was contrary to the regulations of the Local Government Board?—I cannot say it was.

Q. We had no power to do that?—I should think you had.

Q. I am sure we hadn't, but in the interest of discipline we absolutely refused to admit a man the same day he took his discharge?—There is an order which has been in force a great number of years that a man should give a day's notice previous to going out. If he went out frequently he should give two days.

Q. That was for discipline. Did you find anything worse when men were put on light jobs?—Nor better.

Q. You spoke about John Roach. He had been outside a good many times?—Yes.

Q. Is he what you would describe as a blackguard?—Yes.

Q. He had been charged more than once?—I don't know he has ever been charged.

Q. He was charged and sent back for punishment by the magistrate at the Thames Police Court and was put in the remand room with bread and water?—That would be the master's punishment.

Q. Then the master punished some one?—Yes.

Q. There was a man John Welch?—William Welch.

Q. We had a lot of trouble with him?—Yes.

Q. And the magistrate?—Yes.

Q. We did our best to keep him straight?—Yes, sir.

Q. When this poor man Roach was discharged and swore he would have more clothes, you said he got half a sovereign?—Yes.

Q. You don't suggest for a single moment that that came out of the ratepayers' pocket?—No, I simply said he got it.

Q. The way you said it made it appear?—I was asked no question about it.

Q. Let me tell you plainly, half a dozen times I have given this man Roach money, and Mr. Lansbury has done the same thing. A friend outside, Mr. Snelling, has also left money to give the man a chance to go on the road. The result of giving Roach a shilling or half a crown led him to go outside for twelve months at a time. Not a bad investment for a man with a club foot?—He lost his toes.

Q. The people who come in with their clothes destroyed or sold or got rid of—the guardians prosecuted a good many of these men?—No, sir.

Q. None of them?—I don't know. Not as many as they might have done.

Q. As far as you know?—As far as I know.

Q. You know Martin?—Yes.

Q. He sold his clothes?—They were the house clothes, not clothes given to him.

Q. But paid for by the rates?—Yes. I was not speaking of a man absconding. I was speaking of clothes given by the master for their own property.

Q. They have never been given for their own property?—Yes, formerly for their own property; second-hand clothes.

Q. Not to go back into the house with?—Yes.

Q. We disagree on that point. The man Martin, you remember, he was sent off to Hadleigh?—Yes.

Q. He returned to the workhouse, refusing to work?—Yes.

Q. You know he was prosecuted?—Yes.

Q. And the case was dismissed?—Yes.

Q. Is that the guardians' fault?—I thought so at the time, because I thought the guardians had taken the wrong step in prosecuting that man in the circumstances. I said so to several of my fellow-officers and the result proved—

Q. I should not think it a matter of reproach to the guardians because they did not take your advice?—It was a case I thought should not have gone.

Q. We shall raise a general discussion. After the guardians have endeavoured to enforce labour and when prosecuting a man for neglecting to maintain himself, we haven't always been successful.

(The Inspector.) The case was Poplar Union v. Martin.

(Mr. Crooks.) Yes. (To witness.) About the oysters, I suppose it was possible for oysters to go into the house at other times than when guardians were there?—Yes.

Q. Oysters are taken in; they don't walk in. I want to ask about Mr. Barnes' lack of experience. He followed you in your office?—Yes.

Q. When did you leave the labour master's position?—Three and a half years ago.

Q. So it was 1902?—I suppose it would be.

Q. Barnes was appointed 21st September, 1898?—That would be the time.

Q. His first appointment?—Yes.

Q. So he must have been in the house four and a half years getting experience?—I said so.

Q. I thought you said we appointed a man without any experience?—I said he had been in the house as assistant master.

Q. He had the tremendous advantage of being trained under you for four years?—He simply had charge of the linen.

Mr. Haswell.

15 June.

Q. He was junior to you?—We didn't come in contact.

Q. Did he take your place when you were away on leave?—No, sir.

Q. He certainly had some experience of workhouse work, but that does not matter.

(The Inspector.) That does not matter.

(Mr. Crooks.) The question of tobacco. Do you say many men received tobacco who were not entitled to it?—I did not say men had received tobacco that were not entitled to it.

Q. I have jotted it down that you did?—No, sir.

Q. As a matter of fact the Local Government Board Order existed before we were very active down there?—Yes, sir.

Q. You have told us you made a good many complaints about the food. You didn't take the opportunity of complaining to me at any time about it?—I complained to the board and did not think it right to complain any further.

Q. Just listen to this. On the 23rd of October, 1901, you yourself complained about your food?—Yes.

Q. You were perfectly justified in that complaint?—Yes.

Q. It was bad food?—I didn't complain about the quality of our food at that time; that was in regard to not having sufficient.

Q. You didn't get sufficient?—We didn't get sufficient.

Q. Listen. "The assistant master reported to the committee that James Haswell, the labour master, has complained to him that an insufficient quantity of meat was being sent down daily to his mess and that he made further statements as to the issuing of stores."—Quite true.

Q. "The labour master having been called before the committee with reference to the statements referred to apologised to the officers concerned."—Yes.

Q. Why did you apologise if you were right?—I had no other course open.

(Mr. Crooks.) Well, I am simply amazed—I am bound to say I am amazed that any officer of the Poplar Board of Guardians should say he had no other course open.

(The Inspector.) The impression upon my mind is that Haswell's complaint was not true.

(Mr. Crooks.) Then it was moved and carried "That the officer's apology be accepted, though the committee were not perfectly satisfied with it, and that the chairman reprimand Haswell and caution him with reference to his future conduct." That was in 1900?—1901.

Q. He had been cautioned before. Censured 21st October, 1901, and he was appointed ambulance attendant on 30th September, 1902, and porter 17th February, 1904?—Yes.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I won't keep you many minutes. You mentioned that you had some conversation with me when you were first appointed?—Yes.

Q. My memory and your memory do not carry us both the same. I don't ever remember discussing tasks with you?—We didn't discuss tasks in the way of conversation, but you came round the labour yard and asked about certain men who were stone-breaking.

Q. I said I did not want it treated as a convict settlement. That may be an opinion, but I question your statement that I ever made any such remark to you. Do you mean to say you carry your mind back eleven years and swear those are the words I personally used?—That is so.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I don't know that it matters. It would be my opinion, but I never remember speaking to Mr. Haswell either about the task or any other matter.

(The Inspector.) This does not matter.

(Mr. Lansbury.) It might be a matter of great importance. My views about stone-breaking and oakum-picking are known. You are aware that Local Government Board Inspectors come round the house and that you have ample opportunities to speak to them when they come round if you wish to?—No, sir.

Q. You are not allowed to speak to them?—No.

Q. Who stops you?—The master.

Q. He has stopped you?—Yes.

Q. Are you in the position of any other officer, that you cannot be discharged by the guardians without the Local Government Board?—

(The Inspector.) No, it is not so.

(Mr. Lansbury.) The officers on the staff are not in the position?

(The Inspector.) Not this one at the porter's lodge.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I am thinking of labour master.

(The Inspector.) That is not a permanent office.

(Mr. Lansbury.) You could have been discharged without any appeal. Have you ever been discharged anywhere?—Yes.

Q. Have you ever had to resign anywhere?—Stoke-on-Trent.

Q. Why was that?—Because I complained to the master there about his son going in at half-past twelve at night, because there was no night porter, and I had to get up and let the master's son in at that hour of the night, and I complained of that and other matters, and one instance was one of the inmates absconded and returned in drink. He had been a helper in the sick ward and I forbade him going there because he was drunk, and the master sent me there. My influence was gone. I was obliged to write about it.

Q. Was there any inquiry held into it?—Mr. Dansey, the Inspector, came and saw me with the master.

Q. And you had an ample opportunity of justifying yourself with the Local Government Board?—Yes.

Q. And you resigned?—Mr. Dansey advised me to.

Q. That was the Local Government Board Inspector?—Yes.

Q. You say the policy we adopted was subversive of discipline in the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. Would you be surprised to hear from the Local Government Board Inspector at the end of December, 1896—twelve months after you were appointed—when this subversive method was in vogue—"owing to the improved administration at this workhouse the number of able-bodied indoor paupers has considerably decreased." So we certainly at the beginning did not attract large numbers of people to come there?—It is not within my knowledge that there was any particular improvement.

Q. You happen to disagree with me and with the Local Government Board Inspector. That is what it amounts to?—Yes.

Q. Then I must ask you about John Roach or any similar case. There is a Brabazon Society comes to the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. There was a lady, Miss Valmer, connected with it?—Yes.

Q. Are you aware that she left money, and not only left money, but personally visited inmates; and left money to buy these things and generally assist people to go out?—Yes.

Q. Will you swear on this particular occasion that ten shillings had been left for Roach?—I thought that it had come from that source.

Q. Will you swear it didn't?—I should consider that it did.

Q. And in all probability Mr. Madeley knew that this man was going out and he thought it best to let him get over his temper and go?—The only thing is I answered the question put to me.

Q. That is all right. The other thing is about the men who sold their outfits; the second-hand clothes. How many of these do you really know of?—Well, I cannot tell, but there is a book which will show.

Q. There is a book?—There should be a book.

(The Inspector.) Is there such a book?—There was a book.

Q. Is there a book for second-hand clothing which will show how many times an individual man had a suit. Are these items taken from the stock?—

(Mr. Walton.) There are no outfits; it is second-hand clothing or from old people who died?—In some cases they were bought and when taken together it was a considerable item.

Mr. Hancell. (Mr. Robb.) £112 in one year for second-hand clothing.

15 June. (Mr. Lansbury.) You don't know the number of men, or women, because women get them too, and children as well?—I am speaking only of men. I have no knowledge of other parts of the house.

Q. You cannot tell me how many men sold their outfits, came back to the house, and were outfitted again?—A book will show it.

Q. Will it be a very large number?—The thing was of frequent occurrence.

Q. For the same man to have another outfit?—Yes.

Q. We will have that return one way or another. Now, as Mr. Bacon is not here, I want to ask you a question about the ambulance. Was it for his private use, do you say?—I don't know who had it, but I know the order came from Mr. Bacon; that is all.

Q. How many times—how long were you ambulance attendant?—About one and a half years.

Q. Can you swear how many times you removed people for Mr. Bacon?—I have an old pocket book that will show every case. There is no need to tax my memory.

Q. We may have that too. Were any of our own poor neglected?—It was very inconvenient on many occasions that the doctor should send cases to the sick asylum to wait until the afternoon.

Q. Instead of removing the case in the morning it remained until the afternoon?—Had to wait until the afternoon. The doctor wanted it moved in the morning.

Q. The inconvenience is that the case waited; instead of going in the morning, it went in the afternoon. Our own poor weren't neglected to shift a private case to a hospital?—Not beyond having to wait.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I don't think I have any more to ask.

(A ratepayer.) Has this witness received any financial consideration to give information?—I haven't got a half-penny or yet a pound, nor anything.

Q. Anything promised?—Absolutely no consideration for the evidence I have been called upon to give. I have no promise whatever. No one has ever approached me with such a suggestion.

(The ratepayer.) My object is accomplished.

(Mr. Ford.) I won't detain you one minute. Mr. Haswell, you have visited me at my house on several occasions?—Twice.

Q. No more than twice?—No more than twice.

Q. What was the occasion of the last visit?—I was asking you—

Q. How long ago?—Only a few weeks ago.

Q. I don't care a fig what you came about. You came in friendly—the fact you came to my house showed you were not in any way afraid of me?—Certainly not.

Q. Always met on friendly terms?—Always.

Q. Therefore it would not be true to say that you had not got at least some court of appeal. If you could not address the chairman, Mr. Lansbury, or Mr. McCarthy, you could refer to me?—Yes.

Q. Do you know a man named Jarvis?—An old man?

Q. Do you know a man named Jarvis?—I know an old man named Jarvis.

Q. I am not alluding to an inmate?—I don't know—no, sir, I don't.

(The Inspector.) What is your next witness?

(Mr. Robb.) I thought perhaps you would call Mr. Walton.

Mr. W. WALTON, Acting Master of the Workhouse; sworn and examined.

Mr. Walton. (The Inspector.) What is your name, Mr. Walton?—William Walton.

15 June. Q. What is your office now?—Assistant master.

Q. You have been appointed master of the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. You were formerly assistant master?—Yes.

Q. How long were you assistant master?—Since 1901.

Q. What were you before that?—Master's clerk in the office at Poplar.

Q. What is the date of your first appointment at Poplar?—August, 1894.

Q. Where were you before that?—Withington Workhouse, Chorlton.

Q. Before that?—That is my first appointment.

Q. When you were assistant master, did you keep the books?—No, sir.

Q. Do you look after the stores?—Yes.

Q. Were you master's clerk as well as assistant master?—Yes.

Q. What were your duties besides looking after the stores?—To take up duties when the master was absent.

(Mr. Robb.) You were the store keeper?—Yes.

Q. And you have only relinquished that position quite recently?—I haven't yet relinquished it.

Q. You are still store keeper?—Yes.

Q. Would it be right to say that everything in connection with the stores is in a perfectly satisfactory condition?—As far as I am concerned, yes.

Q. So far as you are concerned?—Yes.

Q. Why that reservation?—I don't know what other people do; I have only my own stores to look after.

Q. I cannot hear you?—I have only my own stores to look after.

Q. What stores are there beyond those you look after?—The matron's stores and the engineer's stores.

Q. Do you look after the stores that are dealt with by way of out-relief?—No, sir.

Q. Who looks after those?—They are in this office.

Q. In this office?—Yes.

Q. Who is responsible for these?—

(The Inspector.) The out-relief distributor?—Distributor of out-relief.

Q. Who is that?—I could not tell you.

(Mr. Crooks.) Mr. Comfort.

(Mr. Robb.) That does not come under your notice?—No.

Q. How do you carry forward your details in the stock book?—In the orthodox style.

Q. No balances?—No.

Q. When are the stock books balanced up to?—At the end of every quarter.

Q. At the end of every quarter?—Yes.

Q. And then is stock taken by Mr. Maddams?—Yes.

Q. At the last quarter was there any shortage of stock on any item?—No, sir.

Q. Has any shortage of stock at any time come under your notice?—Not in my existence.

Q. You swear there has never been any discrepancy?—That is so.

Q. Never at any time?—Never at any time.

Q. You are quite sure of that?—Yes.

Q. That has not been the case with the out-relief distributor's stores?—I could not say anything about that.

(Mr. Crooks.) May I help you? Everything in connection with out-relief is done from this office, an entirely separate institution.

(Mr. Robb.) I assume the master knows something?—No.

(The Inspector.) He absolutely knows nothing.

(Mr. Robb.) You are now the responsible head of the workhouse?—For the time I am acting for the responsible head.

Q. And you have been intimately connected with it as assistant master for some years past?—Yes.

Q. And I take it you have made yourself acquainted generally with the details of the administration?—Yes, sir.

Mr. Walton.

15 June.

Q. Can you explain how it is that in-maintenance has risen from £28,573 in 1901 to £40,369 in 1905?—Is that for workhouse maintenance?

Q. It is in-maintenance given on page 23 of the comparative statement?—I cannot inform you on that.

Q. You cannot?—No.

Q. Can you assign any reason for it?—Not for that particular statement.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Isn't that for all institutions? Really you ought to be fair in figures. Read it all out.

(Mr. Robb.) I have read all there is here. In-maintenance, the item I read is in-maintenance in the workhouse. The next item is maintenance in hospitals, certified homes, &c.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Isn't Forest Gate schools there?

(Mr. Robb.) It simply says in-maintenance, and, as I say, there follows maintenance in hospitals, certified homes, &c.

(Mr. Lansbury.) There are schools outside Forest Gate.

(Mr. Robb.) I am not responsible that the accounts are not sufficiently explicit.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I fancy it is on another page.

(The Inspector.) It is set out in the statement in detail.

(Mr. Robb.) I am simply trying to get information. I am inviting this gentleman, who is the responsible head, to assign any reason, if he can, for this large increase. He tells me he cannot do it.

(Witness.) That does not concern the workhouse entirely.

(The Inspector.) You know perfectly well the cost of provisions in the workhouse has gone up enormously?—Yes.

Q. To save time you have to be frank. Do you know anything about it?—The new dietary has been responsible for £1,239 for the workhouse.

Q. Per annum?—Yes.

Q. Give us details of that?—The young men's dietary has increased 2½d. and the old people's dietary 6d.; and the young women's—

Q. What is the percentage of that increase with the original expenditure?—Have you got the year book.

Q. £18,000 a year for provisions, clothing, light, &c., in Poplar Workhouse alone?—Yes.

Q. What is the percentage of the increase for the year?—I could not tell you.

Q. On those figures it would be more than five per cent.?—I don't know.

Q. What?—I don't know.

Q. A little more than 1 in 18. 1 in 20 would be five per cent.?—Yes.

Q. 1 in 18 would be slightly more than five per cent.?—Yes.

Q. You know the cost of provisions has gone up 25 per cent.?—Since when?

Q. Look on page 46 of last year's abstract of accounts. Just take a copy of it, please?—Yes.

Q. In 1900 the average cost per head of maintenance was 5s. 6½d.; in 1905, 6s. 5½d.?—Yes.

Q. Your five per cent. on dietary, assuming that to be correct, doesn't explain that difference does it?—The necessities are somewhat larger you will find.

Q. How much?—£1,300; about the same amount.

Q. I find I took the wrong year. I should have gone to 1900. 1900 was 5s. 2d. per head per week?—I haven't that before me.

Q. That was the year we were comparing. 1905, 6s. 5½d. That is an increase of 25 per cent. is it not?—Yes.

Q. Well, now, you have explained about 5 per cent. of the increase in the cost of the dietary. How do you explain the other 20 per cent.?—There is addition on the necessities and addition on the clothing.

Q. What is the percentage in each case?—The clothing is something like 20 per cent.

Q. How much?—Nearly 20 per cent., isn't it?

(Mr. Robb.) I don't follow that.

(The Inspector.) We want to know whether this witness knows or does not know. I put it to you, when did you first come to the workhouse?—1896.

Q. The cost of provisions was 2s. 10½d. that year?—Yes.

Q. The cost in the next year 2s. 11d. and so on, till you get to your new diet, 1901. Then it was 3s. 7d.?—Yes.

Q. Then 3s. 9d., 3s. 10d. and so on; now 4s. 0½d., showing a steady increase year by year?—Yes. I don't know how that is accounted for.

Q. I will give another figure perhaps you will account for. In 1901, provisions, clothing, necessities, &c., amount to £18,622. In 1905, the same item is £24,717. Have you any explanation to give for that rise in cost?—No, sir, except the workhouse has been materially improved.

Q. Has there been any change in the dietary in the last four years?—There have been two changes.

Q. What are they?—One was pea soup for the roast beef, which accounted for £18 for the dinner, and again haricot beans were knocked out and potatoes and bread substituted.

Q. Did that account for an increase of some shillings in the cost?—Yes.

Q. You mean to say that accounts for some shillings of increase in the cost for each institution?—£18 for each dinner.

Q. When was that change?—Three years ago.

Q. £18 for the dinner on the average for the week for each inmate?—That is once a week.

Q. How many inmates are there?—About 1,200, all excepting the young men.

Q. Did that make any perceptible change?—Yes.

Q. How much?—£18 in the week.

Q. In the weekly charge per head for each inmate?—Not per head.

Q. Have you any explanation of this increase?—I haven't.

Q. You don't know?—No.

(Mr. Robb.) When do you say the last change in the dietary was made, the last material change that would increase the expenditure materially?—About three years ago; that is one instance.

Q. About three years ago?—Yes.

Q. Would that be in 1903?—I haven't the date by me.

Q. Would it be in 1903?—I could not say, sir.

Q. Has there been any change since then?—The one about eighteen months ago, when the change was from haricot beans to potatoes and bread on the Wednesday diet.

Q. Any change in cost?—Slightly.

Q. Any material change?—No, not material.

Q. But there has been an increase of 1½d. per week in the cost, hasn't there, during that period?—Yes, I believe there has.

Q. In 1903 it was 3s. 11d. per head per week. Last year 4s. 0½d., and if 1½d. is a small amount when you multiply it, it runs into money?—Yes.

Q. Can you explain that increase?—No, sir.

Q. You cannot?—No.

Q. When were the other important changes in the dietary which you say would account for the increase; when did that happen?—In October, 1901.

Q. October, 1901, and when else?—That is the only one that I remember.

Q. The only one?—For the last five years.

Q. Was there any material change between 1896 and 1901?—Several variations of the diet.

Q. Was there any change between 1899 and 1901?—On the 7th October, 1899, the Local Government Board sanctioned meat and potatoes instead of meat pies.

Q. Would that increase the cost?—It would slightly decrease.

Mr. Walton.

15 June.

Q. Was there any other alteration between 1899 and 1901?— $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of tea allowance on the scale.

Q. When was that?—7th October, 1899.

Q. Would that increase the cost?—Yes, sir.

Q. How do you account that the cost went down in 1899?—

(The Inspector.) I think I can account for that. The cost went down everywhere about that time. Provisions and other things went down after the dispersal of the stores after the war.

(Mr. Crooks.) We don't have tinned meat, do we?

(Mr. Robb.) Was there any important change that you can remember between 1896 and 1899—those three years?—On 25th March, 1898, butter was sanctioned in lieu of margarine.

Q. What date?—25th March, 1898.

Q. 1898. Was there anything in 1897?—No, sir.

Q. What?—No, sir.

Q. Well, then, how do you account for the fact that the cost rose from 2s. 10d. per head per week in 1897 to 3s. 3d. in 1898?—I cannot account for it.

(The Inspector.) The increase in cost may come from the rise in the price of provisions.

(Mr. Robb.) I appreciate that; it is open to the witness to assume that.

(The Inspector.) I hoped to get some help from this witness, but he has no theory. The point is this, the increase of cost is clear. It may be due to change in dietary; if it is not dietary, it may be due to the increased cost of provisions. If it is due to neither of these causes, there must be other causes which need investigation, such as greater waste in cooking or something of that sort.

(Mr. Robb.) The dietary we have settled; that only explains about 5 per cent. Then the cost of clothing. Was there any alteration since 1897 for clothing?—I am not in a position to say. I was merely master's clerk then.

Q. Very well, because I see that the cost dropped from 7½d. per head per week in 1896 to 5½d. in 1897.

(The Inspector.) It may be the decrease of cost is due to stocks carried forward.

(Mr. Crooks.) Thank you, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) Ever since 1897 there has been a continuous practical increase in the cost; 5½d. per week per head in 1895 to 9d. per week—nearly 50 per cent. difference?—Yes; in the clothing. In the early days the men went about with scarcely any clothing at all. Now they have double suits for going out in.

Q. Double suits?—Yes.

(Mr. Lansbury.) That would not be able-bodied men?—No, the old people.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you think Mr. Walton—I want you here to give your careful attention, and give the Inspector all the information you can. Do you think the system of tendering and contracting for supplies has had any effect on the increase in cost?—I could not say. I haven't anything to do with it, except to make up tender forms.

Q. I want your opinion?—I cannot give any opinion.

Q. You are in a position to form intelligent judgment?—

(Mr. Watts.) Didn't Mr. Davy say he wanted facts and evidence and not opinions?

(The Inspector.) I did hope the workhouse master would give us some information.

(Mr. Robb.) I want a frank reply. I want you to tell the Inspector whether in your honest judgment the method of tendering and contracting for supplies is in any way responsible for this increase of cost?—I cannot say.

Q. Has the most economical method been pursued?—The only thing I have to do is to make up the estimates for the year. I know nothing more about it, or haven't done until now.

Q. Do you mean to say you don't know it has been customary to accept tenders other than the lowest?—I have read that they have accepted other than the lowest.

(The Inspector.) You have not been consulted?—I haven't been consulted in any way, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) It is obvious that would have an effect?—Possibly it would.

Q. If you go and pay £200 or £300 more than you need pay on a particular contract, it must have an effect. Mr. Walton, I won't press you on that, if you assure us you know nothing about these tenders?—I know nothing about them at all, except to make up my own schedules for quantities.

Q. Who has been responsible for the general policy in the matter of tenders?—The guardians themselves.

Q. Is there no official who could go into the books and tell us?—Only the clerk's office.

Q. That is simply the routine work connected with it. You know all the local circumstances in connection with the workhouse?—I know of my own work, that is all.

Q. Don't be over cautious?—I am not over cautious.

Q. I appreciate your position, but I want you to be frank?—Yes.

Q. Do you know of your own knowledge any good reason why the highest tenders should have been accepted in many cases instead of the lowest?—I could not say at all.

Q. Could not say?—No, I am not in a position to have the knowledge.

Q. I don't want to be offensive. Is it that you don't want to say?—I don't know.

(The Inspector.) I may say this. Masters as a rule have nothing to do with tenders, but there are many occasions when a board of guardians are guided by the judgment of the master as to the quality of goods supplied by the lowest tenderer?—Yes.

Q. To know whether they would rule his tender out or not?—Yes.

Q. Are there any occasions where you have been consulted as to the quality of goods sent by some contractors?—I haven't been present on the night of the contracts, but I do believe there have been some representations about certain contractors not fulfilling their contracts.

Q. By the master?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you know if their contracts were cancelled?—That I don't know.

Q. Can you name the contractors?—It is some time ago now. The name—Page, I think.

Q. There is one matter I must press upon you, because we asked Mr. Madeley, and Mr. Madeley tells us he could not give the information; that you could. In November last there were some dustpans, some skewers, pails and meat-hooks supplied to the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. Who supplied them?—From memory, I think it was a man named Walber.

Q. Can you tell the price paid for each article?—

(The Inspector.) Were those goods on contract?—Out of contract.

Q. How paid for?—In the ordinary way.

Q. How?—By cheque.

Q. By whom?—By the clerk to the guardians.

(Mr. Robb.) I want to know what you paid per dustpan and so on?—I haven't it before me.

Q. Will you kindly get it? We will go on to another matter in the meantime while they are getting that.

(The Inspector.) I shall have that up now.

(Mr. Crooks.) We have got it, sir.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Lough, this bill is for £92. Was there any contract?

(Mr. Lough.) No, sir.

(The Inspector.) He is appointed to supply articles not in contract?—Yes.

Q. Does he give a schedule of prices?—Yes.

Q. He puts in the price?—In some cases tenders are obtained or a quotation given. In others the guardians check them.

Q. Who gives the orders?—The guardians.

Q. Some of the committee, I suppose?—They were on the printed tender.

(Mr. Lough.) A requisition is made by the officer requiring the goods and passed by the guardians.

(The Inspector.) There are the items, Mr. Robb.

(Mr. Robb.) We will go on to another item, Mr. Walton. Now, if you don't go in for tenders, you know generally what is going on in the workhouse. If there was any important change in any matter, you would have some knowledge of it?—If there was a new contractor, I should make myself acquainted with his goods and delivery.

Q. If any particular item of expenditure trebled in the course of four or five years, you would know something about the cost of that?—I don't go into the cost of that.

Q. Who is responsible—is there any responsible official who checks the goods as they arrive at the institution?—The master's clerk is appointed for that purpose.

Q. Who is that?—Mr. Genery.

Q. As master you would know. You would know in the future?—Any particular change in cost.

Q. It is put to you an important change?—An important change.

Q. Would you consider it your duty to watch these things?—Yes.

Q. You are not master yet?—Not yet.

Q. Didn't you consider it your duty as assistant master to do it?—No.

Q. You were called upon to act as substitute for the master when he was away?—Yes.

Q. Do you mean to say it was not your duty to make yourself acquainted approximately with the number of items of expenditure?—To be called upon to fulfil his duties does not say I am master.

Q. Is there any officer at all, anyone who can give us complete information about this institution. Where does the responsibility lie?—With the master alone.

Q. But you are the master now?—No, sir, not until the 25th June.

Q. Very well, can you explain why the cost of conveyances, travelling and other expenses have apparently risen from £540 in 1901 to £1,545 in 1905?—Yes, because all the removals are now handed over to the workhouse master to do.

Q. What removals?—Lunatics and sick cases for removal.

Q. How were they returned in 1901: under what head?—

(The Inspector.) Would they be in the relieving officers' accounts in those days?—

(Mr. Robb.) Because, you know, there was and is still a contract item for settlement and removal expenses. If you look at the return, you will find conveyances and hire account—we find the expenditure increased. Settlement and removal expenses are a separate item. They don't appear to be included.

(Mr. Lansbury.) That is another matter altogether.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, but I only want to get it. Just look.

(The Inspector.) The witness doesn't know anything about it.

(Mr. Robb.) I submit he ought to. Mr. Madeley seemed to know about nothing; Mr. Walton is in the same position?—I only know my own work.

(The Inspector.) What is your work?—Store work and doing the master's duties when he is absent.

(Mr. Robb.) Your own work and the work of the master. With regard to these conveyances, help us all you can?—We removed every case, lunatic, children, and everybody else.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Did you move the settlement cases?—Not settlement cases.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Because that is another point, Mr. Robb.

(The Inspector.) Do you remove out-door lunatics?—To the asylums.

(The Inspector.) How is that, Mr. Lough?

(Mr. Lough.) We have very few out-door lunatics. They mostly go from the workhouse. There are two ambulance attendants who do the removal work, and other workhouse officers.

(The Inspector.) Is that charged to this account?—

(Mr. Lough.) This account combined figures for the whole of the institutions paid by the guardians in any way for travelling expenses, railway fares, &c.

(The Inspector.) That was the same with the figures of the earlier date?

(Mr. Lough.) Yes.

(The Inspector.) So the comparison holds good?

(Mr. Lough.) Yes.

(The Inspector.) And Mr. Walton is not the person to account for the difference in the cost?

(Mr. Robb.) Well, sir, who is?

(The Inspector.) I think Mr. Lough will have to tell us. The matter is serious. The increase is three-fold. It would be best to get a return of different items—railway fares, trams, ambulance.

(Mr. Robb.) I wish to get as much detail as possible. When I am told that £540 in 1901 excluded certain items which are now included, I only ask to show me the head under which they are returned in 1901. I should like to know that.

(The Inspector.) We shall get that.

(Mr. Robb.) It must have appeared under some head.

(The Inspector.) That is, perhaps, as simple an item of expenditure as we could investigate—the parties who shared and the items; and you can get the contracts so you can check the cost.

(Mr. Robb.) So we will have a return. Now, we will go back. Those goods were purchased from Mr. Walber in October and November last year?—Yes.

Q. And there was no tender?—No.

Q. Mr. Walber was simply gone to?—No, he was appointed by the guardians.

Q. And this order was given without any competition?—Yes.

Q. I see you paid Mr. Walber 14s. 6d. for dust-pans. Were they sanitary dust-pans?—Yes.

Q. Would you be surprised to hear you can buy the same thing at Bow Iron Works for 6s.?—I don't know anything about that.

Q. Did Mr. Palmer, of Bow Iron Works, go to the workhouse and measure these articles?—I don't know. Some gentleman came, but I don't know who he was.

Q. Would you be surprised that Mr. Palmer supplies these very dust-pans to Mr. Walber for 6s., and Mr. Walber sells them for 14s. 6d. to you?—I don't know.

(The Inspector.) Somebody did go and measure up?—Yes, from Mr. Walber.

Q. What did he measure up?—The dust-pans and some waste pans.

(Mr. Robb.) Had he to make dust-pans exactly like the ones in the workhouse?—Yes, to pattern.

Q. And that is the reason he measured them up?—Yes.

Q. Was it in November and December last?—Just before Christmas.

Q. Why did you mention the incident?—Because he took a long time. He might have been measuring up for a Dreadnought or something.

(Mr. Lansbury.) May we have the total of the value?

(Mr. Ford.) What is the article you are quoting?

(Mr. Robb.) Dust-pans.

(Mr. Ford.) Two dust-pans?

(Mr. Robb.) I don't mind how many there are.

(Mr. Ford.) We do, when we have to pay for them?

(Mr. Robb.) It does not matter whether it was one or fifty items. The principle is the same. The item is December 6th, 1905; two sanitary dust-pans, 14s. 6d.—£1 9s.

(The Inspector.) It is suggested these dust-pans cost Mr. Walber 6s. each.

Mr. Walton,
15 June.

(Mr. Lansbury.) We shall have some witnesses on that.

(Mr. Ford.) Sold to Mr. Walber for 6s. each.

(Mr. Robb.) I said it would be a surprise.

(Mr. Lansbury.) That is a little rough.

(Mr. Robb.) I am going to call Mr. Palmer. Is that an example of what happens by going to one tradesman without competition?

(Mr. Lansbury.) You are taking it for granted.

(Mr. Robb.) That person was appointed for six months to do the work.

(The Inspector.) Do you know anything about the price of such things?—No, sir, unless we get the price.

Q. Have you any experience in that sort of work. Could you tell about the fair price?—Yes.

Q. If you found that price exceeded, as workhouse master, what would you do?—Refer it to committee.

(Mr. Crooks.) Here's the gentleman's bill who made the articles on which such an abnormal profit was made. See how fictitious the figures are. Perhaps it would be as well to keep that until the witness comes.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Impound them.

(Mr. Crooks.) The witness is going to swear it was 6s., or he promised to swear.

(Mr. Lansbury.) We want you to read that out when the witness is here. We don't want you to read it out now, except to correct it for the press. Would you mind reading?

(The Inspector.) I cannot read it. I cannot understand it.

(Mr. Lansbury.) It is the next one.

(Mr. Crooks.) The typed bill.

(Mr. Lansbury.) It is two dust-pans.

(The Inspector.) It is to Edward Shrine and Co.

(Mr. Lansbury.) The same firm.

(Mr. Crooks.) When you are trading you have all sorts of names.

(The Inspector.) Is that the invoice to the guardians?

(Mr. Lansbury.) No, sir, to Walber.

(Mr. Robb.) Is that a serious statement that contractors trade under different names?

(Mr. Crooks.) If this contractor's name is Walber, it is different to what is on the bill.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Would you hand that to me, Mr. Davy? Mr. Robb has made a suggestion that the contractor got those pans that you get there for 10s., that he got them at 6s. We have also got information, which is not sworn to, that they cost 10s. 6d., and I submit to you that we are as much entitled to put that before Mr. Davy to-day.

(The Inspector.) What puzzles me is that in one case the man is called Walber, and in the other case it is debited to Edward Shrine and Co.

(Mr. Robb.) I don't care whether it is ten shillings or six shillings.

(The Inspector.) I think we have got as far as we can to-day. Can we do anything about sitting a little more often.

(Mr. Robb.) After next week, I thought Wednesday. You see some of us made our arrangements on the basis of Thursday and Friday.

(Mr. Crooks.) Could you do Monday instead of Wednesday?

(Mr. Robb.) It is impossible. After next week any arrangement I shall fall in with.

(Mr. Crooks.) We can talk about three days. Monday, Thursday and Friday, or Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

(The Inspector.) How would Wednesday suit you?

(Mr. Robb.) Monday, Thursday and Friday.

(The Inspector.) Yes.

(Mr. Crooks.) Thank you.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Oh, the glorious head-lines in the *Daily Mail* to-morrow. You don't mind, Mr. Davy, but I do. It doesn't matter to you in the least, but it does to me.

(Mr. Robb.) I will call Mr. Palmer. The point I make is that the guardians should go to a manufacturer in the district or should obtain tenders and not go to one tradesman, who obtains goods from another tradesman in the district.

(Mr. Sumner.) I think also—as well as having contractors we should have workmen who say the working price.

(Mr. Robb.) Are there many instances of goods ordered in this way?—No, sir.

Q. Now about Mr. Pyles' account, the ironmonger. How much last year was in contract and how much out of contract?—He has nothing out of contract.

Q. We have one item sworn to by the doctor—the gas stove, out of contract?—Those not in contract the guardians make a contract with Mr. Palmer for the estimates.

Q. Was it a competitive contract?—Yes.

Q. How do you account that there is no entry in here?—The articles were not in contract and I left it open for the names to be filled in.

Q. It is not open to competition; the names are filled in?—It is filled in with the advertisement.

Q. After competition?—Yes.

(Mr. Crooks.) The point is: The guardians, then, in turn advertise, and prices are submitted, and whatever tenders are accepted are filled in. It is done for everything.

(Mr. Robb.) Show me the advertisement and the tenders accepted for this contract which went to Walber?—In that case there were no outside schedules. He was appointed for the six months to supply articles not in contract.

Q. Without competition?—Without competition.

Q. I suggest this is done in other cases?—

(The Inspector.) Here is one case where pursuant to notice on the agenda the guardians considered tenders for ironmonger in February last. "Resolved that the 'lowest tender, that of Pine and Cohen—£4 17s.—, be 'accepted.' That was a case.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you say, then, that this was the only example last year of goods obtained without competition?—Certainly not.

Q. There were many other instances of it?—Yes, we have about 14 or 15 appointed.

Q. This invoice of Mr. Walber, £92?—That might be the sum total.

Q. I suppose it would be desirable if you only save 4s. 6d. upon two pans, to do it?—Yes.

Q. Can you explain why matters of this kind are not thrown open to public tender?—I cannot explain that.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I should like to ask, Mr. Davy, about the social and industrial condition of the union. We will need to put before you a good deal of evidence in regard to that.

(The Inspector.) Yes.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I take it you won't commence that until you have finished with the administration of the guardians?

(The Inspector.) I have great hopes of getting through the Inquiry soon. Get outside the workhouse: then we have evidence about out-door relief, which cannot be so long, and not quite so personal perhaps. Then there will be a short day, I hope, about Laidon. Of course, we have evidence of the police to come. Then we shall be able to tackle the other part of the Inquiry.

(Mr. Crooks.) That is the problems of poverty and the financial condition of the district?

(The Inspector.) The financial difficulties of Poplar.

(Mr. Lansbury.) How is it to be submitted?

(The Inspector.) Whichever way you think it is best to submit it.

(Mr. Watts.) Didn't we understand that you accepted the offer of some of the guardians to give you some information?

(The Inspector.) Quite.

(Mr. Crooks.) Whatever we may do we must do publicly. There is one hint we may be forgiven for giving the Municipal Alliance. In the great works of the district, which are alleged to be moving in consequence of the excessive rates, evidence will come for or against. It may or it may not. We think it won't. I should like them to give us this information, as to what firm of any standing in the borough whose capital has been written down during the last five or six years in consequence of the excessive rates—whose capital was written down—people who were poorer and obliged to fly from the district. We have got to a very wide subject.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Some large employers can give us information, and I must apply for it. I am on the assessment committee of the district and we had considerable difficulty in arriving at the assessment of the London and India Docks Company, and Mr. Broodbank, secretary of that company, came before the committee and submitted a series of figures in regard to the amount of trade in those particular docks; but, what was

germane to this Inquiry, he submitted the amount of wages that company had paid during the last three or four years. Well, will Mr. Robb's clients help us by getting these figures?

(Mr. Robb.) I don't know anything about this. That is a matter of the assessment committee.

(The Inspector.) There is a good deal of the matter in the Board of Trade returns.

(Mr. Lansbury.) That is the money wages paid in the district. Will it be in your power to summon Mr. Broodbank here to give evidence?

(The Inspector.) I shall have to think about that.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I want to submit that for your consideration. As you know part of our case is that there has been a great deal of poverty in the district caused by lack of employment. Mr. Broodbank bore that out when appealing for a lowering of assessment by saying he paid so many pounds less in wages than in previous years. What I want to ask is can we get Mr. Broodbank here for that evidence and I will ask you on another occasion whether you will summon him.

(The Inspector.) It might be the only place in Poplar where it is. He might pay less and another man might pay more.

(Mr. Lansbury.) It is not what he pays per man. That is the crux. I shall apply to you again.

(Mr. Crooks.) Thursday, at eleven, sir?

(The Inspector.) Yes.

FIFTH DAY.

Thursday, 21st June, 1906.

(Mr. Grant.) I shall only ask permission to mention that since the last meeting I have been instructed to appear on behalf of the guardians. I shall have to appeal to you for a little mercy for a day or two, because coming into the Inquiry after it has begun I haven't had an opportunity of mastering the whole matter, but I shall do my best during to-day and to-morrow. After those two days I shall be up with you and be able to present our case before you.

(The Inspector.) Where have we got to, Mr. Robb?

(Mr. Robb.) We were cross-examining the last witness, who was adjourned last time.

(The Inspector.) Any more witnesses.

(Mr. Robb.) Several more.

(The Inspector.) I am very anxious, Mr. Grant, to expedite this Inquiry. It must not be too long. That is certain. I am rather anxious to get this department of it finished, so that we may start on the out-door relief. It will give you more time.

(Mr. Grant.) I have only had an opportunity of glancing through the shorthand notes hurriedly. I understand this Inquiry takes two branches. There is the Inquiry initiated by the Local Government Board and contained in your Memorandum as I understand it, an allegation against the policy of the guardians, not of maladministration, but within their powers as guardians, of having done things which necessitate enquiry. That is to say, of course, if they had gone outside their legal powers the Local Government Board could have dealt with the matter in an entirely different way, but if I understand the Memorandum rightly, what I understand is that you, as Local Government Board Inspector, had to go into the financial position of the guardians; that you went into it and drew up what I may call an indictment of the guardians, and that indictment was no charge—no personal charge—against any of the guardians at all, but was an allegation that their policy was one which either was unwise or was new. Now, sir, on that comes another body into the Inquiry—the municipal alliance, I think it is called, and

they make a series of charges which are of an entirely different character and these do involve charges of the character I have mentioned.

(Mr. Robb.) Sir—

(Mr. Grant.) Don't interrupt me.

(Mr. Robb.) We must—

(Mr. Grant.) I must not be interrupted.

(Mr. Robb.) I shall address you at the proper time.

(Mr. Grant.) What I want to put before you is the position. The municipal alliance come with a list of charges, and these we are most anxious to meet; but instead of these charges being put before you in the ordinary and regular form, charges made and proved by evidence, because of the form of procedure which has been adopted they have been allowed to allege their charges first of all in cross-examination, before they have given any proof. I don't object to that at all, but on behalf of the guardians I say that, that having been done I cannot consent, on their behalf, to this Inquiry closing until every one of the charges Mr. Robb has made has been examined to see whether it is true or false. We shall be prepared at the proper time to meet them, but without any notice of them, without a single allegation of fact against us, and with nothing but a broad general charge in their letter, they have been allowed to cross-examine in regard to their charges.

(The Inspector.) You know why they have been allowed to cross-examine: so as to enable them to bring such evidence as they deem necessary.

(Mr. Grant.) We have got to a certain point, and we are not going back on what has been done, but I hope you will allow me to meet those charges.

(The Inspector.) You will have an ample opportunity of meeting every charge.

(Mr. Grant.) That is all I want.

(The Inspector.) I feel you can rely upon a gentleman of Mr. Robb's standing to produce the evidence.

(Mr. Grant.) Quite so.

(Mr. Robb.) Sir—

(Mr. Grant.) I am standing up. I haven't finished. Mr. Davy, you know when I have finished addressing you I shall sit down. What I want to ask is this—as I understand, I may still not be in full possession of the situation, but, as I understand at the present time, it is Mr. Robb who is calling his evidence.

(The Inspector.) No, I call them. There are certain witnesses I am intending to call. I have called the workhouse master as to the administration, and the medical officer was called by me. Several of the relieving officers will be called by me.

(Mr. Grant.) I didn't know that you called Mr. Jacobs.

(The Inspector.) No, I allowed Jacobs to be called because the master, I understood, was going abroad.

(Mr. Grant.) The thing has got tangled from my point of view. We want to have Mr. Robb's charges and Mr. Robb's evidence disposed of first and then take the evidence you are going to call and dispose of that, and then we shall have our reply. What I want to point out is that the Local Government Board or you and Mr. Robb, representing the municipal alliance, are making charges of different kinds. The Inquiry has got crossed and a man who is making a charge is allowed to cross-examine before he has put in any proof at all, which I venture to suggest is not in accordance with ordinary procedure.

(The Inspector.) I don't argue with you.

(Mr. Grant.) I want to point out how I am here and have the whole of the proceedings on behalf of the guardians in my own hands; there will be only one mouth to address you instead of more than one as in the past. I shall understand what our proceedings are going to be in the future, as I understand in one way or another the two sets of charges will be disposed of first of all and then you will give me an opportunity of calling evidence.

(The Inspector.) You shall have every opportunity.

(Mr. Robb.) Allow me to say a word. I strongly object to any attempt to revert to the tactics which, as I under-

stand, were disposed of on the first day of this Inquiry. I don't shrink from any responsibility in this Inquiry, but I want it clear at the outset that the only charges—if charges they can be called—levelled by the municipal alliance, were those contained in my letter to you of the 31st May last, which did not involve anything of a personal character against the guardians. I think you will bear me out that anything of a personal character which has been imported into this Inquiry has been so from testimony of the guardians' own officials. That being so, I fail to understand or appreciate the views of the learned counsel. I understand that you are enquiring into certain matters, that you are putting certain officials of the board into the box, and if those officials choose in the course of their evidence to make charges against their masters and superiors and take the responsibility of doing so, then that is a matter germane to this Inquiry, and it is a matter on which I conceive that, subject to your ruling, I am entitled to cross-examine. The only charges levelled by the alliance are charges levelled in no vindictive spirit, but against the system. We don't care about individuals. It is the system we attack. It may be necessary in the course of the Inquiry to refer to the conduct of certain individuals, and if that is brought into question on the sworn testimony of the officials themselves, I cannot conceive how it can be excluded. I disclaim at the outset the position of prosecutor, and I will not be driven by Mr. Crooks, or Mr. Corrie Grant, into that position of prosecutor. I am simply here to support the matters I referred to in my letter of 31st May, which was directed against the general administration of the board; but I conceive you will not, after what has occurred, disallow questions relating to the conduct of the guardians or officials, after the allegations we have had made, not by the alliance, but by the officials themselves.

(The Inspector.) I don't propose to enter into this discussion. Any question which is going to throw any light on the extraordinary increase in the cost of this union, I am going to admit, and I am perfectly sure some of the guardians will be only too glad that this matter should be properly brought out.

Mr. W. WALTON; recalled, and further examined.

Mr. Walton,
—
21 June.
—

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Walton, I think you told us on the last occasion you had been provisionally appointed master?—That is so, yes.

Q. I think your wife is provisionally assistant matron?—That is so.

Q. You told us your own experience. Has your wife had any experience of workhouse management?—She has not, only by living in the house for three months.

Q. Only by living in the house three months?—Yes.

Q. Do you think that she is qualified to cope with the state of things which, it is alleged, exists at the workhouse?

(Mr. Grant.) I must object to a question like that.

(The Inspector.) All right.

(Mr. Robb.) Well, I take it she has had only three months' experience in the workhouse?—She has been with me on many occasions.

Q. What experience has she had as an official?—She has never been an official.

Q. She has not been an official?—No.

(The Inspector.) Perhaps, Mr. Robb, you are not aware of the procedure. The master is appointed and within a certain number of months the guardians can get rid of him. Before he is made a permanent officer the Local Government Board have to sanction his appointment.

(Mr. Robb.) I understand; it was with a view to that that I put my question. Now, on the last occasion questions were put to you as to the tenders. Is it a fact that the tenders are invariably accepted in bulk?—Yes, always accepted in bulk.

(Mr. Grant.) Again, I raise an objection. Mr. Walton is provisionally appointed master. Tenders don't come to him. The proper person to ask is the official who deals with them.

(The Inspector.) I have general knowledge of it. He knows as well as possible. He must know. He knows it as a result of tenders being invited.

(Mr. Grant.) Unless I object it will be said the evidence has been admitted. When you ask about the tenders, the next thing will be to ask questions about things in the tender, and I say he does not know. There are many people who will give technical evidence.

(Mr. Robb.) I have been unable to discover these witnesses, because Mr. Madeley knew nothing.

(The Inspector.) My procedure is going to be this. Mr. Oxley, at my direction, has gone carefully through the whole of the tenders, the method, system, cost, and whether the highest or lowest tenders were accepted. I am going to put Mr. Oxley in the box.

(Mr. Grant.) Surely that justifies my objection.

(Mr. Robb.) I may be allowed to put one other point. Has any instance come under your notice of fictitious prices being quoted for certain items in the tenders?—I haven't noticed any. In fact I don't look at the prices.

Q. I suppose you would recognize that the invariable acceptance of tenders in bulk might lead to that?—I dare say it might do so.

Q. You dare say it might?—Yes.

Q. You will agree that the invariable acceptance of tenders in that form is open to objection?—Yes, the tender forms are made up in bulk and the articles we want from certain tradesmen.

Q. The tender forms consist principally of different articles which are priced separately?—Yes.

Q. Has any instance of fictitious prices come under your notice?—No.

Q. You were the storekeeper?—Yes.

Q. And I suppose as storekeeper the prices would come within your province?—No, they did not.

Mr. Walton.

21 June.

(The Inspector.) If you don't look at the prices how do you fill up your miscellaneous and necessary account?—The master's clerk does that.

(Mr. Robb.) You know nothing about the prices?—Nothing at all. It rests with the master's clerk to check the prices.

Q. Have you kept any book or storekeeper's list?—I prepare my own list for the stores.

Q. For the stores?—Yes.

Q. Do you not enter the prices on that list?—No.

Q. Do you as storekeeper keep any book of any kind in which the prices are returned?—No, sir.

Q. That you swear?—Yes. I have a copy with the prices in the master's office—a few of the prices on a list.

(The Inspector.) You mean as master or storekeeper?—As master.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you know anything. Is it any good my asking you about specified items; for instance, small-tooth combs?—No.

Q. Do you know anything about the tender?—No.

Q. Can you explain, for instance, why?—

(Mr. Grant.) After a witness has said he doesn't know, is Mr. Robb entitled to go further?

(The Inspector.) This witness oughtn't to be so troublesome.

(Mr. Robb.) I understand he is only provisionally appointed master. He would have as master certain duties, but up to now he has been storekeeper.

(The Inspector.) He has been acting master since 4th February. Were you assistant master before that?—Yes.

Q. We want to know the system?

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Oxley is coming and will cover the present system.

(The Inspector.) No, he does not. I know the work of the master, and it is only fair to the witness that he should be asked; I give him an opportunity of saying something.

(Mr. Grant.) If you would ask him there would be no difficulty. Mr. Robb knows nothing about the administration. He is wandering all over the desert.

(Mr. Robb.) The object is to extract information. Now, Mr. Walton, what was the price of small-tooth combs in 1902?

(The Inspector.) He might legitimately not know. Mr. Oxley will give us that.

(Mr. Robb.) Will you have it looked up and give it after the adjournment, and the number of gross ordered, and similar information, please, with regard to 1903. The number of gross ordered?

(The Inspector.) We shall get that, Mr. Robb.

(Mr. Robb.) If you please, sir. Now, when did you relinquish your duties as store keeper?—I am still storekeeper.

Q. What is your stock of bed ticking at the present time?—That is in the matron's stores. I have nothing at all to do with the matron's stores, and these articles are in the matron's stores.

Q. You have nothing to do with the matron's stores?—No.

Q. Do you suggest you pass that to her in bulk?—She has always received her goods except when away.

Q. Do you suggest the matron receives her own goods direct?—Yes.

Q. They don't pass through the general stores?—They don't.

Q. How long has that gone on?—Since I have known Poplar.

Q. Who keeps the matron's store book?—Herself.

Q. Where is that book at the present time?—At the workhouse.

Q. She keeps that book herself?—Yes.

Q. Can you give us any information on the subject of bed-ticking?—No.

Q. Can you suggest anyone who can, as we know the matron has gone?—The assistant matron might possibly know.

Q. Miss Usher?—Yes.

Q. You told us on the last occasion that you received the meat?—Yes.

Q. And I suppose you examined it?—Yes, sir.

Q. Well, then, we know best English ox beef and good wether legs of mutton are specified?—Yes.

Q. It is your duty to see you get what is specified?—Yes.

Q. What is the wether leg of mutton?—It is hard to tell what the leg of mutton is.

Q. What is a wether leg of mutton?—It is the male sheep, as it were, of twelve months.

Q. Oh, is that all you know about it. What are the characteristics of a wether leg of mutton to distinguish it from frozen meat?—The term wether is an applied term, I think.

Q. What are the characteristics of a wether leg of mutton, by which you would distinguish it from frozen meat?—

(The Inspector.) You mean an English wether leg?—I have seen no frozen meat in there.

(Mr. Robb.) You would know it if you had seen it?—Yes.

Q. How?—By the liquor in it, or the colour.

Q. Can you tell me by what characteristics you know the English wether leg of mutton when you get it?—I am afraid I cannot tell you.

(The Inspector.) You said just now that you told it was frozen meat, by what?—That is not the question.

Q. I am asking the question. You said, "I tell it by"—Frozen meat?

Q. How do you tell it?—By the colour of it.

(Mr. Robb.) How would you distinguish between the meat of a wether and the meat of a tup?—I am not learned in that direction.

Q. How would you know whether prime legs were off a wether or off a tup?—I am not a butcher; I cannot.

Q. If you cannot distinguish, do you think it is any good specifying that prime quality of beef?—That is the guardians' orders.

Q. Yes, but I mean what is the object of specifying these prime joints of meat if you cannot tell them?—

(Mr. Grant.) I must interrupt you. The witness hasn't said he cannot tell. He cannot describe in technical language the characteristics of a wether leg, which is an entirely different matter.

(The Inspector.) Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) Ask him to tell us his experience of handling the meat.

(The Inspector.) The suggestion is that the means of checking the supply of mutton are small. As to what they are—

(Mr. Grant.) I only proceed to protect the witness. He did not state what Mr. Robb was putting into his mouth.

(Mr. Robb.) What is the difference between a wether leg and the leg of a tup?—

(Mr. Grant.) Do you know what the leg of a tup is?—I haven't had the description of a tup.

(Mr. Robb.) You don't know the difference between a wether and a tup?—No.

(Mr. Grant.) Surely cross-examining counsel is not entitled to put—

(The Inspector.) If you leave this matter in my hands it will be fair to the witness.

(Mr. Grant.) I have a duty to perform just as much as you have. When an unintelligible question is put, I have a right to know if the witness knows what is the question. He told Mr. Robb he doesn't know what the leg of a tup is.

(Mr. Robb.) T U P.

(Mr. Grant.) Even now I don't know.

Mr. Walton.
1—
21 June.

(The Inspector.) Because the question is unintelligible to you, it does not follow that it is unintelligible to me or the witness.

(Mr. Grant.) He said he did not know what a tup was.

(Mr. Robb.) I shall be tempted to suggest that my friend's knowledge of meat is as unlimited as mine of Poor Law. Do you know what a tup is?—I have heard the term.

Q. You are the responsible officer. You have to examine the meat to see it is up to sample?—Yes.

Q. I want to know what you know about it?—I have never received any but one class of meat since I have been there, and it has always been of the same quality.

Q. The point is this; a high quality of meat is specified?—Yes, and we received high quality.

Q. Are you in a position to judge?—I am, of what we receive.

Q. Do you know whether prime English meat is specified?—Yes, that is the term, I believe.

Q. What is the distinction between wether and tup?—A tup must be an old one.

Q. Well you have got it at last. That is all you are able to tell us about it?—The only thing I can say, I have always received good class meat. The master usually examines it first, in the morning. I haven't much opportunity except on Sundays.

Q. He is responsible now in addition to yourself. Anybody else?—Nobody else.

Q. No one?—Not at the present time.

Q. Did any of the guardians examine it?—Occasionally, yes.

Q. Do you remember an occasion last September when Mr. Gibbs, a guardian, examined the meat?—I was not there, sir.

Q. At the store?—No, sir.

Q. You ought to have been in the store last September?—The meat is not in the store. It is in the larder.

Q. Does the larder adjoin the store?—Adjoins the kitchen away from the store.

Q. You remember that examination by Mr. Gibbs, one of the guardians?—I don't recollect it.

Q. Have you heard anything about it?—No.

Q. Come, Mr. Walton?—I don't recollect.

(Mr. Grant.) I can help my friend at once. Mr. Gibbs is behind me. He tells me the meat he examined wasn't the meat for the workhouse, but was out-door meat, and you shall hear all about it presently.

(Mr. Robb.) I don't mind what the meat was for. It was meat purchased by the guardians.

(The Inspector.) Does this fall within the purview of the master?

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Madeley told us you were responsible for the beer?—Yes.

Q. As store-keeper?—Yes.

Q. What becomes of the ten per cent. waste?—Well, it is wasted in serving, in spilling, tapping and leakages.

Q. What?—In spilling, tapping and leakages.

Q. Ten per cent.?—About ten per cent.

(Mr. Grant.) This question has been raised before. The ten per cent. is an allowance to the officers. They have to account for everything except ten per cent.

(The Inspector.) You have to account for the ten per cent. now.

(Mr. Robb.) I am afraid I omitted a question. I don't want to be snapped up. The question about the mutton. I don't know whether you will allow me to return. Does the witness know the difference between Dutch and English mutton?—

(The Inspector.) He tells us he is not an expert, but he knows frozen meat when he sees it?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) What becomes of the ten per cent. of the beer?—Waste in spilling, tapping, leakage in drawing and serving out.

Q. In serving out?—Yes, I always allow the officers half a pint—about ten per cent.

Q. And it is always ten per cent.?—That is an allowance.

Q. It is a constant figure?—It is an approximate allowance.

Q. It is always charged up?—Yes, either less or more.

Q. Isn't it a fact that ten per cent. is a constant figure?—It is a constant figure, no matter how much the beer is charged up—whether 600 or twenty.

Q. And that waste is always adopted?—Yes.

Q. Have you any other explanation to give?—No, sir, I haven't, except the old people who serve it out may have a drop of the waste in washing the cans.

Q. Yes, anyone else?—No, sir.

Q. Do you swear that you have never seen anyone else with the exception of the inmates drinking that beer. Do you pledge yourself to that?—I am now talking about the waste.

Q. We shall speak of the beer generally. Do you pledge yourself you have never seen anyone but the inmates drinking that beer?—I have seen people drinking the beer.

Q. Who?—The guardians and the master.

Q. You have seen the guardians drinking beer?—Yes.

Q. Where?—In the cellar.

Q. Who have you seen drinking the beer there?—Well, most of the guardians, at various times.

Q. There was a counter there, was there not?—Yes.

Q. With a number of glasses on?—Yes, what I serve on. The glasses are on a side table, not on the counter.

Q. What are the glasses kept in the cellar for?—For drinking purposes.

Q. Who by?—By the master, or who like to go down.

Q. Who like to go down?—Who the master liked to take down.

Q. The guardians, for instance?—Yes.

Q. And who did the master take down with the exception of the guardians, apart from the guardians?—He has taken friends down there.

Q. Now I want you to tell me this: has the master ever taken any of the contractors down there?—They have been down there with him.

Q. Drinking beer?—I cannot say they were drinking beer.

Q. They would not go there to examine the decorations, or anything of that sort?—No, sir, I don't suppose they would.

Q. Can you suggest any other purpose they would have gone down there for?—No.

Q. Now, the names of the contractors who have been down in the cellar with the master?—I have seen Mr. Whitlock.

Q. Mr. Whitlock is the milk contractor?—Yes. Mr. Pyle and Mr. Kirk, and several of them have gone down there.

Q. Who else: Kirk?—Yes.

Q. Is he Mr. Whitlock's partner?—I could not say.

Q. Anyone else?—No, sir, not that I remember.

Q. Anyone else. What do you suggest these persons went to the cellar for?—I suppose they went to drink some of the beer.

Q. Some of the waste?—No, sir, the master's beer.

Q. The master's beer?—Yes.

Q. You have a record how much beer came in for the master?—I always ordered his barrels separately.

Q. He would want a lot of beer, wouldn't he?—The barrel holds nearly 600 glasses.

Q. Doing all this entertaining. Do you keep a separate record for the master's beer?—Only by the delivery notes. I keep no separate record.

Q. Who supplies it?—Whitbread's.

Q. The contractors?—Yes.

Q. The contractors for the guardians. Do you get a separate invoice?—He had his own invoices.

Mr. Walton.
21 June.

Q. Did you see him have them?—Yes, sir.

Q. What has become of them, do you know?—I think he has them.

(The Inspector.) I have got some of them.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you know anything about the margarine?

(The Inspector.) The master has sent me some of his beer invoices.

(Mr. Grant.) I understand that?—The present margarine?

(Mr. Robb.) Yes?—Yes.

Q. Whose is it?—

(The Inspector.) The brand?—Van den Berg's double crown.

(Mr. Robb.) Van den Berg's double crown?—Yes.

Q. How is it supplied?—In 24 lb. boxes.

Q. 24 lb. boxes. Are they made up in 2 lb. rolls?—Yes.

Q. That is a more expensive method of buying them than by the cwt. or half cwt.?—I should say it was.

Q. What is the object of the more expensive way?—I could not tell you. I had no idea it was going in the schedule. I did not even estimate for it.

Q. Is it a method of buying which commends itself to your judgment?—I should prefer it in cwt. baskets.

Q. Because it is to be divided again in small pats of half-ounce?—That is so.

Q. Do you know to what extent the cost is increased by this method of buying?—I could not say, but I should think there is a slight difference in the cost of packing.

Q. A slight difference?—Yes.

Q. You formerly had another brand of margarine, I think?—Some years ago we had Le Dansk.

Q. What do you pay for Van den Berg's per cwt. at the present time?—72s., I think, or 75s.

Q. What used you to pay for Le Dansk?—I could not say certainly, but I think it was about 64s.

Q. Wasn't it from 56s. to 60s.?—Something like that. But we had it in bulk then.

Q. Was there anything wrong with Le Dansk's that you gave it up?—No, sir, we did not give it up.

Q. How was it that you gave up butter. You only specified one brand of margarine?—I did not specify anything.

Q. So there was no reason for it?—I could not give any reason.

(The Inspector.) He would not know.

(Mr. Robb.) As far as you are aware was any complaint ever made regarding the cheaper brand?—No.

Q. Do you know what the market price of Van den Berg's double crown is?—I have never looked for it.

Q. Do you think it is purchased in the best possible manner by specifying that brand alone?

(The Inspector.) That is a matter of judgment for the guardians. He has told us there is no advantage in having margarine in 2 lb. rolls.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes. Now during your term of office as store-keeper, how often have you had to reject goods?—Many a time, sir.

Q. Have you got a record of your rejections?—Yes, sir, I have. They are always reported in the master's journal.

Q. In the master's journal?—Yes.

Q. Have you ever rejected any meat supplied by Messrs. Blott?—Only in small portions.

(Mr. Grant.) I don't think the witness ought to be asked these questions. He said it is all in writing. He has had no notice. The books can be sent for, with every instance in which the meat was rejected. Presently he will be charged with not giving proper evidence. The proper thing is to send for the books.

(The Inspector.) In what form are the books?—The master's written journal.

Q. Was that your book before you were master?—No the master's own journal.

Q. Do you keep the books still?—Yes.

Q. Have you had occasion to reject any goods since you came into office?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) I ask that we have the books sent for.

(The Inspector.) They are not his books.

(Mr. Grant.) They are the guardians' books. I want to have the proper information. To ask the witness what he knows for a series of years when everything is entered in the books is not fair.

(Mr. Robb.) If my friend had been here, he would have known that the master swore he did not keep any books at all.

(Mr. Grant.) That is a perfectly irrelevant observation. The witness has sworn he has rejected meat and entered any rejection in the books.

(The Inspector.) Have you a rejection book?—No.

Q. How did you enter the rejections of the meat?—By simply so and so was returned to the contractor.

Q. You put it in your own book?—No, not a book at all. In the master's journal.

Q. Did you write?—Not in regard to the meat. I write so and so has been returned.

Q. To whom?—To the guardians. Every fortnight, to the fortnightly meeting.

Q. Was that on a strip or in a book?—In the master's journal. I have always copied it for him.

(Mr. Grant.) Then we can get it?

(The Inspector.) Send for the book.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you swear you have kept that book?—I have written it up for him as his assistant.

Q. You have told us just now that you hadn't, distinctly. We have been told with regard to labour that outside labour is exclusively employed in the workhouse?—Not exclusively; for all works.

Q. For all works?—Yes.

Q. And you have or had a labour master?—Yes.

Q. And two assistants?—Yes.

Q. Well, now, has any instance of labour come under your personal notice?—The cost of labour?

Q. Yes. You have complained of the excessive cost of labour?—I might have made remarks, but I have complained to no one.

Q. You commented upon it?—I might have done.

Q. I think you very properly complained, if I may say so, of the excessive cost of papering your sitting-room in July, 1904?—Any complaint I made was to the painter that they were too long.

Q. What is the size of your sitting room?—Eighteen by twelve, I think.

Q. Now is it a fact that in doing that up, in papering and white-washing, that £12 16s. was spent on labour alone?—No, sir.

Q. What?—No, sir, I don't think it is £12 16s.

(The Inspector.) Have you to pay for the labour yourself?—I didn't.

(Mr. Robb.) You told us the matter you commented upon came under your special notice?—Yes.

Q. What did the labour cost?—I haven't the figures before me.

Q. Were the men hovering about a long time?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Would that be shown in your books, Mr. Lough?

(Mr. Lough.) The check sheets.

(The Inspector.) We shall have that book.

(Mr. Robb.) Were the men there a long time?—A considerable time.

Q. Did you complain?—I didn't complain except to the painter.

Q. You thought it was not the proper state of things?—It was my own room, and I thought they were keeping me out too long.

Mr. Walton.

21 June.

Q. Keeping you out of it too long. Didn't it strike you from any other than a personal point of view?—The painter explained that he had another job on, and he had not sufficient men to put on.

Q. Do you know what it cost altogether; including material to do that room up?—Not without the books.

(The Inspector.) We shall get that?—I might say before he put the paper on he had to burn the paint off the wall and burn a hundred-weight of paint off.

(Mr. Robb.) Well, assuming my information is correct, it was £12 16s. for labour, with the foreman: would that strike you as reasonable for labour on a small room like that?—No, it would not.

Q. The ordinary thing would be about £4 or £5?—I should think about that.

Q. Do you know anything about the new floor at the chapel?—It was laid some time about three years ago.

Q. Did any complaint as to that come under your notice?—No.

Q. Deal with the question of labour?—I think the floor was laid by outside people.

Q. Yes, you know nothing about it?—No, sir, I don't.

Q. Now have you, as storekeeper issued any goods to the late master or matron, or either of them, since the date of their resignation?—I have issued several things to the matron.

Q. You have?—Yes.

Q. Have you a list of these things?—They are entered in the book, yes.

Q. What did they consist of?—Without the book I could not say. Several odds and ends she wanted for the kitchen.

Q. Have you issued other things—provisions—since the date of the resignation?—Only odds and ends for her kitchen.

Q. New domestic utensils?—Yes.

Q. Will you hand in a list to the Inspector of everything you supplied from store to the late master and matron since their resignation?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Will that appear in your necessities account?—No, sir, in the inventory book.

(Mr. Robb.) Are these in the house. Will you ascertain?—They are in the master's kitchen, I believe. The inventory is in the house, I believe. The matron left to-day.

Q. Is it a fact that while you were assistant master your family used to spend Sunday at the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. Took meals there?—Yes.

Q. Was that in accordance with the regulations?—The master authorised it. I was on duty from eleven in the morning to eleven at night.

(The Inspector.) How many of your family?—Wife and three children.

Q. What age?—Three, four and a half, and eight.

(Mr. Grant.) Three, four and a half, and eight?—Nearly nine.

(Mr. Robb.) Four people taking meals there every Sunday?—Not every Sunday.

Q. Usually on Sunday?—When I was on duty.

Q. Were you on duty usually when the master was away?—Yes.

Q. And so this sanction to entertain your family was given by the master in consideration of your performing his duties when he was away?—He authorised me to have my dinner there.

Q. I want to be quite fair to you, Mr. Walton. The master was frequently away?—Yes. I have here a record of my attendances.

(The Inspector.) We shall have that.

(Mr. Robb.) And you were obliged to be constantly there performing extra duties?—Yes.

Q. And in consideration of that your family were allowed to be entertained?—I don't know whether on that consideration or not.

(The Inspector.) The master was not drawing his own rations, and you had them?—The matron had her rations.

(Mr. Robb.) Did the guardians know that the master was so frequently away?—I don't know that they did as a body.

Q. Well now, a gentleman who came 361 times a year must have known something of what was going on?—Yes.

Q. You don't suggest that Mr. McCarthy had no knowledge of what was transpiring?—I think he had knowledge of the master's absence.

(The Inspector.) (referring to slip.) What does this mean?—It is a weekly summary.

Q. The number of hours on duty?—Yes.

Q. And what does this red ink mean?—That is the number of hours per day.

Q. This is a summary of the rest?—Yes.

Q. What number of hours would you work in ordinary circumstances?—56.

Q. That is eight hours a day?—Yes. Dinner hour less—seven hours.

Q. Seven hours a day, and, as a matter of fact, 10½?—Yes, including Sundays.

Q. And the reason?—The master's absence.

Q. In those circumstances your wife and children came into the workhouse on Sundays?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) May we have the facts or the notes about it—from what source the figures come—where has the record been kept?—From the gate porter's book.

(The Inspector.) I understand from the gate porter's book.

(Mr. Grant.) I want it clearly on the notes. The attendances have been entered in the gate porter's book?—Yes.

Q. As they have occurred?—Each incoming and outgoing.

Q. And this shows you were doing three hours' work a day more than you ought to do?—More than three hours.

Q. At least more than three hours a day which were not in your duties?—Yes.

Q. Were you paid for that in any way?—No.

Q. We might have the document identified for the sake of the notes. It begins on June 7th, 1904, showing the hours worked each day, and it extends down to March 31st, 1906. Is that right, Mr. Walton?—That is so, yes.

Q. And this page is a summary?—Yes.

Q. And then all the details exactly as they appear in the gate porter's book—is it the gate-keeper or porter?—Porter.

Q. Are kept on the subsequent sheets here for every day right through from 1904—?—Two and a half years.

Q. To 1906. That is correct; so as to identify it on the shorthand notes by and by. It is from December?

(The Inspector.) From January 1st.

(Mr. Grant.) I misunderstood the figures, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) So that apparently it was a matter of frequent occurrence?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) And that also was entered in the porter's book?—That is so, yes.

(Mr. Robb.) And his duties were cast upon you?—To a very great extent they were.

Q. Would the master frequently be away for week-ends?—He has been away for week-ends.

(Mr. Grant.) May I suggest that instead of cross-examining witness after witness about this, that we should have the record out of the porter's book?

(Mr. Robb.) We have had that, Mr. Grant; we cannot go all through the book.

(Mr. Grant.) If you have got it may I see it. I have not seen it yet.

(The Inspector.) I have not got the master's. I have the guardians'.

Mr. Walton.

21 June.

(Mr. Grant.) I want the record from the porter's book of the individual absences of the master.

(The Inspector.) I should have thought a simple question would have been enough. Is it not a fact that most week-ends the master was away—half the week-ends?—No, sir, I could not say that.

Q. A great many of the week-ends?—He had a great many, but not half the week-ends.

(Mr. Grant.) Have you got for the guardians the number of hours he was absent from duty?—No.

(The Inspector.) I believe that has been done.

(Mr. Grant.) I think we ought to have it.

(Mr. Robb.) The guardians must have known what was going on.

(Mr. Grant.) How can he say that?—I could not say that—as a body.

(Mr. Robb.) But as to your daily attendances, you—

(Mr. Grant.) The witness has said he does not know. Surely he ought not to be argued with.

(Mr. Robb.) I am testing his knowledge.

(The Inspector.) What is the good? There is a good deal of make-believe in all this. We know perfectly well they know something of that. It wastes time, you know.

(Mr. Grant.) Yes, quite so. I have not interrupted Mr. Robb. I thought the best thing was to let him finish. We are trying to get to some important points.

(Mr. Robb.) You complained of all this?—No, sir, I did not complain.

Q. Did you complain to Dr. Lamont?—When?

(The Inspector.) Do you know anything about it?—I could not say. I might have said something casually.

(Mr. Grant.) That is not a complaint.

(Mr. Robb.) Did you tell the medical officer that you had been Madeley's tool long enough?

(Mr. Grant.) Supposing he did?—I don't recollect that.

(Mr. Robb.) Will you swear you did not?—I will not swear.

(Mr. Grant.) What one officer says to another is not a complaint.

(Mr. Robb.) Had you been Madeley's tool?—I was the assistant.

Q. Had you been Madeley's tool?—I suppose I must have been to do the work for him.

Q. Did you tell Dr. Lamont you had been that long enough. And that if you were master you would make an alteration?—I might have done so.

(Mr. Grant.) I won't cross-examine generally, because I have not yet read Mr. Walton's first evidence; but I will ask one or two questions. Mr. Walton, you told us you had seen guardians in the cellar, that you had seen friends of the master in the cellar, and contractors in the cellar?—Yes.

Q. Of the contractors you mentioned three names?—Yes.

Q. Mr. Kirk—who were the other two?—Pyle and Whitlock.

Q. Kirk, Pyle and Whitlock?—Yes.

Q. Those are the three contractors?—Yes.

Q. Have you ever seen any other contractors in the cellar drinking beer with the master or anybody?—I don't remember any others.

Q. Now, come to the friends of the master. Oh, but first of all how often have you seen these three contractors; I mean in the cellar?—Not many times.

Q. Six, or twenty, or one hundred?—I have been there a number of years and they have—

Q. How many years?—Twelve years.

Q. During the twelve years how often have you seen these three contractors in the cellar?—About a dozen times.

Q. A dozen times in a dozen years?—It might be more or less.

Q. Was it a hundred times?—I should not think so.

Q. Well, we have got some sort of limit. Who were the friends of the master in the cellar?—I could not name them; he brought friends at all times.

Q. Did you know any of them?—I have seen his private friends.

Q. You don't know them by name?—No.

Q. How many together?—I could not say. Various faces kept coming down.

Q. As to the guardians. Who were the guardians you saw there drinking with the master?—I have seen several times the master and the guardians.

Q. I want the names of each of the guardians?—I might name the whole of the board for that matter. I have seen down there—

Q. I am not asking you to make a general charge, but the names of the individual guardians whom you say you have seen in the cellar drinking with the master. Tell me the names one after another?—Must I tell you the names?

Q. Certainly, that is what you are here for—to tell the truth?—Mr. McCarthy—

Q. Yes, give me a list of the guardians. I may say I shall want a list of the old guardians who have gone out of office as well as those in office. I take the list of the present guardians. I come to Mr. Crooks. Have you seen Mr. Crooks drinking beer with the master?—No.

Q. Never?—No.

Q. Mr. Jungblut—did you ever see him drinking beer with the master?—Yes.

Q. How often?—I could not say how often.

Q. A number of times, or once or twice?—I have been there a number of years, and I have seen him there on many occasions.

Q. Mr. Anderson—have you seen him there?—Yes.

Q. On many occasions?—I could not say how many.

Q. On more than one or two?—More than one or two.

Q. Mr. McCarthy—you have mentioned him already?—Yes.

Q. Mr. Ford?—Yes.

Q. Mr. Gibbs?—Yes.

Q. Mr. Poole?—Yes.

Q. Mr. Finden?—Yes.

Q. Mr. Peckham?—I don't say that he has; he might have been.

Q. Mr. Webster?—Perhaps I have seen him; I could not say exactly.

Q. Mr. Phillips?—No, sir.

Q. Mr. Sumner?—Yes.

Q. Many times?—Not many times.

Q. Mr. Beaumont?—Yes.

Q. Mrs. Cordery?—No, sir, I have not.

Q. Mr. Bellsam?—No, sir.

Q. Mr. Yeo?—No.

Q. Mr. Lindsay?—No.

Q. Mr. Smith?—Yes.

Q. Mr. Bacon?—No.

Q. Mr. Lansbury?—No.

Q. Mrs. Wilson?—No.

Q. Mr. Watts?—Yes.

Q. Mr. Bandoek?—Yes.

Q. Mr. Diamond?—Yes.

Q. That is all. Now, you said, Mr. Walton, you might have named the whole board, but you have left out several members of the board?—Yes, it is a difficult matter to recollect.

(Mr. Grant.) I know, but you should not make a general charge like that unless you could support it. I shall ask you to go through the list of the old guardians retired since your twelve years of office, and ask you some questions with regard to them.

(The Inspector.) Is that all?

(Mr. Grant.) I have asked these questions on examination to-day.

Mr. Walton.

21 June.

(The Inspector.) That is all you propose to ask now?

(Mr. Grant.) On this point. I am told I have the old list. If so, I can—no, that is not it. This is only for 1903. I want the guardians for the 12 years.

(The Inspector.) Oh, no; I don't think. You have done with this witness, I suppose?

(Mr. Grant.) No, sir; I have simply asked questions on the evidence given to-day. I have not finished reading the evidence he has given on a previous occasion.

(The Inspector.) And you want a postponement of the examination?

(Mr. Grant.) Yes, if you will allow that.

(The Inspector.) Yes, I will allow that. (To witness): You say you have seen certain guardians and certain contractors—how many hours were you on duty, eight hours?—Yes, about that.

Q. Would not the supervision of the beer cellar be removed from your ken for 16 hours?—No, sir, it would not.

Q. You were away from the workhouse?—When I have been on duty I have been for 15 or 16 hours a day myself.

Q. Always in sight of the beer cellar?—Not always.

Q. With regard to the frozen meat, what has been your experience as a meat expert?—Well, the beef we have had has always been of good quality, to my knowledge.

Q. Has your experience been simply gained in the workhouse stores?—Yes.

Q. How do you know then, how to tell frozen meat?—I buy it at home.

Q. Can you tell me why, in your specification, you do not put in heads and shanks. Is there any reason, from the workhouse master's point of view?—I think that legs and shoulders are more economical for serving.

Q. Your contract is for so much English-fed wether mutton, without heads and shanks. Speaking as a workhouse master, is there any administrative reason for that?—Without the shanks. Of course, we could not use them.

Q. Do you use heads?—I don't think that is in our contract.

Q. They are not in your contract. I ask you whether there is any good reason why they should not be?—Except that we could not use them.

Q. That is a very good reason. There is nothing in your dietary table that would enable you to use them?—No, sir.

Q. If the heads and shanks were left on you could readily tell what was foreign mutton?—Yes.

Q. Much more readily than you can now?—Yes.

Q. The reason you give is that the heads are of no use?—They are of no use.

Q. You never looked at the quantity of goods in stock?—My own quantities, yes.

Q. So that you know pretty well what the quantities of each article in stock was?—Yes.

Q. Have you ever been approached by any contractor for information as to the amount of these quantities?—No.

Q. Never since you have been workhouse master?—No.

Q. If you had been approached you would have known why?—I was approached on one occasion and refused the information.

Q. A man wanted to know how much you had in stock?—Yes.

Q. Do you consider it legitimate for a master to give information to a contractor as to the amounts in stock?—No, sir, I do not.

Q. You would not do it?—No, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) Might we have the name of the contractors?

(The Inspector.) Was it some time back?—He did not get the contract.

(The Inspector.) Now with reference to these Van den Berghs.

(Mr. Grant.) I think, sir, as you are having a full Inquiry, we should have the name of the contractor.

(The Inspector.) He approached him, and didn't get the contract.

(Mr. Grant.) It doesn't follow. He might have got others. He might be a contractor to-day.

(The Inspector.) Has he been a contractor since?—No.

(Mr. Grant.) Has he ever had a contract from the board?—Well, some years ago I think he did.

(Mr. Grant.) I think we ought to have his name.

(The Inspector.) I don't know.

(Mr. Grant.) Tell us who it was.

(The Inspector.) You are perfectly safe. You have no difficulty in answering. You are protected?—It was Middleton Bros. They came down and asked me if I could not receive soda in bags, and I told them certainly not—ours were in original casks, and I wanted casks.

Q. No, the question asked you was a plain and important one. It is, were you ever approached by any contractor for information as to the quantity of any of your stock in the store?—No, sir, I have not.

Q. Never?—No.

(Mr. Grant.) I don't think he quite understands it. Put to him the reason why it is asked, and he may see. You see the point is, if a contractor was sending in a tender for soda, amongst other things—if he could find out whether—

(The Inspector.) I don't think that we can.

(Mr. Grant.) I don't think he followed it.

(The Inspector.) It is a most extraordinary thing if he did not. It shows a child-like innocence, which would disqualify him from being a master.

(Mr. Grant.) I want you to put your mind upon the point Mr. Davy has put to you. Has any contractor at any time come to you to ask what quantity of goods you had in stock?—No, sir, never.

Q. It has never happened?—No, sir.

Q. Have you ever given any information to any contractor which would help him in making a tender to the guardians?—No, sir.

Q. Never?—No.

Q. Has any contractor ever tried to get information out of you?—Only in this one particular instance.

Q. Very good.

(The Inspector.) How much soda-water had you in stock?

(Mr. Robb.) Before you go on to that, would you ask him if any other officials have ever been to him for that information?—No, sir, no one.

(The Inspector.) Or guardians?—No.

(Mr. Grant.) I want to say that he makes his returns of what he has in stock to the clerk, I take it, regularly?—They are entered up weekly.

Q. Weekly?—Yes, I mean it is in the books.

(The Inspector.) They go through, I am told, the necessities book. How do you make up the necessities book. Do you wait till the end of the quarter or—?—Every week.

Q. You estimate the quantity you have taken out?—Yes, from the list prepared.

Q. How much soda-water have you in stock?—Nine dozen.

Q. Is that the remains of the gross?—Yes.

Q. What has become of the other three dozen?—They were used for a concert.

Q. What sort of a concert?—A children's concert. About eighty children came to give a concert to the old people.

Q. The three dozen soda water was for them?—Not soda; lemonade.

Q. It was a gross of minerals you ordered?—Six dozen of each.

Q. Was that in your time as master?—No, sir; they have been in there about four months now.

Q. Are they any good?—Yes.

Q. As to the Van den Berg's double crown margarine : what happens when it comes in ; do you cut it up in small rolls ?—It is pressed into half ounce pats.

Q. How is butter supplied to you. In 2-lb. rolls ?—In 24-lb. boxes.

Q. Is that an unusual way of supplying butter ?—I don't think so, sir ; I think it is supplied so to all the institutions round about.

Q. In that form ?—Yes.

Q. So that would not have affected the price of the butter ?—No, sir.

Q. Would the form in which the margarine was supplied have affected the price of the margarine ?—I should say it would.

Q. Do you think it would have affected it to the extent of 12s. per cwt ?—I do not think so much as that.

Q. At all events, 14s. would have been an excessive price to pay for the extra sub-division ?—I should say so.

Q. That is all I have to ask you now ; we have to come back again to that. While you are here you may tell me what precisely was done to your room ?—The paint was burned off. Previous to these last repairs, for eight or nine years, every time a paper was put on it cracked.

Q. What did they do ?—The master, this last time, gave instructions for the paint to be burned off, and in all they took off nearly a hundredweight of burned paint, and the wall had to be made good.

Q. Was not painting done ?—Painting and graining.

Q. What was done to the ceiling ?—The ceiling was made good after the electricians had been there, and the blinds ; in fact, everything in the room was done that wanted doing.

Q. We can get the cost from the books. Do you keep that book ?—No, sir.

(Mr. Grant.) I have the figures here somewhere.

(The Inspector.) Then it is arranged that this witness comes back for further cross-examination by Mr. Grant. Who is the next witness ?

(Mr. Robb.) Genery, the master's clerk.

(The Inspector.) Oh ! master, I want to ask you another question. Have any of the officers of the workhouse permission to work for any outside firms ?—I do not think they have permission, sir.

Q. Do any do it ?—Not to my knowledge.

Q. You have no official knowledge of it ?—No.

Mr. C. W. GENERY ; sworn and examined.

(The Inspector.) What is your office ?—Master's clerk.

Q. How long have you been master's clerk. I mean approximately ?—Permanently, since January 21st, 1903.

Q. What were you before ?—I was temporarily engaged at West Ham in the clerk's office, and relieving officer for 12 months.

Q. And before that ?—Temporary master at Beverley, Yorkshire.

Q. And before that ?—Temporary master at Uxbridge.

Q. And before that ?—Temporary clerk in the steward's office, St. George's-in-the-East.

Q. And before that ?—I was engaged to straighten up matters for the guardians at Monmouth and Birkenhead unions.

Q. And before that ?—Mile End Old Town as master.

Q. And you left that. You were requested to resign, were you not ?—I was.

Q. I remember that. How many years had you been in the service before. Were you dismissed ?—I resigned, and my resignation was accepted.

(Mr. Grant.) No, sir.

(The Inspector.) A dismissal is the rarest possible thing in the world. We rarely do it now.

Q. Have you any other knowledge of it ?—No, sir, I have not.

(Mr. Grant.) It would be better if you put a specific case ; you have evidently something in your mind.

(The Inspector.) The case I have in mind is an allegation made at the very start of the Inquiry that a man who is employed in the engineering shop in the workhouse—his name I do not know, or have forgotten—worked for a firm outside ?—I do not know of it.

(Mr. Robb.) Cunningham was the name ?—I know the name, but know nothing of what he does outside.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Robb knows all about it. Give us the name, and we will have it inquired into ?—I know the name is Cunningham, and I know the man, but I do not know he worked outside for anybody.

(Mr. Grant.) We will have him here.

(Mr. Robb.) It was my suggestion.

(The Inspector.) I am quite satisfied.

(Mr. Grant.) I only said that Mr. Robb knew his name.

(Mr. Robb.) I think that it was stated he was the electrical engineer.

(Mr. Grant.) I am told that the name was not mentioned here.

(The Inspector.) I do not think so, but it is one of those things—

(Mr. Grant.) It has come to you, perhaps, in another way.

(Mr. Robb.) It is mentioned in the course of this Inquiry. If you do not remember it we will look for it in the shorthand notes.

(The Inspector.) Have you any knowledge of the practice of the cook selling tobacco and sweets to the inmates ?—She does that, sir ; I think it is for the convenience of the inmates instead of sending out for it.

Q. Is it, in your opinion, subversive of discipline in any way ?—I do not think it is the correct thing to do, although it helps the inmates by getting from the cook instead of sending outside for it.

Q. How do the inmates get the money ?—From their friends.

Q. What amount of money do you take from an inmate under the provisions of the Order. You let small sums go, I suppose ?—Yes, we always let anything under a shilling go.

Q. And over a shilling you take it from them ?—When they find it.

Q. Rather a difficult thing to do ?—Yes.

Mr. Walton.

21 June.

(Mr. Grant.) I don't mean that. I thought you knew all about it, and if you do not I will speak to you about it at the adjournment.

(Mr. Robb.) Don't let us have any mystery about it. If you want to attack one of your officials, do so ?—The circumstances of the case, preparatory to my election at Poplar Workhouse, were known to the whole of the guardians.

(Mr. Grant.) We had better have it out. Mr. Genery was convicted, I am told, of some offence.

(Mr. Robb.) What is the object of this ? I am not here to protect this witness, but this is certainly extraordinary.

(The Inspector.) I am asking as to his past career.

(Mr. Grant.) One of the questions which has to be decided is the credibility of the witness.

(The Inspector.) We will come to that afterwards.

(Mr. Robb.) Before he has said anything against you !

(The Inspector.) Your attitude, Mr. Corrie Grant, if you will allow me to say so, needs explanation. You appear, as I understand, for the guardians, who asked for a public Inquiry, and the guardians, I am certain, are willing and anxious—

(Mr. Grant.) All of them.

Mr. Genery.

21 June.

Mr. Genery.

21 June.

(The Inspector.) That everything should come out.

(Mr. Grant.) And that is why I am asking the questions—

(Mr. Robb.) And that is why you commence by intimidating the witness.

(Mr. Grant.) You ought to know that—

(The Inspector.) I can get the whole position from the papers, but of course the past does not affect his evidence to-day.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Genery, you have told us you have had a great deal of experience—

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Inspector, I only want to know what course you propose to pursue. If you examine the witness first, and Mr. Robb afterwards—

(The Inspector.) I will not examine this witness now.

(Mr. Grant.) Then I want to know where I am.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Genery, you have told us you have had a great deal of experience in Poor Law work?—Yes, sir.

Q. I do not know this mystery about your past, with which you have been threatened before you have given any evidence, but whatever it was, were the Poplar Guardians cognisant of it when they appointed you?—They were, sir.

Q. As far as you know, have you performed your duties satisfactorily?—I believe so, sir.

Q. Have you ever had any complaints of the way in which you have performed your duties?—Never, sir.

Q. As far as you know, have the guardians or their counsel, any right to assume that you will speak other than the truth at this inquiry?—I could not say.

Q. Do you know any reason why this threat should have been hurled at you before you had spoken a word?—No, sir.

Q. I do not understand it, either. Now, we will get to the facts. When you got to Poplar Workhouse, did you find any striking differences between the methods there and the methods at other institutions where you have been?—Very many.

Q. Can you instance anything in particular?—I must trot out the beer again. £316 10s. 5d. was spent for beer last year.

Q. I think we know those figures. What is the particular point about beer?—It is not done elsewhere.

Q. It is your duty to keep the books?—Some of them, sir.

Q. Do you keep the books in which this waste is debited—this ten per cent?—I do, sir.

Q. Can you give us any information about that: Is ten per cent. always charged?—It is a standard waste of ten per cent.

Q. That is curious, isn't it?—Well, rather.

Q. I mean the waste would not be a constant figure like that?—In reality there is no waste at all.

Q. How is that?—It is possible to draw a barrel of beer of 36 gallons—that represents 288 pints. It is possible to draw 288 pints from that barrel.

Q. Have you done that yourself?—Many a time.

Q. You are speaking from actual experience?—Yes.

Q. Therefore, you say, in actual practice, there need not be any waste at all?—No waste at all.

Q. What becomes of the ten per cent. waste in the Poplar Workhouse?—The ten per cent. waste in the Poplar Workhouse has been drunk by the master, assistant master, their friends, and guardians.

Q. Have you seen that done?—I have, sir.

Q. Where?—In the beer cellar.

Q. We are told there is a counter there on which a number of glasses are kept. Is that so?—That is so.

Q. What are those glasses kept there for?—To serve the friends of the master with beer.

Q. Is it true that the beer comes from the master's own cask?—No, sir.

Q. Where does the beer come from?—Out of the ten per cent. waste.

Q. This is a serious matter; do you know it of your own knowledge?—Certainly, sir.

Q. Have you actually seen it drawn?—I have, sir.

Q. You have been in the cellar. Do you swear that?—Yes, sir.

Q. And you have seen it drawn?—I have, sir.

Q. And you have seen guardians drink it?—I have.

Q. Do you name any guardians you have seen?—Oh, yes.

Q. Give a few names. My friend will ask you if I don't?—Mr. Ford, Mr. McCarthy, Mr. Sumner.

Q. Alderman Sumner?—Mr. Alderman Sumner.

Q. Anyone else?—I have actually supplied those, and I can answer to that.

Q. You have supplied them actually yourself?—Yes.

Q. How did it come about that you supplied them?—Well, on several occasions I have acted as master there. The master and assistant master have both been off the premises, so they have got me to act in their place.

Q. What has happened. Have you offered the beer, or been asked for it?—Well, motions have been made towards the beer cellar.

Q. I see, and were you able to interpret those signs?—Yes, sir.

Q. Putting it in a word, was it a well-understood and well-recognised thing?—Well-recognised and well-understood by officers and inmates.

Q. We have been told of the name—(we don't want it again)—we have been told the name that was given to the beer-cellar. You have seen it reported?—Yes.

Q. Is that true?—That is true, sir.

Q. Have you supplied any refreshments besides beer?—Yes, sir.

Q. I am not speaking of the cellar. Have you ever supplied any brandy or lemonade?—That is in the cellar also.

Q. You have supplied brandy and lemonade?—I have, sir.

Q. To whom?—Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Sumner—Mr. Alderman Sumner.

Q. You have supplied them with brandy and lemonade?—I have, sir.

Q. Personally?—Personally.

Q. Did they ask you for it, or what happened?—We met in the cellar, or, rather, we went there; and the question was asked, "What are you going to have?—I think we had better have a little brandy and lemonade, or brandy and soda," and that was served.

Q. Were you told to serve it?—Well, not exactly, of course, but I was there, and I suppose I was the servant for the time being; so I had to draw it.

Q. Anything else in the way of refreshments?—I have not actually served any refreshments, but, of course, the committee meets there once a fortnight. They are supplied with tea, &c., ham sandwiches, jam tarts, cakes and little odds and ends of that sort out of the stores. The ladies' committee met there every week. They are also supplied the same way.

Q. We have heard that before, but the particular point I want to get is, do you keep the books in which these teas have been entered up?—I do, sir.

Q. How have those teas been entered in the books?—This book in which they are entered is divided into two parts—one for the inmates and the other for the officers. These teas have been charged up to officers under "extraordinary supplies."

Q. To officers?—

(The Inspector.) What book is that in?—"Net issues from store."

(Mr. Robb.) These teas are charged as extraordinary supplies to officers?—Yes.

Q. Is that a proper item to which to locate them?—Most improper.

Q. Why did you enter it in that way?—I was told to do so.

Q. By whom?—The assistant master.

Q. Mr. Walton?—Yes.

Q. Do you still enter them in that way?—I do, sir.

Q. As extraordinary supplies. Have you ever entered them in any other division?—No, sir.

Q. I suppose as extraordinary supplies the Auditor's attention would not be drawn to the real facts?—No, sir.

Q. Do you know anything about the supply of beer to inmates?—Yes, sir.

Q. How is that conducted?—I do not quite follow.

Q. Can you tell us any special circumstances about the supply of beer to inmates. You suggested just now that a course was pursued that was not pursued anywhere else?—In all the workhouses I have been to, the inmates that make the workhouse their home are supposed to work without fee or reward of any sort.

Q. What happens here in Poplar?—Well, if they handle a broom they are given a pint of beer for it.

Q. Have you ever seen any guardian or any official the worse for drink on the workhouse premises?—I have, sir.

Q. Who have you seen?—Mr. Albert Smith.

Q. Anyone else?—No one else, sir.

Q. When did you see Mr. Smith?—A week or two ago.

Q. Is it true, as alleged, that the guardians take meals in the workhouse?—Undoubtedly, sir.

Q. Do you know that of your own knowledge?—Well, I have not seen it actually go down their throats, but I have been told so.

Q. I want you to tell us what you actually know?—I have not actually seen them eating.

Q. Has the discipline of the house been maintained since you have been there?—In fact, there is no discipline at all, sir.

Q. Have the officers conformed to the regulations of the Local Government Board and the General Orders?—As far as the master and matron were concerned, I am very doubtful whether they ever knew their duties.

Q. We won't go into that.

(Mr. Grant.) Pardon me, let the witness answer; don't interrupt him.

(Mr. Robb.) Very well, what do you know?—If they knew them they did not do them, anyhow.

Q. Will you give us any instances?—Well, the master should see all inmates on admission for one thing; and he should visit the wards every day once.

Q. Yes; was that done by Mr. Madeley?—I never saw him.

Q. Anything else?—The matron should do the same, of course, on the female side.

Q. Did the matron do that?

(The Inspector.) The matron is gone; I don't think we had better go into that.

(Mr. Robb.) Very well. Is it your duty to keep the books relating to the stores?—Yes, sir.

Q. And did the tender forms come under your notice?—They did, sir.

Q. Now, we have been told that tenders are invariably accepted in bulk; that is so, I think?—That is so.

Q. Well, now, speaking from your experience—from your long experience—in the Poor Law, what do you say as to the practice. Is it open to objection?—Yes, sir.

Q. Is it open to abuse?—Certainly.

Q. In what manner?—Well, of course, it depends to a certain extent on the chief officer of the institution. If a contractor could get to know the quantity of any particular line on his contract, of course he has the matter in his hands, to an extent, in contracting.

Q. That is where you accept tenders in bulk?—Just so, sir.

Q. If you can single out items, the contractor is at your mercy?—He is, sir.

Q. Is that a well-known practice?—Well-known.

Q. To contractors?—Yes.

Q. Is there any special term applied to it?—Well, finesse in contracting; that is all I can call it.

Q. Has any of the finesse of contracting come under your notice at Poplar?—There is one item I can point out. For the year Lady-Day, 1903, 10 gross of small-tooth combs were purchased at £2 per gross.

(The Inspector.) This is the West Ham evidence?—Just the same, sir; exactly the same.

Q. This has happened here?—Certainly.

(Mr. Robb.) This did not happen at West Ham?—No, sir.

Q. Then let us have it. Lady-Day, 1903, 10 gross of small-tooth combs, at what?—At £2 per gross.

Q. Was that on the tender form, or ordered apart?—No, part of the tender. Six gross of dressing combs at £3 per gross. On the following year, Lady-Day, 1904, small-tooth combs, exactly the same thing, supplied by the same man at 10s. per gross.

(The Inspector.) How many gross?—Two gross were ordered.

(Mr. Robb.) So that in the year ten gross were ordered the price was £2 per gross; when only two gross were wanted the price was 10s. a gross.—That is so, sir.

(Mr. Grant.) What is the name of the contractor?—Eaton.

(Mr. Robb.) What is the inference you draw from that?

(Mr. Grant.) Are we to have this inference?

(Mr. Robb.) I think so, sir.

(Mr. Grant.) But this witness is not a jury or a judge trying the case.

(The Inspector.) He is quite clear. He points out that a contractor, either by his own judgment, or by information obtained, gets to know what stock of tooth combs there is, and therefore what is wanted, and contracts accordingly.

(Mr. Grant.) That is one explanation.

(The Inspector.) It is the one that occurs to most people.

(Mr. Grant.) There is another one, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) It is obvious, sir, isn't it, that the contractor put in that tender with some knowledge of the position?—Yes, it was. Either that, or the connivance of the official.

(The Inspector.) Not necessarily, of course.

(Mr. Robb.) Of course, not necessarily. Would 10s. a gross for small-tooth combs be a fair price or £2 a gross?—10s. I should say.

Q. 10s. would be a fair market price?—I should say you would get them for a penny each in the street, or outside.

Q. Have you seen them?—Oh, yes.

Q. You could buy them for a penny?—In my judgment.

Q. In 1903, according to your view, four times the correct price was paid?—Yes, sir.

Q. Can you give us any other instances of that kind. How about dressing combs?

(Mr. Grant.) In what year?

(The Inspector.) 1903.

(Mr. Grant.) He did not say so, sir?—Six gross when £3 a gross; 3 gross when they were 36s. a gross.

(Mr. Robb.) Were articles ever purchased when there was already an adequate supply in stock?—Yes, sir.

Q. Can you give us any instance of that?—Yes, sir. The stock of bed-ticking on the last day in October, 1902, was 1,869½ yards.

Q. Over a mile?—Yes. This bed-ticking is made up half-yearly. The consumption for that half-year was nothing. That left us where we were with 1,869½ yards.

Q. At March, 1903?—Yes. The consumption in the March quarter, 1903, was 1,090½ yards. To meet that consumption the purchase was 2,347½ yards.

Q. Was that purchased at the beginning of the half-year?—I could not say that, sir.

Q. Then the position is this. Just let me see if I have got it right—that, having in stock 1,869 yards in March, 1903, and requiring 1,090 yards for consumption that quarter, 2,348 more yards were purchased?—Yes, sir.

Mr. Genery.

21 June.

Mr. Genery.

21 June,

Q. So that the stock was four times more than was actually required?—That is so.

Q. Do you know anything about the way the stock books are kept and made up?—Yes, sir.

Q. Can you give us any information about that?—Well, prior to the stock-taker coming, the books are what I call "readied"—got ready for him.

Q. In what way?—Well, if there is a surplus it is put on one side; if there is a deficit in any particular line there, it is booked out, especially in the clothing.

Q. Do you mean to say fictitious entries are made?—Entries to meet the requirements are made.

Q. Are they true and correct entries?—I should say not, sir.

Q. For instance, supposing there was a certain—

(Mr. Grant.) We don't want suppose. This is a very serious charge. Let us have the actual instance you are referring to. You know all about it, Mr. Robb.

(Mr. Robb.) I know nothing about it. Was there an excess of any particular item?

(Mr. Grant.) I ask you, sir, that we may have the individual item.

(Mr. Robb.) I don't know that there is an individual item.

(Mr. Grant.) He has been through the books.

(Mr. Robb.) Can you give any instance of surplus or excess?—No, not without the books.

Q. Has any instance of surplus, or over-plus, ever come under your personal notice?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) Before that goes any further, I ask that we may have the books sent for, and that the witness shall produce the charges from the books.

(The Inspector.) He will do that right enough.

(Mr. Robb.) We have been asking all the time to have the books.

(Mr. Grant.) There are two ways of asking for a thing. I wish to have them here, and that the examination shall not go on until he has got the documents in front of him.

(The Inspector.) I will ask a question which may obviate the necessity of having the books.

(Mr. Robb.) Will you put your question?

(The Inspector.) The question I put is: you have had great experience of workhouses; is it not rather usual to make these alterations on a small scale to meet the stocktaker on the date?—I don't quite follow it.

Q. Is it not, unfortunately, rather a common practice to make these alterations in the books so as to meet the stock?—Oh, yes, it is to an extent.

Q. I put it to you, in the matter of necessities, in the present way of keeping accounts, is it not quite common for masters to make up their books by balance?—It is, sir, yes.

Q. Did the practice that prevailed in Poplar, according to your evidence, go beyond that custom?—Well, no, I don't say it did.

Q. What is true of Poplar has been true of other workhouses within your knowledge?—Oh, yes, it would apply pretty well all round.

(Mr. Robb.) Then it comes to this—that you are not, in a workhouse, able to keep your stock correctly?—Of course, it all depends; it is possible to do it if it is done in a workmanlike style.

Q. And are we to understand that the discrepancies here in stock are nothing more or less than customary in other places?—Well, they are a bit excessive at Poplar to what I have been accustomed to.

Q. Do you suggest that is the practice, if you have got an excess of any item of stock, to set it aside—to conceal it, as it were, and not disclose it to the stocktaker?—That is what would be done, of course.

Q. Is that the customary practice in other places?—Yes, I think it is, in a small way, of course.

Q. What becomes of the goods afterwards?—They would be given out. To meet the surplus stock they would be given out and would not be booked to anybody.

Q. It has been alleged in the evidence that one of the guardians—Mr. McCarthy—pays a very large number of visits to the house. Has that come under your notice?—Yes, sir.

Q. For what were those visits paid, do you know?—I could not say.

Q. Has Mr. McCarthy any relatives holding positions in the house?—Yes, sir.

Q. How many?—Three.

Q. Will you name them, please?—His son is my assistant clerk, his daughter is a temporary machinist—

Q. Temporary or permanent?—Temporary-permanent.

(The Inspector.) I confess I do not know what you mean?—She is only temporary.

(Mr. Robb.) How long has she been there?—About two years, I should think.

Q. And is there any other relative of Mr. McCarthy employed there?—A brother-in-law.

(The Inspector.) What is he?—A labourer, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) As to these temporary officers, do you know how many there are of them. How many officers on the temporary list?—A great number, sir. I could not say right off without the book.

Q. Have you ever seen such a list in your experience in any other workhouse?—At West Ham I have seen them, sir.

Q. With the exception of West Ham and Poplar, have you seen them anywhere else?—No, sir.

Q. What is the object—can you explain it—of keeping this large number of people as temporary officers, solely, I take it, at the expense of the local rates?—I cannot say. I could not give any answer to that.

(The Inspector.) The officers are not chargeable to the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund.

(Mr. Lough.) I take it the witness means workmen?

(The Inspector.) Do you include workmen?—No, with the workmen there is a fairish number—not a large number; but, including workmen, there is a large number.

(Mr. Lough.) Five or six, I should think; I could not say right off.

(Mr. Grant.) We had better have the books.

(The Inspector.) Those temporary officers are not chargeable to the Common Poor Fund?

(Mr. Lough.) That is so.

(The Inspector.) And are not sanctioned by the Local Government Board. We know nothing about them.

(Mr. Lough.) With the exception that the Local Government Board in some cases have been asked for sanction to the appointment, and they have not seen their way to do so, and these men were employed under the assistant officers Order.

(Mr. Grant.) In regard to the temporary officers, are a large number of them workmen who are employed?

(Mr. Lough.) I will read the list.

(Mr. Grant.) No, give me the totals.

(The Inspector.) We will have that this afternoon or to-morrow. We will now adjourn, and Mr. Lough will get it out for us, and we will have the books sent for that Genery knows about.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you had much experience with regard to stores in your 20 years?—Yes.

Q. Do you understand the quality of meat and so forth?—Well, not in a way; I am not an expert.

Q. Have you ever inspected any of the stores of the Poplar Workhouse?—No, sir.

Q. Did any of it come under your notice?—I have had some of the meat for dinner.

Q. What do you say about it?—Well, I have had to say "pass" to it a good many times; I have had to say "take it away."

Q. Do you know the quality that is specified?—Yes.

Q. Is the meat that you have had supplied to you for dinner of the quality specified?—No, sir.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Can we have some dates of this sort of thing? It is all very general. When was it Mr. Genery objected to the meat, and who did he object to, and so on?

(*Mr. Robb.*) Was this speaking generally, or on particular dates?—I could not give the dates. I have been there over three years.

Q. How often has this sort of thing happened?—Say a dozen times. I have gone without.

(*The Inspector.*) With whom do you mess?—Myself and the assistant clerk.

Q. Anybody else?—No, sir, nobody else.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Do you understand what wether leg of mutton is?—Yes, castrated lamb, that is bred for mutton.

Q. Specially bred for fattening?—Yes.

Q. Is the mutton you had of that description?—No, I should not think it was—not any of it, at any time.

Q. Not on any occasion?—No.

Q. In your experience in other workhouses, is it a customary thing to specify meat in that way?—In one or two workhouses, of course, they tender in that way, but as a rule they tender for frozen mutton, both at workhouses and asylums.

Q. And you say that on no occasion have you had mutton which could fairly be described as prime English wether?—Yes, in my opinion it never has been.

Q. Has the cheese come under your notice?—It has only come under my notice in this way—I have heard that inmates have complained about it.

Q. To you?—Yes, to me.

Q. To what effect have the complaints been made to you?—The word they used was that it was "rotten stuff."

Q. Have you seen it?—Yes, sir.

Q. Was that a correct description?—Well, it was not absolutely rotten, but it smelt a bit for one thing. The contract was for best American cheese. I think I can safely say it is nothing of the sort.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I did not hear anything about the cheese before.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Go on. (*Witness repeated his statement.*)

(*Mr. Grant.*) Ask him if he carried any of these complaints to the board of guardians. We are having a lot of gossip about the workhouse.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Was any expert ever employed to inspect or check the stores?—I could not say, sir; no one with the exception of Mr. Maddams.

(*Mr. Grant.*) He says he cannot say. You really are not justified in pressing that further.

(*The Inspector.*) Who is Maddams?—The stocktaker; he has nothing to do with the quality.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Do you know what Mr. Maddams is in his private capacity?—I have heard he is an insurance agent.

Q. Is he a member of the borough council?—I believe he is.

Q. Have you ever been present when he took stock?—No, sir.

Q. Now do you know anything about a typewriter that was purchased for the master?—Yes, sir.

Q. What do you know about it?—I know that a typewriter, at a cost of £30, was purchased in January, 1905.

Q. For whom?—Well, it is in the master's office.

Q. What has it been used for?—There is no general use for it. I believe Mr. Walton, the assistant master, practises a little upon it.

Q. But by whom was it mainly used: Did the master's daughter ever use it?—Not to my knowledge; I have not seen her do it.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Are we to have these leading questions put? I must really call your attention to what is taking place. I am objecting, Mr. Robb, if you will sit down.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I shall not sit down.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I shall not until you do. I take objection to what Mr. Robb is doing, and he ought to sit down.

(*Mr. Robb.*) You may not be very long, and there may be no necessity for it.

(*Mr. Grant.*) We ought to have our proceedings conducted regularly. I have a technical objection to what Mr. Robb is doing, and ask for leave to take it, and I cannot go on whilst he is standing up.

(*The Inspector.*) This is really childish.

(*Mr. Grant.*) What I have stated is really the ordinary course of procedure in the courts, and the more the proceedings are brought into line with the proceedings of the courts, the better for everybody.

(*The Inspector.*) Make your objection then.

(*Mr. Grant.*) It is that this witness is being examined in chief, not cross-examined, and evidence is being put into his mouth which he denies. He was asked whether the master's daughter practised on the typewriter, and he said he did not know. In the face of that Mr. Robb proceeds to cross-examine him upon it.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I will answer the objection at once.

(*Mr. Grant.*) You need not answer it.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I beg your pardon, I—

(*Mr. Grant.*) I understood you to say, sir,—

(*Mr. Robb.*) Will you please sit down while I—well, I will sit down to my learned friend.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I thought that you had decided my objection.

(*The Inspector.*) I did not, I—

(*Mr. Grant.*) I understood you to indicate that he was not to proceed.

(*The Inspector.*) I did not know what he was going to say further. The witness said he had not seen the typewriter used, and I did not catch anything further.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Then you have not heard what my objection is based on. It depends upon what the typewriter was used for.

(*The Inspector.*) Mr. Corrie Grant, you take a technical objection and stop the proceedings for five minutes on a technical point, whereas we all want to know what the fact was.

(*Mr. Grant.*) If I had heard of these charges in a proper way at the beginning of the Inquiry you should have had the evidence, but the first I hear of it is the charge now made.

(*Mr. Robb.*) By your own officials.

(*Mr. Grant.*) The charge made is that the guardians have spent £30 on a typewriter which is used by the master's daughter. Mr. Lough will tell you about it at once.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I will take the Inspector's ruling.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Will you tell Mr. Robb, Mr. Lough, about the typewriter?

(*Mr. Robb.*) Subject to your ruling, sir, I will not have the examination of the witness interrupted in this way. If Mr. Grant had heard the course of the Inquiry we should not have heard these trivial objections put forward.

(*Mr. Grant.*) What is the story of the typewriter, Mr. Lough; we want the facts.

(*Mr. Robb.*) And I want a ruling of the Inspector as to whether I am entitled to put a question in cross-examination, and I ask Mr. Corrie Grant to sit down.

(*The Inspector.*) Mr. Grant, we must follow the ordinary course. Will you be good enough to do so. This thing has gone far enough. The suggestion is that this is an unnecessary typewriter. The witness says he never saw the master's daughter use it.

(*Mr. Grant.*) It is the suggestion that is made, sir.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I certainly object to Mr. Corrie Grant, or anyone else, interposing like this in the course of the cross-examination.

(*The Inspector.*) Oh, let us finish about this typewriter.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Will you reply, Mr. Lough, to—

(*The Inspector.*) Really, I am tired of the typewriter.

Mr. Genery.

21 June.

Mr. Genery.
21 June.

(Mr. Robb.) So am I; I was not going to ask a further question on it.

(Mr. Grant.) I did not suppose you were.

(Mr. Lough.) The typewriter was supplied by the guardians for the use of the master's office in the workhouse.

(The Inspector.) I would ask the witness—are you in the master's office?—I am in the general office.

Q. Can you use a typewriter?—No, sir.

Q. Is there within your knowledge any officer in the workhouse who can use a typewriter?—No, sir.

(Mr. Grant.) That surely is a question you should ask Mr. Lough. How can this man know?

(The Inspector.) He is not in the master's office. If the guardians will give what evidence they have of the typewriter being used—but, I am rather tired of the typewriter.

(Mr. Grant.) I hope nobody will be tired of the Inquiry until the whole of the facts have been produced. Let me recall your mind to what has happened—

(Mr. Robb.) Are we to have speeches?

(Mr. Grant.) Yes, we are going to have speeches. We have had plenty of them on the other side.

(Mr. Robb.) I object to this. I want to answer my learned friend's objection that I have no right to cross-examine on this point.

(Mr. Grant.) We want to deal with the typewriter. The charge against us is that it has been put into the master's office at the expense of the guardians for use by the master's daughter.

(The Inspector.) No, no.

(Mr. Grant.) That was the charge.

(The Inspector.) The charge was that the typewriter had been bought quite unnecessarily, and, as I understand, the master's daughter was brought in to show it was there as a plaything, and not for business.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Genery having supplied all the information to Mr. Robb beforehand—

(Mr. Robb.) Nothing of the sort!

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Robb examines Mr. Genery on the facts, and puts the master's daughter into his mouth. Genery denies it, and on the face of that you allow Mr. Robb to cross-examine Mr. Genery—Mr. Robb having been supplied (I charge him with it) by Genery with all the facts he is asking about.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Genery denies all knowledge of it, so how could I have been supplied with it? I charge my friend with absolute and intentional discourtesy to me.

(The Inspector.) I rule that I will have no more of it.

(Mr. Robb.) It is not my fault. I may say at once that I am not going to be put off my line of cross-examination by Mr. Corrie Grant or any counsel at the bar.

(The Inspector.) We have had quite enough of it. As I said from the first, there is an element of injustice to some of the guardians. The Press get hold of these things. Now a further evidence of the injustice to some of the guardians is being introduced. We had better proceed with some of the alleged irregularities, the investigation of which is necessary in the settlement of the case. I believe there is a sincere desire on both sides to get at the facts.

(Mr. Robb.) On a personal ground, Mr. Davy, I claim your indulgence. Mr. Grant is apparently under the impression that by these constant interruptions—

(The Inspector.) Oh, don't.

(Mr. Robb.) That he will disturb me in the conduct of my case.

(The Inspector.) Let's go on in the ordinary way.

(Mr. Robb.) I can assure Mr. Corrie Grant that he will do nothing of the kind. It will make me put my back into it all the more. (To witness.) Can you tell me what was spent on the workhouse garden last year?—£83 19s. 7d.

Q. How much did that include for labour?—£31 15s. 4d.

Q. By whom was the labour performed?—By outside men.

Q. Were there able-bodied inmates of the house at the time capable of doing the work?—I should say so, sir.

Q. These men who were brought in, in addition to being paid, were they given beer at their dinners?—They were, sir.

Q. What was the class of work?—Simply to take a flower out of a pot and put it in the ground.

Q. Nothing requiring any great skill?—No, sir.

Q. Some figures were put in at an early part of the Inquiry about the quantity of water used?—Yes, sir.

Q. Do you know anything about that?—I know the quantity that was used during last year.

Q. What did it average per head per day?—75 gallons

Q. Can you explain how this excessive waste of water has come about. Have you seen anything?—I have seen them washing down the roads, for instance, when it has been pouring with rain.

Q. We were asking the master this morning as to the cost of doing up his sitting room. Can you tell us what the cost was?—I can.

Q. Please give the Inspector the figures?—There were four painters doing up the sitting room.

(The Inspector.) Where do you get the figures?—From the time sheets.

Q. Do you keep the time sheets?—I do, sir. Four painters were engaged 350 hours; two labourers 25 hours; one plumber 2 hours.

Q. What was the total cost of the labour?—£12 16s.

Q. In addition to that, was there a foreman employed?—There was, sir.

Q. Do you know what the material cost?—No, sir.

Q. What class of paper was used?—Well, I should say it was satinette, in my own opinion.

Q. Is it a good class paper?—Yes, very good, sir.

Q. How was this work done?—

(Mr. Lough.) It was done by the works department—by direct labour.

(The Inspector.) Do the entries as to the maintenance of the master's family appear in any books kept by you?—Yes, sir.

Q. We were told Mr. Madeley paid 4s. 2d. a week for his son and daughter. Is that correct?—I do not know; I could not say.

(The Inspector.) The point is, that this sum was sanctioned by the Local Government Board when they were small, and that as they grew the sum was not altered.

(Mr. Robb.) The son was earning £100 a year at the borough council.

(A ratepayer.) Was it not the duty of the Local Government Board to notify the officials of the guardians of the ages?

(The Inspector.) We cannot have these questions now that the guardians have counsel.

(The ratepayer.) He is not representing me. I represent a large body of ratepayers. Is it not the duty of the Local Government Board to notify any officials having children living on the ratepayers to clear out when the age appointed shall have arrived?

(The Inspector.) I should say it was the duty of the guardians.

(Mr. Robb.) That is so.

(The Inspector.) I think the guardians would be more likely to know what was going on than the Local Government Board.

(Mr. Robb.) This young man was 21, was he not?—I believe so; I don't know his exact age.

Q. And Mr. Madeley tells us that 4s. 2d. per week was paid for him?—Yes, sir.

Q. Take one item. Do you know what he was allowed per week for fruit and vegetables alone?—1s. 9d. between the two.

Q. Fruit and vegetables?—1s. 9d.

Q. The son and the daughter?—Yes.

Q. Both?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) The two—the master's son and daughter?—The two children.

(The Inspector.) The two children. That is what the witness says.

(Mr. Robb.) And did they have the same food as the master?—Certainly they did.

Q. Now some figures were put in about the newspapers that were supplied. Did you hear that evidence?—No.

Q. It was stated that newspapers were supplied for the use of the master and matron and assistant matron. Is that true?—Yes.

Q. It was suggested that the inmates afterwards got these papers. Is that correct?—I could not say, sir.

Q. Now you have acted in other capacities besides that of master's clerk?—Yes, sir.

Q. Were you ever employed to take men away to the farm colonies?—Yes, sir.

Q. When was that?—Well as often as I could get the job.

Q. Yes. Do you remember ever having to take some men to the farm colony at Lingfield?—Yes, sir.

Q. Do you remember anything particular about that occasion?—Well, I had to take two men named Oakes and Shuttle. I took them to Lingfield on the 2nd of December, 1903. Of course it is a condition with these men going to Lingfield that they should be rigged out to a certain extent with clothing. I took them down and left them there.

Q. When did you see them next?—Well, I saw Shuttle on the 4th of February at the Thames Police Court, when he got a month's hard labour for absconding.

Q. When did you see the other man?—I did not see him for a long time after.

Q. Were they received into the house again?—Yes.

Q. Were they again fitted out?—Shuttle was.

Q. You took them to London Bridge Station?—Yes.

Q. How did you convey them there?—In a brougham.

Q. Was it usual to give outfits to men who were leaving?—Well, not all, of course.

Q. For instance, take the settlement cases. If you were removing a man to another union would he be given an outfit?—It depended on where they were sent to. If on a long journey, say a case to Plymouth or Scarborough, it was usual to give them a rig-out.

Q. Which, of course, could not be recovered?—That is so.

Q. Because they were chargeable to the other union?—Yes.

Q. Just so. We have been told that there is some book bearing on these outfits?—A book, sir?

Q. Yes?—I don't know of it, sir.

Q. I think it was Mr. Madeley who said there was a book showing second-hand clothing purchased and outfits given?—I don't know anything about this book, sir.

Q. Can you explain how it is that apparently a considerable quantity of goods are purchased out of contract and apart from contract?—No, sir, I cannot.

Q. Can you explain?—

(Mr. Grant.) He says he cannot explain it.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you know anything about the bedsteads?—The bedsteads?

(Mr. Grant.) I must object.

(The Inspector.) I want to know something about the purchase of these bedsteads.

(Mr. Grant.) You have got the answer. He says he knows nothing about it.

(The Inspector.) He says he knows nothing about the purchase of goods out of contract. Does that answer your question?

(Mr. Grant.) Of course, sir, I am not going to object to anything you say. But to the best of my ability, Mr. Robb, I am going to try and keep you within the limits of ordinary proceedings. I know I shall fail sometimes.

(The Inspector.) Do you know anything about the bedsteads?—I know there have been some purchased.

Q. How were they purchased?—I know 250 Lawson Tait bedsteads were purchased.

Q. Have they been purchased in the neighbourhood?—Off a man named Butcher.

Q. Is he a contractor?—I don't know. I think he is what you may call a six-monthly man, who is called on to supply any little article that might be wanted out of contract.

Q. 250 Lawson Tait bedsteads were purchased. Did you have any information as to the price to be paid?—26s. each.

Q. What book does that appear in?—It would appear in the ordinary way through the day book. I may say that they were not purchased in one lot, but in ten lots of 25 each.

Q. And the purchase extended over several months?—It may have extended over 12 or 15 months.

(Mr. Grant.) Will you ask the witness, Mr. Davy, when they began and ended.

(The Inspector.) When did they begin?—I could not say, right off.

Q. Is it recently?—I could not say. It would have been some time last year.

(The Inspector.) That is a point no doubt the guardians will be able to clear up.

(Mr. Grant.) I may say that on every item that has been mentioned here or elsewhere you shall have the very fullest information.

(The Inspector.) We have got to this point, that the witness tells us that 250 Lawson Tait bedsteads were bought in a good many lots, ten lots in all?—Yes.

Q. Extending over a period of some months, at 26s. each?

(Mr. Grant.) Some time last year.

(Mr. Robb.) Can you explain why the transaction was done in that way instead of by way of public tender?—No, sir.

(The Inspector.) That would not be a matter for him to explain.

(Mr. Robb.) Did you or your department have to pass a motor car for Laidon?—No, sir.

Q. Who did that?—I believe one of the assistant clerks to the guardians did that.

Q. Which one?—Mr. A. B. Smith, I am told.

(Mr. Grant.) I don't want "I am told." I want it accurate.

(The Inspector.) Passed the motor. What do you mean? A motor was purchased for £800. The individual who passed it was a Mr. A. B. Smith?—Yes.

Q. What do you mean by passing the motor?—The motor was put on trial and he was the gentleman who passed it.

Q. I suppose he will be called?—Here he is, sir. (Pointing to Mr. Smith).

(Mr. Grant.) This is entirely new to me. Let us understand; a motor was purchased by the guardians—when Mr. Robb's friends leave off laughing.

(The Inspector.) The point is this. I know something about motors myself. I should think it was some form of agricultural motor for Laidon.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, that is so.

(Mr. Grant.) And it is put to the witness as a motor-car. Mr. Robb asked about a motor-car. It was a van brought down from Yorkshire as a motor-van for the colony.

(Mr. Robb.) We shall go into that fully. I understand Mr. Smith passed it?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Did it come before the Local Government Board for sanction?—Yes.

Q. How?—

(Mr. Lough.) Application was made to the Local Government Board for sanction. Then we entered into a contract with a Yorkshire firm.

(The Inspector.) It was an application to enter into a contract without advertising?

(Mr. Lough.) Yes, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) I hope we shall not have these constant interruptions. I shall not interrupt him. If the learned

Mr. Geary.

21 June.

Mr. Genery
21 June.

counsel every time he hears something new, gets up and down like a piece of india-rubber, we cannot go along very fast. He will hear a good deal of what is new.

(The Inspector.) But here, Mr. Robb, the correction was justified.

(Mr. Grant.) I am afraid, as usual, sir, your observation did not reach the press. Your observation was that the correction was justified. It won't have any effect on Mr. Robb, but it may have on someone else.

(Mr. Robb.) It is so unusual for a correction of my remarks to be justified.

(The Inspector.) Go on.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, sir. I did not commence this sort of thing. I promise not to interrupt my friend. I have not interrupted anyone in their examination here, and I claim the same privilege for myself.

(Mr. Grant.) I will say frankly that the whole conduct of this Inquiry, as far as Mr. Robb is concerned, to me as an experienced lawyer, is wrong, and I shall enter a protest, and a strong one, against it. From my experience I will say that never in any court of inquiry has anyone, making charges against an individual or a body, been allowed to cross-examine on any of the charges before he has put his charges in evidence or proved them in any way.

(Mr. Robb.) Will you shew him the charges?

(The Inspector.) Now this has no effect on me whatever.

(Mr. Grant.) I simply interrupt to enter my protest.

(The Inspector.) Well you can make any protest in the ordinary course. I am here, and want, with my Department, to get out the whole of the facts. I am not going to be deterred from that in any way, or from putting any question I please in the course of the proceedings. I sit here without having any power to clear the court, and that puts me in a little difficulty. But I don't mean to and don't at all complain of that. But I do say that it is enough to make a protest without interrupting or wasting a moment of time.

(Mr. Grant.) Let me explain my position.

(Mr. Robb.) You have explained it half a dozen times already.

(Mr. Grant.) I trust, Mr. Inspector, you—

(The Inspector.) I have apparently spoken in vain.

(Mr. Grant.) I want to say this. This motor-car is an exact illustration of what has been going on ever since the Inquiry commenced. This witness, who supplied Mr. Robb with the evidence on which he is examining, is asked how the motor-car for the guardians is passed.

(Mr. Robb.) I did not. I protest. I asked and am asking about the motor-car for Laindon, and for what purpose it was bought. I protest emphatically against the constant interruptions from this gentleman and the misrepresentations which he is endeavouring to throw into the proceedings. The only effect of them will be delay. This gentleman is brought here with the avowed object to browbeat me because I am a young and less experienced man than he is. I can assure you that he won't be able to accomplish that purpose. If my conduct during the four days the Inquiry has lasted had merited the comments my friend has passed I assume I should have learned something from you, sir.

(Mr. Grant.) Let me just say this. I am going to take up the points as they arise. This witness has put a charge about a motor-car.

(Mr. Robb.) No charge at all.

(Mr. Grant.) Not a word was said to us about it before now. No notice was given to us of what the evidence was to be, as it should have been. I did not call him. He is put up as one of the officials of the workhouse. He is called by you, sir, and unless I had interrupted at once and shewn that so far from this being a motor-car which cost £800, as Mr. Robb said—

(Mr. Robb.) I did not say anything of the kind. Your own official said it. I assume that the motor-car was supplied for Laindon.

(Mr. Grant.) You must allow me. When a matter which is really a personal charge against my clients, the guardians, of purchasing a motor-car, you must allow me to give the real facts, and with your permission I shall do it whenever it occurs.

(The Inspector.) We have got the use for which this car was purchased.

(Mr. Grant.) You have said the interruption was justified, and I am trying to get the exact facts out when a charge is made. That is what ought to have been done in the past.

(The Inspector.) All right.

(Mr. Robb.) Has any contractor ever approached you for information?—No, sir.

Q. I want you to tell us who supplied that bed-ticking you spoke about?—It was divided up between two contractors.

Q. Who were they?—Messrs. W. H. Watts & Co. and Messrs. Cartwright & Co.

Q. Do you know how much?—No, sir, I could not say right off?

Q. Are they local people, both of them?—Oh no, sir.

Q. Have you ever been ordered to make up parcels of any description for the guardians to take away from the workhouse?—I was ordered to make up parcels of stationery, but not for the guardians to take away. A messenger has taken them away.

Q. A messenger?—Yes.

Q. Who to?—Mr. Finden, one of the guardians.

Q. You have made up parcels of stationery for him?—I have, sir.

Q. Out of the workhouse stores?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) By whose directions?—The late master, Mr. Madeley.

Q. And did you consider that a lawful order of the master?—What was I to do? Was I to say, No, I must not do it?

(Mr. Robb.) And to your knowledge were they sent to Mr. Finden?—I believe so.

(The Inspector.) Who addressed them?—There was no address. I made up the parcel. The parcel was left in the master's office. The master called a messenger and sent it away. I did not send it away, I made it up.

Q. And how do you know it was for a particular guardian?—The master told me.

(Mr. Grant.) Will you ask him if he entered it in his book, as he ought to have done?

(The Inspector.) Did you make any protest?—No. How could I? I am a subordinate. I am obliged to carry out the instructions of the master.

(Mr. Grant.) The legitimate instructions. Will you ask him if he made any entry in the books?—There is no book kept of the stationery.

(The Inspector.) What was the stationery?—A packet of 250 envelopes, half a ream of foolscap paper, a few pencils, pens, &c.

Q. How long ago was it?—It was a long time ago. Perhaps 12 months ago. I have not only done it once. I have done it twice or three times.

(The Inspector.) Have you any questions, Mr. Grant?

(Mr. Grant.) Oh, yes. I have a great deal to ask him. Mr. Genery, when did you first have anything to do with workhouse administration?—I cannot say when. It goes back a good long time.

Q. How old are you?—46 years.

Q. When did you take any official post in workhouse administration?—It may have been about eight-and-twenty years.

Q. I want a direct answer. I don't want, it may be?—I have not the papers with me.

Q. Do you mean to say that you don't know your own history without looking up papers. How long do you want to get the papers?—They are at home.

Q. Not at the workhouse then?—The workhouse is not my home.

Q. I shall want a lot of answers from this witness. I think (to the Inspector) you should allow him to go away and fetch the papers.

(The Inspector.) The point is so remote.

(Mr. Grant.) You may think so. Wait till you hear a little more of my cross-examination.

(The Inspector.) The particular point is that you want to know how long he has been engaged in workhouse administration. He says about 28 years.

(Mr. Grant.) I want his history.

(The Inspector.) The question you are asking him is what is his age. He says about 28.

(Mr. Grant.) Excuse me. He said his age is 46. I am asking him when he became associated with the workhouse. And he said about 28 years. He says he wants his papers before he can give me the exact date.

(Mr. Robb.) I don't know where we are getting to. This official is an official of the board of guardians. I don't care what his record is. Now he is to have the harrow driven over him.

(The Inspector.) He is to be tested as to his credibility.

(Mr. Grant.) And a great deal more than that. What was the first post you held. You know that?—Oh yes. I was assistant steward at Fulham Union Workhouse.

Q. And where did you go after that?—St. George's, Hanover Square.

Q. As what?—assistant master.

Q. And the next?—Master of Mile End Workhouse.

Q. How long were you master there?—About 4 years. I am not certain about that.

Q. Roughly 4 years?—Yes.

Q. And that brought you down to 1893, did it not?—I could not say that. I have these records in pen and ink and they drop out of my memory.

(The Inspector.) You say about August, 1893?

(Mr. Grant.) And in 1893 were you charged at the Old Bailey with conspiring to defraud the guardians of Mile End Old Town, and of obtaining £468 and £87 by means of false pretences?—That is so.

Q. And you could not get a master's post after this record?—Certainly not.

Q. And since then you have been getting temporary employment?—I have, sir.

Q. And then in 1903 you applied for an appointment in Poplar?—Yes.

Q. Do you know that the Local Government Board were consulted about your application?—I did.

Q. Did you know that the Local Government Board said you might go there if Mr. Crooks had no objection, and that Mr. Crooks said that although you had been guilty you might have a fresh start?

(The Inspector.) You will have the papers here to-morrow and then we shall see precisely what was said.

(Mr. Grant.) At any rate you came into the workhouse in 1903. The guardians knowing of your record were willing to give you a fresh start?—Yes.

Q. How long after you came there in 1903 was it that you became dissatisfied with the administration of the workhouse?—The administration of the workhouse had nothing to do with me.

Q. I did not ask you that?—I did not become dissatisfied.

Q. When was it you first began to write anything about it?—Did what?

Q. When did you write about it?—Write about it? I have not written to anyone.

Q. Mr. Genery, you are on your oath. I have the letters here?—You have got letters there that I have written?

Q. Before I ask you anything further, do you want to withdraw that answer that you have not written to anyone?—No.

Q. You have not written to anyone before you came into the office to-day?—I don't quite understand.

Q. I put the question again. You came into the workhouse in 1903. This is June, 1906. During that period have you written to anyone about the administration of the workhouse?—Never.

Q. Have you written any criticism at all about the affairs in the workhouse?—Never.

Q. Or complaints?—Never.

Q. Or spoken to anyone?—Oh, yes. I have spoken to lots of people.

Q. You have spoken. First of all, let us see who they are. Are they Local Government Board officials who you have spoken to. If so, who are they?—Mr. Oxley.

Q. Anybody else?—No.

Q. Quite sure?—There were several gentlemen in the room.

Q. When Mr. Oxley was there?—Yes.

Q. But except when Mr. Oxley was there you have not spoken to anybody else. You have seen Mr. Davy?—Mr. Davy was in the room at the time.

Q. When Mr. Oxley was conducting the Inquiry?—Mr. Oxley was not conducting any inquiry. I went to see Mr. Oxley at the Local Government Board.

Q. Now tell us about that. When was it?—The 1st of May.

Q. That is so?—Yes.

Q. Was that your first visit there?—Oh, yes.

Q. On any occasion?—No. After I had left Mile End I went and called on Mr. Lockwood. Those are the only two occasions I have ever been to the Local Government Board.

Q. And that was in order to get some employment?—No. I have got plenty of employment.

Q. You visited Mr. Oxley. On how many occasions have you been to the Local Government Board?—These two occasions. I went to see Mr. Lockwood on one occasion and Mr. Oxley on the other occasion.

Q. In May of this year?—Yes.

Q. Who sent for you to go?—I wrote to say I would go up.

Q. Now you see, Mr. Genery, you are not doing yourself justice. You told me just now you had never written anything. Now you say you have written to the Local Government Board?—I will withdraw that. I did write to Mr. Oxley.

Q. Now then, let us go back to the writing. When was it you first wrote anything at all about Poplar to anybody?—On the 17th of March of this year.

Q. Who was that to?—Mr. Oxley.

(Mr. Grant.) I don't know whether these papers are here—these documents he sent to the Local Government Board.

(The Inspector.) So far as I remember you made a communication to Mr. Oxley when he was inspecting the workhouse?—I did not make it there.

Q. You spoke to him?—Yes.

Q. And then I sent for you?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) May I ask if I will have an opportunity of seeing Mr. Genery's letter?

(The Inspector.) So far as I remember he wrote a note submitting himself as evidence, and he said he had an important communication to make, and Mr. Oxley saw him in my presence.

(Mr. Grant.) I want the letter.

(The Inspector.) The original letter? If I remember rightly it was a short letter to say he had an important communication to make. I think so. I have scores of these letters.

(Mr. Robb.) If this letter is put in I shall ask that the other letters of complaint should also be put in.

(Mr. Grant.) I want this particular one.

(Mr. Robb.) If this letter is put in, let the other letters you have received about this board be also put in.

(Mr. Grant.) You have the letter. Mr. Robb can ask anything he likes. I also want to see the minute of the interviews with Mr. Genery.

(The Inspector.) There was no minute at all. Some notes may have been taken.

(Mr. Grant.) Well then, just consider what the Local Government Board is doing through you. It is allowing one of officials to the guardians to go to the Local Government Board, and make anonymous complaints without disclosing these complaints in any way to the guardians or letting them know anything about them until this man has been examined. I am asking to cross-examine him on the statements made and I am entitled to have the letter.

Mr. Genery.
21 June.

Mr. Genery.

21 June.

(The Inspector.) You are entitled to cross-examine him on oath on the questions he came here for.

(Mr. Grant.) But I am entitled to know what the man said when he saw you, after such a record.

(The Inspector.) It is a matter for us what credence we attached to what he said. If I were to produce all the letters I have received—

(Mr. Grant.) I am only asking for a matter of common justice. I am not speaking personally. The Local Government Board have actually received from a subordinate officer of the guardians a letter saying that he has a complaint to make. According to this statement, which I don't accept, he goes to the Local Government Board, he sees Mr. Oxley and you, and he sees other officials, and makes statements and then we are never told he is coming to you, we are never told that any statements were made, and we have no alternative, beyond seeing the letter, of knowing anything about it.

(The Inspector.) Why should you? I don't call him on the statements he made to me.

(Mr. Grant.) That is not the point. The point which I am making is that the Local Government Board, as I understand their rules, I may be wrong, but I have always understood that the first thing that Department does if anybody is to be impeached is to send them a copy of their impeachment and to ask them for their observations on that impeachment.

(The Inspector.) That is the usual, but not the invariable practice.

(Mr. Grant.) I am content to take the usual practice, and I am asking you to take the usual practice and let me see that statement.

(Mr. Robb.) Then I object unless all the letters are given to my learned friend. At the time the Local Government Board had ordered an inquiry, and the inquiry was in actual progress at the time. If the Local Government Board are not to be allowed to obtain the statements of any official unless the officers are to be dealt with in this way we shall never get an officer to make any statement.

(The Inspector.) The object of that inquiry was to see whether the request of the guardians should be acceded to and a public inquiry ordered.

(Mr. Grant.) At the present time I am so handicapped by not knowing the whole of the proceedings. I have not seen the correspondence between the board and the guardians preliminary to the Inquiry, and therefore I have to proceed by way of general knowledge of what is usual in these cases.

(Mr. Robb.) I suggest it would save a considerable amount of time if my friend would read up the proceedings of the last four days.

(Mr. Grant.) I am asking for the letter and the minute of the interview.

(Mr. Robb.) I wonder what we shall be asking for next. If you put in all the letters you have received we shall be here a very long time.

(The Inspector.) Here is your witness.

(Mr. Grant.) He is not mine. He is yours. I am cross-examining him.

(Mr. Robb.) Just now you said he was my witness.

(Mr. Grant.) Then I understand you will have the letter produced.

(The Inspector.) Oh, indeed, you may not understand that.

(Mr. Grant.) Do you refuse it to me?

(The Inspector.) I am telling you what it is. It is, if I remember, simply a letter stating—

(Mr. Grant.) I ask for the minute of the interview made when he came to the Local Government Board to make this complaint, and I understand you to say I shall not have it.

(The Inspector.) That is my ruling. If I remember rightly, it is absolutely ridiculous to make all this fuss about it.

(Mr. Grant.) I have not seen the letter.

(The Inspector.) If you were to see the multitude of letters I have received—

(Mr. Grant.) When I ask for them it will be time for you to refuse them.

(Mr. Robb.) There is a grave objection to communications of officers pending the Inquiry being disclosed to persons whom those letters referred to.

(The Inspector.) I am taking the whole of the responsibility of this thing and the Inquiry will now proceed.

(Mr. Grant.) Do I understand that this letter is refused?

(Mr. Robb.) Seriously speaking, my learned friend and his clients are doing everything in their power to prevent officers going into the box and giving information, and all this examination into an officer's past record is an absolutely unnecessary piece of cruelty, with the object of deterring other officers from giving information. I strongly object to any confidential letter of any officer being disclosed. I strongly object to any confidential communication of any officer pending the Inquiry being disclosed.

(The Inspector.) I have given my ruling.

(Mr. Robb.) I have not seen them and don't know whether the other side has.

(Mr. Grant.) Now we will come to the point. I have not got from you what was the nature of your communication with the Local Government Board. What other communications have you made to anybody?—Not any.

Q. Not any. There again you must be careful about your answer, because that flatly contradicts an answer you have already given, when you said you have made complaints?—I have not made complaints.

Q. You said so just now. You said you made complaints to certain other officers of what went on in the workhouse?—No, sir.

Q. No?—I may have discussed it with the officers. I have not made complaints. What is the good of my making complaints? Supposing they had gone to the guardians with my complaints, they would have kicked me out.

Q. Did you ever try. Do you suggest that in any way you ever tried?—It was no use.

Q. Wait till you have heard the question. Did you ever suggest directly or indirectly to any guardian that there was anything in the workhouse which ought not to be there?—Never.

Q. There were irregularities?—Certainly.

Q. There were?—Oh, yes.

Q. When did you become aware of it?—The very first quarter I was in the place.

Q. In 1903?—Yes.

Q. What was the first thing that struck you?—There was the matter of the beer. I am being obliged to draw it out. There were also lots of other things.

Q. Quite right. My complaint against you is that, knowing of these things you did not make an entry in the books. I ask you another question—what was the next thing after the beer?—Well, there was general waste in the place. There was no head. There was no man to go to, and say that such and such a thing is going on which ought not to.

Q. I want a little more in detail?—General waste going on.

Q. I see you have a mass of notes before you. I think there was the water. You have not given us much in detail?—75 gallons per head. Is not that too much?

Q. What further complaints have you made against the guardians. Let me read the complaints you have already made. First of all there was the beer. Then the contracts. And then the bed-ticking. Then the stock-taking. Then the relatives of the guardians. Then the temporary officers. Then the stores. Then there was a type-writer. Then the workhouse garden. Then the water. Then the decoration of the assistant master's room?—The assistant master's room.

Q. And then the master's family. Then the farm colonies?—I never said anything about the farm colonies.

Q. There was a complaint made against two men—Oakes and Shuttle. Then the outsize, and then the bedsteads. Later on there was Laidon. Is there anything else?—There are a few. Well, a man named William Payne, 56 years of age, was admitted into the workhouse on the 1st of December, 1902.

Q. That was before you went there?—Oh, no.

Mr. Genery.

21 June.

Q. I think you said you went there in 1903?—Oh, yes, you are right.

Q. How is it you got this information?—I got it from the books.

Q. You have been searching it out from the books?—It comes natural to me.

Q. I understand?—

(Mr. Robb.) Let him give his answer. I have heard over and over again that judges declare that witnesses should not be questioned on matters that did not come up during examination.

(Mr. Grant.) Go on with your evidence?—William Payne was admitted into the workhouse in December, 1902. His order was marked by the committee, "The committee request immediate attention to this man." That man remained in the workhouse for three years and three months. At the end of that time it was found he belonged to Romsey in Hampshire.

Q. Well?—That man was in Poplar at the expense of the rates. He ought not to have been.

Q. If he had been removed they could have recovered from Romsey?—

(Mr. Robb.) My friend accuses me of not knowing the Poor Law. He does not know how long you can charge any union with the maintenance of a pauper. He is under the impression that you can charge two or three years. A mere novice would know different.

(Mr. Grant.) May I say this at once. I am here to protect my clients. I am not here to trouble about anything Mr. Robb says about me.

(Mr. Robb.) That you are not called to do.

(Mr. Grant.) Now Mr. Genery, have you finished with that case?—When this man was removed after being in the workhouse for three years and three months he was rigged out in an entire rig of clothes, and an official of the workhouse took him down. Of course this official ought not to have gone, because you cannot work a dual office. If he is assistant master to the workhouse he should be that and not removal officer at the same time.

Q. Is that all you have to say about that case?—Yes. A man named John Markhams was in the workhouse for 20 years before they removed him.

Q. That was before you came?—Oh, yes.

Q. Can you give me details about this case?—I have no details.

Q. What is the next matter you complain of?—Well, there is the matter of Cunningham. I think that has already been referred to. I have not said it. It has come out. He is a brother-in-law of Mr. Lansbury.

Q. You had better tell us about him?—Well, he was engaged in the workhouse as assistant engineer, and during that time he also did outside work.

Q. Was he living in the workhouse?—No, sir.

Q. Did he have regular hours of attendance?—Oh, yes.

Q. Is that all you want to say about Mr. Cunningham. What is the next?

(The Inspector.) Was he an eight-hour officer?—I believe he was.

Q. You are all on duty for eight hours?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) I see you have a budget there. I want you to tell us what it is?—At Christmas, 1904, and 1905, a concert was given to the inmates in the workhouse, and paid artistes were engaged for these.

Q. How many of them were there?—I could not say right off.

Q. You have not searched that up?—It is hardly worth while.

Q. What was the total amount paid?—Anything from 10 to 20 guineas.

(The Inspector.) I think that is hardly worth while?—I have not got the book to see.

(Mr. Grant.) You think it was enough to make a charge without producing evidence?—It is quite illegal to do it.

Q. Illegal to do what?—To pay artistes to come to the workhouse.

Q. When was it?—

(Mr. Robb.) Will you ask, sir, what fund it was paid out of?

(Mr. Grant.) At present I want the date of the concert?—Boxing Day, 1904, and Boxing Day, 1905.

Q. Two concerts.

Q. And you say the amount was ten guineas for each concert or five?—I say anything from ten to twenty.

(The Inspector.) They would be paid for out of voluntary subscriptions?—It is paid for by the master, I think, out of petty cash.

(Mr. Grant.) What is the next thing?—I think it was in September last year the guardians elected a man as out-relief distributor.

Q. Yes. What is his name?—Comfort.

Q. That was the post you applied for?—It was.

Q. You did not get it?—I did not.

Q. Was that about the time your dissatisfaction with the guardians began?—No, sir.

Q. Were you not told the reason why the guardians would not appoint you to that important post. Was it not because of your record?—Oh, dear no.

Q. Was that not the reason?—Oh, dear no. They did not say anything of the sort. My record was brought up by one of the guardians, Lansbury, to blacken me and to prevent my getting the job. Sixteen years ago I made a slip. Am I always to be blackened with it?

Q. Let us have things accurately. Thirteen years ago you were convicted at the Old Bailey of conspiracy to defraud?—Wait a minute. I was discharged on my own recognisances of £100 to come up for judgment if called upon. Sir Forrest Falton was then Recorder of the City of London, and there was nothing in it at all.

(The Inspector.) What is your tenure of office under the guardians?—They can dismiss me at a month's notice.

Q. And without any interference by the Local Government Board. Therefore you can be dismissed for the evidence you are giving to-day?—I can.

(The Inspector.) That is not the case with the other officers of the guardians. I want it to be known that if any officer of the guardians comes and offers evidence here he will be protected to the utmost by the Local Government Board.

(Mr. Grant.) I am glad to hear what you have said. But let us deal with one thing at a time. I am defending the guardians, and cross-examining the witness and cannot pay attention to Mr. Davy all at once. I was not putting it to you. It came from you. (To witness.) Now have you any more charges to make against the guardians?—About this out-relief distributor. This man who was engaged at £150 was utterly incompetent.

Q. In your opinion?—Not in my opinion, but in fact. They had to engage a man at £1 15s. a week to assist him in the work. I could have done it for £130 a year.

Q. But how much money would have been passing through your hands every week?—Not any money.

Q. Goods then. What was the value of them that would pass through your hands every week?—I could not say right off.

Q. A large amount?—Yes.

Q. A very trustworthy post?—There is nothing in it.

Q. Is that all you have to say about Comfort?—Yes.

Q. What is the next?—On the 14th of March of this year a paragraph appeared in the *Daily Chronicle* respecting the Mazawattee tea, which raised the ire of the guardians.

Q. Have you the paragraph there?—No. Mr. Lansbury wrote a letter to the *Daily Chronicle* objecting to this. A messenger, an inmate of the workhouse, was sent to Fleet Street, and he was paid 1s. expenses out of the rates. This was a private communication from Mr. Lansbury and a shilling was paid the man for expenses out of the rates.

Q. The communication was defending the guardians?—That does not matter. It was in the name of Mr. Lansbury. That makes him a private individual.

(Mr. Robb.) Will you allow me to say that I have carefully refrained from going into these trivial matters, and in each instance they have been elicited from the witnesses, who have been stung into retorting. Most of these things have been elicited from the witnesses whom they have examined themselves by their methods of treating them. I don't want it to go forth that I have dragged up all these details.

Mr. Genery.

21 June.

(The Inspector.) To me it is a positive grief that the names of honourable men should have been drawn out in this way for the papers to get hold of.

(Mr. Grant.) We regret it. We have to put up with it.

(Mr. Robb.) At all events, I do object to being put under innuendos. It has been suggested that I made these charges, but I say that the charges, and especially those made by Mr. Jacobs, and other things of a personal nature, have been extracted by cross-examination by the guardians and ought never to have been made. I don't want it to go forth that I am responsible.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, Mr. Genery, what is the next thing?—I could keep on all day. I have no further notes. I have done.

Q. Have you now exhausted every charge you want to make against the guardians. Those of which you have got notes?—There are several others, of course.

Q. This is a full Inquiry?—One charge is against certain guardians feeding at the ratepayers' expense.

Q. Who are they?—Mr. McCarthy for one.

Q. Who are the others?—I leave it there.

Q. Are there others?—I won't say anything more about this.

Q. You have said so?—I withdraw it then.

Q. Was it true or false?—True to an extent.

Q. Let us have them?—I will withdraw it.

Q. I won't want them withdrawn. I want to know the full extent of the charges. The guardians are impeached and are as anxious as anyone else to have the whole thing out. Let us have the guardians who you say have been feeding at the ratepayers' expense.—I will leave it to them.

Q. You said there were?—I withdraw that.

Q. What is the next one?—With respect to this feeding at the workhouse there seems to be a misunderstanding, and I think if I may be allowed, I should like to read Article 172.

Q. You need not trouble yourself about Poor Law matters. After all, we don't want a lecture about the Poor Law. We want facts. Are there any other charges you wish to make?—No, that is all.

Q. Now then, let us go through them. I want to ask you about some of them later on, and discuss them. Did you think that the workhouse was overstaffed?—Yes.

Q. Who were the officers they could have dispensed with?—A number of them.

Q. Tell me, now?—I don't see why I should.

Q. You are here to help me?—Yes, that may be.

Q. And I ask you for an answer?—Well, a good many I cannot individualise.

Q. Oh yes, you can?—I don't see why.

(Mr. Robb.) I object, because the learned counsel is asking for a matter of opinion, and he objected to me asking such a question. He said that a witness was not a judge or jury, and I agree. He is now putting the same class of questions to which he strongly objected when I asked a witness the same sort of thing. This is a very good example of doing yourself what you deprecate in others.

(The Inspector.) The witness says his general opinion is—

(Mr. Grant.) I must make him answer.

(The Inspector.) I cannot make him answer.

(Mr. Grant.) Do you decline to help me?

(The Inspector.) I have no power to make him.

(Mr. Grant.) You have very great power. You can tell him it is his duty to do so. I don't think it quite fair.

(The Inspector.) You ask him whether in his opinion—well, it is some time ago. I don't think you can individualise. I am not accustomed to this method.

(Mr. Grant.) I ask you to tell the witness it is his duty to answer.

(Witness.) I don't want to get the sack.

(Mr. Grant.) You have heard from the Inspector that everyone else except you is going to be protected.

(The Inspector.) Excuse me, I have said nothing of the sort.

(Mr. Grant.) I understood you to say that this man is under a week's notice, and that some officers are under the Local Government Board, and that the Local Government Board can protect them.

(The Inspector.) You are asking the witness for a scheme to do with less officers.

(Mr. Grant.) I am entitled to put a question and I ask you to help me to put it.

(The Inspector.) You want to know the names of the officers who can be dispensed with?

(Mr. Robb.) I ask you to recollect that I was stopped when I asked the witness for an expression of opinion. I was at once stopped, and the notes will bear me out. Why should he be allowed to introduce matters of opinion when I was debarred from doing the same. I cannot understand it, and I must say that if this sort of thing is to continue on every little point my learned friend raises, this Inquiry will go on for some time.

(The Inspector.) You will make it worse.

(Mr. Robb.) The Inquiry is lengthened, if I may say so, by the marked inaccuracies of my learned friend.

(The Inspector.) Don't say so. He puts in my mouth and your mouth things that we never said.

(Mr. Robb.) You are accused of saying that officers won't be protected. That is the sort of misrepresentation that is going on.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Robb, I cannot help you.

(Mr. Robb.) Then I enter my protest.

(Mr. Grant.) Let us hear what officers can be dispensed with?—I don't know. I don't want to get a man or a woman the sack. Besides that, I don't see why I should instruct the guardians or their chief officials as to who should be sacked and who should not.

Q. May I put it in a more courteous way. Although an officer of the guardians, you don't see why you should help the guardians in the administration of the workhouse, although you are paid?—Do you pay me as an officer to advise them?

Q. Just listen. The workhouse is much overstaffed, and the officers are simply falling over one another. Is that your view?—No.

Q. You swore it?—I swore it? It has nothing to do with me.

Q. Well then, look at this document, and tell me whether you know anything at all about it?—I have never seen it before in my life.

Q. That is not an answer. Look at it. Do you know anything about it?—No.

(The Inspector.) I should like Mr. Genery to read all through it?—I had nothing whatever to do with it.

(Mr. Grant.) I suggest that you wrote it?—I cannot typewrite.

Q. I say you got it typewritten?—No.

Q. I suggest that you did?—

(Mr. Robb.) Now I object. The document is put in. It is put before the witness and he swears that he knows nothing about it. According to the laws of evidence he cannot put that document in.

(The Inspector.) He cannot.

(Mr. Grant.) As far as I am concerned, I am quite satisfied if Mr. Davy reads it through. It contains exactly the same charges as Mr. Genery has just made.

(Mr. Robb.) My friend has no right to state the sense of a document which cannot be admitted.

(Mr. Grant.) Then it is not admitted?

(Mr. Robb.) I submit he cannot put it to the witness. He cannot state the contents of it when it is not admissible in evidence.

(Mr. Grant.) I have made the statement. Very well, then. I want to know to whom else besides the Local Government Board have you complained to?—Nobody.

Q. To whom else have you said anything?—I have said it to hundreds.

Q. To any of Mr. Robb's friends?—Very likely.

Q. Which of them?—I don't know. I don't know any of those gentlemen over there.

Q. Well, Mr. Genery, will you be good enough to tell us who, since last March, have you seen about this matter?—Who I have seen? No.

Q. You refuse?—I refuse.
 Q. You have seen people?—I don't say I have.
 Q. You don't say you have not?—No.
 Q. You won't swear you have not?—No.
 Q. Now I put to you a general question. You say that the discipline among the officers was very bad?—I did not say so.
 Q. I said the discipline of the house generally?—Of the inmates?
 Q. Yes?—What?
 Q. The discipline among the inmates was very bad?—I did not say very bad.
 Q. Will you put your own words?—I don't see that has anything to do with me.
 Q. Did you ever, during the time you have been in the workhouse, make any complaint of what you saw?—I said a little while ago it would have been of no use.

Rev. D. CONOLEY, Chaplain of the Workhouse; sworn and examined.

(The Inspector.) Are you the chaplain of the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. What is your name?—Daniel Conoley.

Q. Are you a Churchman?—Yes.

Q. How long have you been chaplain?—Eight years.

Q. What are your hours. Have you regular hours of duty?—No.

Q. No regular hours of duty. Are the duties at the workhouse most difficult?—Yes.

Q. At all hours?—No special hours, except when special services are arranged.

(The Inspector.) Have you any questions to ask, Mr. Robb?

(Mr. Robb.) About four years ago, did you see the chapel altered?—The chapel was renovated.

Q. Did you know how long it took?—As well as I can remember, from 4 to 6 months.

Q. In your opinion was that a moderate and proper time to occupy?—I think it should have been finished in about a month or six weeks.

Q. What did the work involve?—The inside of the roof was scraped and varnished so as to make it lighter in appearance.

Q. What was done to the floor?—The floor was tiled.

Q. Was that done under Mr. Gillock, the labour master?—The superintendent of labour, I think he is called.

Q. Did he make any statement to you about the work?—He thought the amount of money spent on wages was scandalous.

Q. Yes?—He told me that about £200 was spent on labour alone and very little on material.

Q. Let us understand it right. Gillock, who was labour master, and in charge of the job, told you that the money paid in labour was scandalous?—He did so.

Q. He said it was about £200?—Yes.

Q. For labour alone?—Yes.

Q. What has been your experience of conduct and discipline in the workhouse generally?—Well, I should say it was, from my point of view, very bad.

Q. Yes. Will you explain that, please?—Well, the conduct of the master in taking the guardians to the beer cellar got about amongst the inmates and the conduct of the master recently has gone abroad. That also has got to be known to the inmates. And we have in the house, of course, I am sorry to say, inmates of a low type of character, and hearing of the conduct of the master, it has made the work of the chaplain very difficult indeed.

Q. In other words, you have a class of inmates to whom example is everything. What has been the example set to the inmates?—I should say very bad.

Q. Has it been subversive of discipline?—I should say so certainly.

Q. Did you experience difficulty with any of the inmates?—There is no pressure put on the inmates to go to chapel, and of course their knowledge of the doings of the master and the guardians would gradually hinder them from taking instruction from me.

Q. That is not an answer. I ask you why you didn't?—Yes.

Q. And the reason is that it would have been of no use?—Yes.

Q. During the whole of the time you have been at Poplar have you ever known anyone dismissed by the guardians or threatened by the guardians for helping them with suggestions about their administration?—No.

Q. During the whole of the time you were there, did you make any suggestion about the administration of the workhouse?—To whom?

Q. Have you made any suggestions?—No.

Q. Not to the guardians?—No.

Q. During the whole of the time you never opened your mouth until you got to the Local Government Board?—Yes, that is so.

Q. You speak of the doings of the guardians. Have you any personal knowledge. Have you seen anything yourself?—I have seen guardians in the cellar with the master drinking.

Q. Have you ever seen any person in the workhouse the worse for drink?—I have, sir.

Q. Whom have you seen?—Mr. Anderson.

Q. One of the guardians. You saw him the worse for drink?—Yes.

Q. When did you see him drunk?—I cannot specify the date, but I mentioned it to Haswell. I came out and said, "Did you see that man who has gone into the workhouse?" He said, "He is not sober." I saw him rolling up to the master's house and saw him smoking a cigar.

Q. How long ago was that?—Three months ago.

Q. Has any other instance of this kind of thing come under your notice?—Only the general going to the cellar by members of the board of guardians.

Q. Has anything been drunk in addition to the beer?—The only thing I know about spirits is what the master told me in the doctor's room, when the doctor said that Mr. Walton said that there were five bottles of brandy short, and he told Mr. Walton to buy some more. He said it had been used by the guardians.

Q. Who said so?—Mr. Madeley.

Q. To you and the doctor?—To myself and the doctor.

Q. It had been used by the guardians?—Yes.

Q. When was that statement made?—About Christmas time.

Q. Last Christmas time?—About Christmas time.

Q. Are you able to say whether or not Mr. and Mrs. Madeley attended to their duties?—Whether they attended to their duties?

Q. Yes?—I cannot say anything about that.

Q. Do you know whether they were frequently absent or not?—I don't know from personal knowledge.

Q. Do you know anything about the temporary branch workhouse at Well Street, Hackney?—I acted as chaplain.

Q. Have you any information you can give to the Inspector about that?—I can only tell him about being approached by the master.

Q. Who was the master?—There was a master appointed, Mr. Clark. I was approached by him because he said he was in a great difficulty, that he had had several sleepless nights because he had been interfered with in the discharge of his duties. He gave me one or two instances of how he had been interfered with. He said he pointed out to the committee as they went round, a defective boiler put in by Messrs. Pyle. Mr. Madeley stepped back and threatened him and swore at him because he brought this to the notice of the guardians, telling him that he would have this set right. In the matter of the shirts, he said that he telephoned as he felt that the shirts sent in were not up to sample. He sent to ask for the sample, and Mr. Madeley, after he had got in contact with the matron on the telephone, replied that he had insulted his wife by

Mr. Genery.

21 June.

Rev. D.

Conoley.

21 June.

Rev. D.
Conoley.
21 June.

asking about such a thing. There was also a challenge or a complaint about the meat sent in. In that case he was also bullied for taking any notice of it. I told the man he should put the facts in writing—in a letter—and that I would do my best to see that no evil was caused to his position. He told me that had he not made this statement to me he must have sent in his resignation. He spoke to me as the chaplain and a Churchman.

(Mr. Grant.) Can you give any date for this Hackney business?—It was at the beginning of the administration of the workhouse. It would be in the books.

Q. Some years ago?—Yes, when the Well Street Workhouse was opened. The clerk would know.

Q. Can you tell me, Mr. Lough. Was it in 1902?—I think it was. I cannot be quite sure.

Q. At any rate, I believe it was when the rector of Bow was a guardian?—I don't think he was.

Q. I am told he was. At any rate whether he was or not, can you tell me what steps you took to protect this man?—To protect him?

Q. Yes?—I don't think it is necessary to say that. It is entirely a matter that comes within the discharge of my office.

Q. I only mean this, and will be quite content with your answer. Having had these complaints made to you, did you do anything to see it remedied?—I did.

Q. I don't want to know what it was. I want to know if you followed the matter up?—Yes.

Q. And was it put right afterwards?—Not until a considerable time after.

Q. But the master has been dismissed. You cannot have anything more than the dismissal of the master?—

(Mr. Robb.) He resigned.

(Mr. Grant.) Now just tell me. Mr. Anderson was drunk coming into the house?—Yes.

Q. He did not get drunk in the workhouse?—He was going to the master's house. He was going in that direction.

Q. Did you say anything to anyone about this drinking going on in the workhouse?—I have said to a number of people that I thought it was a scandalous thing.

Q. Mr. Conoley, you are a man of education, you would know the right quarter in which representations should have been made?—I did, and I told the Bishop of it.

Q. Did you make any representation to the Local Government Board?—We sent a joint letter, I and the doctor, to the Local Government Board, asking to see the new Inspector when he was appointed.

Q. How long ago?—Last year. We thought that was a good opportunity.

Q. Well, now you have mentioned one guardian. I want to know—you have already said you have seen others—can you mention any others?—I cannot.

Q. "I have seen guardians in the cellar drinking. I saw Mr. Anderson drunk coming into the workhouse." I want to know who the guardians are that were drinking in the cellar?—It is a long time since I saw them drinking. I cannot remember who they were.

Q. How many?—I saw it on one occasion. Actually saw it. I have been there myself and had lemonade.

Q. I think you are a teetotaler?—I am, fortunately.

Q. So far as the offence goes, you were in the cellar as the guardians were in the cellar?—I am afraid I was. I was invited there by the master.

Q. What did you have?—Lemonade.

Q. Do you know who paid for your lemonade?—I suppose it came from where the others did.

Q. What did you have?—A single glass of lemonade on two occasions.

Q. On two occasions?—Yes.

Q. I thought it was only on one occasion. Close together?—Yes.

Q. Have you been in any other place of the same kind. Will you mind telling me?—Any other place. None, except when I have accepted the hospitality of the master in his room.

Q. And when you accepted it, at the time, you did not know that there was anything wrong?—Certainly not.

Q. Did you alter your opinion later?—I am afraid I have. I have been told it is illegal even for the guardians to take a cup of tea in the workhouse; it must have been wrong for me to have taken the lemonade.

Q. These guardians' teas have been charged for all through and have been allowed by the Auditor. The Auditor must have been just as ignorant of the fact that they were illegal as you were. Well now, about the chapel; of course you don't pretend to have any expert knowledge?—Oh, no.

Q. And the superintendent of labour says that the expenditure was scandalous?—That is all.

Q. Do you know that he was afterwards dismissed?—No, I don't think he was dismissed.

(Mr. Robb.) In justice to this man, whom I don't know. Here is a statement going forth on the authority of the learned counsel that Mr. Gillock was dismissed. It is nothing of the sort.

(Mr. Grant.) I understand that the exact framing of the words I ought to have used were "His services were dispensed with." Do you know whether that was so or not?—They were dispensed with in an honourable way. I think he obtained a pension.

Q. Unfortunately, I am being instructed as I go along on these facts. Now, you say there were five bottles of brandy short. That was something the doctor told the master and the master told you?—The master told me and the doctor in the doctor's room.

Q. How long ago?—About last Christmas.

(The Inspector.) I am much obliged to you for your evidence. I am just going to ask you a question or two. Did anyone ever allude in your presence to the master's misconduct?—Yes.

Q. So as to make it disagreeable for you to be in the house?—Yes.

Q. Did any of the inmates ever allude in your presence to the drinking by some of the guardians?—Yes.

Q. And said things unpleasant for you to hear?—Yes.

Q. Now the number of guardians drinking in the cellar was not large?—Not very large.

Q. Did it ever occur to you that you might have done some good by making an appeal to the chairman, Mr. Crooks?—I had that in my mind, sir, but we felt the difficulties of the case. I must say I took steps to bring it to his notice. I should have approached the matter more definitely, but I was anticipated by a brother clergyman. In asking a brother clergyman's advice, the vicar of St. Stephen's, as to how he would act in the matter of the master's misconduct, he said, "I think I should be quiet." I had written a letter with the intention of calling the attention of one of the guardians to it, but before I could get the letter under weigh, Mr. Breakwell had brought it to the notice of Mr. Peckham, and Mr. Peckham brought it to the notice of Mr. Crooks.

Q. That was last summer?—Yes.

Q. And some of the guardians took some steps in the matter?—Yes.

Q. I am not particularly alluding to that, but to the possibility of something being done to bring the matter before the attention of the guardians?—I am afraid Mr. Crooks knew it. I think everyone knew it. I could not set myself to bring a matter before him which I felt certain must be within his knowledge.

(Mr. Grant.) You hear the exact story of how the matter came to Mr. Crooks, and what action he took. At one time the guardians were not aware of it, but when they were, action was properly taken at once.

(The Inspector.) That is the same thought that occurred to me.

WILLIAM CROSBIE ; sworn and examined.

(The Inspector.) What is your name?—William Crosbie.

Q. Are you an inmate of the Poplar Workhouse?—I am.

Q. And what is the usual work you do?—Telephone work.

Q. How long have you been at telephone work?—Nearly six years.

(The Inspector.) Have you any questions, Mr. Robb?

(Mr. Robb.) Crosbie, where is the telephone box situated?—It is in the corridor. The main corridor.

Q. So that you are in a position to see a great deal?—Yes, sir.

Q. So that you are in a position to see a great deal of what goes on?—I don't see, I hear.

Q. Are you always in the box with the door closed?—I am there in the summer from a quarter past six to a quarter past nine at night. I never leave it.

Q. Do you know anything about the allegations of the guardians and others feeding and drinking in the workhouse?—Well, I do know. I had better stand or I cannot hear. Now, sir, what is it?

(The Inspector.) He is asking you if you know anything about the guardians eating and drinking in the workhouse?—Oh yes, I know a little about that.

(Mr. Robb.) Well, now, what do you know?—What do you wish me to know?

Q. Well, you tell your story just as you know it?—Do you give me a little text and the story I am to relate on it?

Q. Have you ever seen guardians eating and drinking in the workhouse?—I have.

Q. Where?—In the place usually called "The Horn of Plenty."

Q. Who were they drinking with?—With the ex-master.

Q. What were they drinking?—Ah, that is what I could not tell you. I never saw them drinking at all.

Q. Where did you see them drinking. Through the door?—Through what was called the "Poplar Horn of Plenty."

Q. Did you see through the open door?—Yes.

Q. How many were there?—There might have been seven or eight, or eight or nine.

Q. Not often nine or ten, would be there?—Not often.

Q. How many were there usually?—Take an average, five or six.

Q. Now, who were usually there?—That is personal.

Q. I think you had better tell me. It is personal to them. It helps some of the guardians who have not done it?—All the guardians, so far as I am concerned, I have the greatest respect for. They have always treated me as a gentleman. You know that I am at the telephone and I have been there nearly six years, but I think it is rather out of my line to say anything personal. But, I do know who have been there because my telephone box is situated just where they were. They have to pass through the corridor to the "Horn of Plenty."

(The Inspector.) Then you prefer definitely not to tell me who they were?—No, I will not. I am only an inmate, understand that, and that places a very serious consideration on me, because as an inmate I may be treated very indifferently after.

Q. Oh no. You say you might be, but you would not be?—They have always treated me with the greatest respect.

(Mr. Robb.) I won't press you on that question if you don't wish to answer it. What about the eating of the guardians. Did you see anything of that?—Yes.

Q. Did they eat with the master?—Yes.

Q. Many of them?—Yes.

Q. How many of them?—One, two, three, or four, that is all.

Q. You know the visiting committee have their tea in the workhouse?—I do.

Q. When they have that tea, is that what you are alluding to?—No. I am only a pauper, understand that.

Q. But you have been good enough to come here, and you are on your oath. I want you to tell me what time of day they have been feeding with the master. Was it in the middle of the day?—About the middle.

Q. With the guardians?—You must not say guardians. You must say a guardian.

Q. Was there more than one?—As a rule, no.

Q. As a rule, did that guardian dine there?—Always. It is like this. One week it was dinner, and one week it was supper. That is a guardian and I suppose he is in a situation there, one week he can only come at dinner-time and another week at supper-time.

Q. At all events he came when he could?—That is true.

Q. What time would dinner be?—As a rule the master's dinner was at one o'clock.

Q. What time would supper be?—Supper would be at any time. When it was convenient.

Q. I think, in justice to the other guardians, I must have the name of that guardian?—What guardian?

Q. The gentleman who dined with the master or supped with the master?—You know you are putting me in a very curious position.

Q. I am, but look here. You are a very sensible sort of chap; you are putting some of the guardians in a very curious position. You see, it might be anyone of them unless you tell me who it was?—You are trying to bluff me.

Q. Was it Mr. McCarthy?—Yes, I know the gentleman.

Q. Was he the man who lunched and dined with the master?—Yes.

Q. Then it was no other guardian?

(The Inspector.) That is all I want.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you seen any delicacies sent in?—I have.

Q. What have you seen?—Well now that is a question. Look here, I think you are exacting.

Q. Did you see salmon sent in?—Oh, salmon, I have.

Q. Oysters?—I have.

Q. Stewed eels?—Oh yes, sir.

Q. Do you know if they were sent in for Mr. McCarthy?—That is a query.

(The Inspector.) Answer the question?—You are getting at me. Don't get excited.

(Mr. Robb.) Was Mr. McCarthy there at the time these things were sent in?—He was.

Q. Now, do you know Mrs. Monks, the master's servant?—I do.

Q. Has she made any statement to you?—Oh, certainly. Oh, yes, what she said.

(The Inspector.) You need not go into that.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you seen any goods sent in to the master's premises since he left?—I have.

Q. What have you seen go in?—I have seen lots of vans passing.

Q. Going into the premises?—Going into the premises.

Q. Have you seen one dozen pairs of blankets?—I could not specify what they were.

Q. Have you seen some blankets?—No, I did not see blankets.

Q. Well, what did you see?—I saw the van go in and I understood from information given me that they were so and so and so and so.

Q. You understood, through Mrs. Monks?—Well, yes.

Q. The master's servant told you what the things were?—Yes.

Q. What did she tell you they were?—Well now.

Q. We are going to have Mrs. Monks so that she can deny any statement that is not true?—I think things have gone so far that they cannot be made any worse. There you are. That's me. I am only an inmate, I may remind you.

Q. Has Mrs. Monks told you that a large quantity of goods have been taken into the master's house from the stores?—I don't want Mrs. Monks to say that to me because I saw it for myself.

W. Crosbie.

21 June.

W. Crosbie.

21 June.

Q. Has she told you what the goods were?—Yes.

Q. Did she say one dozen pairs of blankets?—Yes.

Q. Two dozen pairs of sheets?—That is nothing. What has been there is really unaccountable. You could not give me an inventory of what has gone into the place?

Q. Too large to account?—Certainly.

Q. Well, what has become of all that stuff?—Ah, I don't pretend to know.

Q. You know Mr. Walton, the present master, tells us that it is all in the inventory?—What I know of Mr. Walton is that he is a gentleman.

(The Inspector.) Cannot we get this somewhere else?

(Mr. Grant.) I hope I may point out the difficulty of my position. Here we are having servants' gossip.

(The Inspector.) No. He says he does not require to be told because he himself saw.

(Mr. Grant.) This sort of thing would not be allowed in any Court because if I objected I should be told I was keeping things back.

(The Inspector.) Do you, as counsel for the guardians, think it right to object? I should have thought it was essential to your case.

(Mr. Grant.) The point of view from which the guardians approach this Inquiry and the point of view from which I am instructed, is that everything should be told, but what I am objecting to is that you are conducting this Inquiry in such a way that we are getting things in such a manner that we are getting to hear what the master's servant told the man at the telephone, instead of having at the first a list of charges against us. You must not complain presently if this Inquiry takes some time.

(Mr. Robb.) I should have thought that a statement made by one person to another—

(The Inspector.) So should I.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you seen any large vans pass out lately?—I have.

Q. When was that?—I could not give you the date.

Q. Was it before or after these goods went along the corridor?—It was after. After Mr. Madeley's resignation,

that was the time. There was a continual procession of goods.

Q. A continual procession?—Yes, and I understood that there were enough blankets and all sorts of things to have stocked a general store.

Q. This is a serious matter?—It is a serious matter to me, because I have no business to be here.

Q. You need not trouble?—But I do trouble.

(The Inspector.) What do you do, Mr. Crosbie?—I attend to the telephone.

Q. If your story is true what you are doing is helping the guardians?—I only speak the truth. I have nothing to live for now.

(Mr. Robb.) The Inspector has pointed out that if your story is true you have nothing to fear from anybody?—I don't fear anything.

Q. Well then, don't be afraid. So there was a regular procession of goods?—I do.

Q. After the master's resignation?—I do.

Q. From the stores into his premises?—I do.

Q. All kinds of goods?—Yes. What they were I could not tell you.

Q. They came from the stores?—They did. They came from that direction.

Q. Where are these articles now?—I think they are distributed all over Lewisham, or somewhere else, I suppose.

Q. Why Lewisham. Don't say anything but what you know?—I know that what I am telling you is the truth.

Q. What do you know about Lewisham?—I know nothing but this. I know they went through the tunnel. I know Mrs. Madeley has a brother, Mr. Mott—

(The Inspector.) No, no.

(Mr. Robb.) I want you to tell us what you know?—I am telling you.

(Mr. Grant.) What do you know about Lewisham. You say the goods went to Lewisham?—I don't say anything of the sort. I say they went through the tunnel.

Q. I did not hear it, for the Inspector stopped it. I want to know?—What do you want to know.

(The Inspector.) I think I must adjourn now. I am certain of this, that Mr. Crooks and the guardians will investigate this statement and if anything can be done will do what they can to recover the goods.

(Mr. Crooks.) If they have any evidence of a robbery from the ratepayers' stores we shall order a prosecution this very night.

(Mr. Robb.) If that is so, I have an important application to make. Will the guardians send to their contractors, who, I understand, are Clark and Clover, or one of them, to see if their vans were used for moving goods. It is after this statement clearly the duty of the guardians to follow up the vans of their own contractor to find where they went.

(The Inspector.) I am sure the guardians will take such steps as may be necessary.

(Mr. Grant.) I want to deal with one particular point before we adjourn. A great deal has been said about teas for the guardians. I want to say a word about those teas.

(Mr. Robb.) Are we to have another speech?

(The Inspector.) As I understand about the matter it is this. The guardians decided that they should have plain teas once a fortnight when they were sitting, but that since that time ham, and jam, have crept in, or something of that kind.

(Mr. Grant.) I want to shew you what this gross charge about the teas comes to. It is authorised as the minutes shew, it is marked up in red ink, it has been passed by the Auditor, and I want to shew you what it

comes to. I told one of the clerks to get it out for me, and to take out the charge for the first week in the second month of each quarter. It is my own shot. This is what the teas come to—on the 6th May none were supplied; on the 5th of August the guardians' tea cost 2s. 1½; on the 4th November, 2s. 4d.; and the 3rd February, when there was a large attendance, 13s. 4½d. That is under 18s., for the guardians' teas for specimen days selected in the way I have done. That is the charge about which we have heard so much.

(The Inspector.) We will now adjourn till Monday, at 11 o'clock.

(Mr. Grant.) May I ask you, sir. I am in this difficulty. I have come into this Inquiry and a great deal of it I have yet to get over. I do not quite understand how you are going on. I want to ask you what you are going to do with the future sittings. For Monday and Tuesday next week I am engaged. I am engaged for the London County Council in connection with an area scheme and those two days I am obliged to be away.

(The Inspector.) Last week we made arrangements to sit on Monday, Thursday and Friday. I think the guardians feel themselves that the sooner the Inquiry is over the better, and at great inconvenience to myself we decided on those three days, and Mr. Robb agreed to the arrangement.

(Mr. Grant.) If you will let me off on Monday I will agree to the other times.

(Mr. Robb.) We will consider it to-morrow, and see what we can do.

SIXTH DAY.

Friday, June 22nd, 1906.

(The Inspector.) Well, Mr. Robb, I understand you had to call more witnesses with regard to the question of stores?

(Mr. Robb.) I did propose so.

(The Inspector.) May I suggest? It is desirable we should bring this part of the Inquiry into the workhouse to a close. I don't think that the guardians will take long to state their case, and the suggestion occurs of applying the closure by compartments. I think we might all hurry up towards the finish. Your evidence, Mr. Robb, goes to show some sort of misappropriation of stores. I would suggest that you hand the evidence you have collected to the guardians, who will undertake to deal with the facts as far as possible.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes. Of course, I am entirely in your hands. I had sent for further witnesses as to the workhouse, but as that part of the case has been carried far enough, I am quite willing to fall in with your suggestion; and instead of calling these further witnesses—at all events, for the moment—I will give to the guardians such information as I have for the purpose of their making the necessary investigation. I am quite prepared to do that, and I assume you will go on with the question of out-door relief.

(Mr. Grant.) Before we call the evidence I want one or two matters cleared up. The first question—about Monday. It is quite impossible for me to be here, as I explained. I only came into the Inquiry yesterday. From personal convenience, I cannot put the case higher, but ask you to do me a personal favour. But I don't think the Inquiry will suffer if we don't meet on Monday. We have had a considerable number of days of this Inquiry, and every day there has been matter of charges against the guardians, and every one of these charges has to be inquired into; and while this Inquiry is sitting the officials and the guardians are required every day, and the preparation of the guardians' case has had to stand still. If we have an extra day on Monday, when the Inquiry is not sitting, we shall have a day to prepare our answer to the charges put forward by the Local Government Board and Mr. Robb. So it is not a matter of personal convenience; I think I can ask for the indulgence on broader grounds. It cannot waste anybody's time, but you will save a day if you allow a day for the preparation of the case when that time comes.

(The Inspector.) The only ground on which I think I can properly accede to your request will be this: that your absence would prejudice to some extent the case of the guardians; and if the guardians are of that opinion, I have no alternative but to accede to your request, but always on the understanding that you will help me to get through with the Inquiry as soon as possible. You will see that to sit for an unlimited number of days on an Inquiry is not good for anyone.

(Mr. Grant.) The pledge I would give would be to give you help in every way, subject to the Inquiry being a full Inquiry.

(The Inspector.) If it is the expressed opinion of the guardians that your absence would prejudice their case—

(Mr. Crooks.) Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) I am still unfortunately—I worked as late as possible last night, and still I am not fully equipped. There is a great amount of correspondence I have never seen. I want to ask that we might be supplied at once with a list of the witnesses to be called.

(The Inspector.) I can give you a list of my witnesses at once. The witnesses I propose to call are the four relieving officers for whom I sent. They are Berry, Pitt, Evans, and Powell; and then I have had instructions that the Chief Constable of Essex, with the superintendent of police, is to be called. That practically finishes my own list.

(Mr. Grant.) As I understand.

(The Inspector.) But I will call for the municipal alliance any person they submit as being likely to throw any light upon these questions.

(Mr. Grant.) If they haven't already done so. Before you finish your own list, there are two or three others?

(The Inspector.) The relieving officers.

(Mr. Grant.) Outside the relieving officers, others have been spoken to in the shorthand notes. There is Mr. Oxley.

(The Inspector.) Yes, I forgot.

(Mr. Grant.) The next one is the Auditor.

(The Inspector.) Subject to the fact I may change my mind as to how Mr. Oxley's evidence shall be put.

(Mr. Grant.) I don't know who he is, but some gentleman has sent to the guardians since the Inquiry a series of tables. There is nothing but the tables, and nothing to show who they come from, or the date or anything.

(The Inspector.) I sent those to the guardians.

(Mr. Grant.) It does not say they come from the Local Government Board.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Lough asked for a copy. He asked if I had an analysis of the accounts of the guardians. I had a copy made and handed to him. He knows what they are.

(Mr. Grant.) Is the gentleman who prepared them coming?

(The Inspector.) They are copied from the Auditor's report.

(Mr. Grant.) We want to know whether he is coming to prove those figures?

(The Inspector.) He takes them from your books. If you call him he will come.

(Mr. Grant.) These figures are being put in by you?

(The Inspector.) Not a bit of it. They are given to Mr. Lough at his request as an analysis of the Auditor's report to the Local Government Board. They are quite informal, and given to him simply to inform him.

(Mr. Grant.) These are part of the report. I want the report as well.

(The Inspector.) You cannot without the consent of the Local Government Board.

(Mr. Grant.) May I ask for it at once?

(The Inspector.) We will consider. You had better write.

(Mr. Grant.) I will at once.

(The Inspector.) But you know these reports are made up at considerable intervals—for six months, and other reports may be put in.

(Mr. Grant.) There are documents I find mentioned in the shorthand notes. Mr. Walsh's report.

(The Inspector.) You understand, Mr. Lough, I handed them to you to help you.

(Mr. Lough.) Yes.

(The Inspector.) Those are the figures I had. They may help you. The increase of cost in the workhouse is necessary to the case, and it was necessary to find out as far as possible what caused it. First, was there an increase in the diet?

(Mr. Grant.) Quite so.

(The Inspector.) Next, was there an increase in the cost of provisions, because if the extra expenditure was accounted for in other ways we have to get other information?

(Mr. Grant.) You have now said what I understood from the first, and what I wanted to get you to say. If these figures are part of the report named, we have the

figures; but we haven't the report, and I am asking that we might have the report as well as the figures. If we make a formal application to the Local Government Board, I don't know that they will help. Next is Mr. Walsh's report. I want to ask if I may have a copy of that?

(*The Inspector.*) That was by misadventure not sent to the guardians.

(*Mr. Grant.*) It should be sent now?

(*The Inspector.*) I don't know.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I did not know until this moment. I may take it that we are to have—

(*The Inspector.*) I shall also give it to Mr. Robb.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I want Mr. Robb to have everything I have. I want to renew my application about the letter I asked for yesterday, which you would look out.

(*The Inspector.*) That is a privileged letter, and you are not to have it.

(*Mr. Grant.*) That is a privileged letter, and that is the ruling on that? That is the reason?

(*The Inspector.*) That is the reason of it. If the Board had thought it necessary to send that letter to the guardians they would have sent it.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I want to ask further. You said you would enquire into the record of Mr. Genery. You stopped my enquiry into his record, and said you would enquire into the papers yourself and tell us this morning.

(*The Inspector.*) There is a newspaper report of the trial.

(*Mr. Grant.*) It was not a trial. Genery pleaded guilty.

(*The Inspector.*) And the sentence was postponed.

(*Mr. Grant.*) He pleaded guilty, and was remanded in custody, according to my report, for a session; and in the meanwhile the contractors party to the case with him paid all the costs and indemnified the Guardians for everything, and after imprisonment for the difference between the two sessions—

(*The Inspector.*) I see also his defence. The prosecutor said Genery during the time he had been master had given satisfaction, and gave every information. It was not shown he received any money for what he had done. That was what counsel said, and sentence was postponed.

(*Mr. Grant.*) If the contractor who was liable with him had to pay all the costs and indemnify the guardians.

(*The Inspector.*) The prosecution, as far as the Local Government Board are concerned—

(*Mr. Grant.*) Oh!

(*Mr. Robb.*) Let us have this in fairness to this man.

(*The Inspector.*) The prosecution said that Genery had given every information, and it was not shown he had received any money in consideration of it, and on that the prosecution ended on our register, and we have nothing more to do with it. We haven't the appointment of the assistant officer, and we have nothing—

(*Mr. Grant.*) I ask for the record of the Local Government Board. Most people have misapprehended it when I put this matter to Mr. Genery yesterday.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Before going further, may I ask the date of that? It is rather material.

(*The Inspector.*) 1893.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I don't know what report you have. I have the *Local Government Chronicle*, October 21st, 1893.

(*The Inspector.*) I have the *Daily Chronicle*.

(*Mr. Grant.*) What is yours?

(*The Inspector.*) The *Daily Chronicle*.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I don't want to go into what the prosecution said. I have a much fuller report.

(*The Inspector.*) I have also a report of the whole thing in the form of minutes.

(*Mr. Grant.*) He was charged with conspiring against the guardians of Mile End, and other charges of obtaining £468 by means of false pretences. Accused pleaded guilty. I went into it to lead up to the fact; you have the documents before you. When this man came to the Poplar Guardians the matter was referred to the Local Government Board, and I may submit the Local Government Board had no objection to his appointment if Mr. Crooks accepted it.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I don't want to interpose. Is this a performance? The learned counsel is pledged to help the procedure, in consideration of which I have refrained from calling any more evidence. I have listened with patience to this unfortunate man's character being dragged again through the mire thirteen or fourteen years after the case, when the prosecution said he could offer no case, and that Genery received no monetary consideration.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I don't find that in my report.

(*Mr. Robb.*) The learned counsel has addressed you twenty minutes, and the time has arrived when we should get on. I don't want to make speeches. If the learned counsel will restrain himself I will do the same myself, and confine myself for the moment to the evidence. I am desired by two of the officials to say this.

(*Mr. Grant.*) May we settle the point I am on?

(*Mr. Robb.*) I claim the same indulgence as is extended to the learned counsel.

(*Mr. Grant.*) At present I am in possession of the Court.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I was addressing the Court.

(*The Inspector.*) All right; let us finish this.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Well, sir.

(*The Inspector.*) That is all we know about Genery.

(*Mr. Grant.*) No, sir; there is a record in the Local Government Board.

(*The Inspector.*) I have official documents. He is in the list of assistant officers, and we sanction in the following terms: "We see no objection to the appointment."

(*Mr. Grant.*) What is the date?

(*The Inspector.*) May, 1903, the last one.

(*Mr. Grant.*) That is exactly the thing I am asking about. Genery's appointment was put forward by the Local Government Board that they would sanction it if Mr. Crooks would agree.

(*The Inspector.*) No record of that. If there was such a communication, it is outside the ordinary practice of the Local Government Board.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Of course, Genery himself is outside.

(*The Inspector.*) If that communication took place there would no doubt be a copy.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Mr. Crooks will tell you. You stopped me yesterday from going into it because of the official document.

(*The Inspector.*) Not from an official document, because I had not got it.

(*Mr. Grant.*) That is what I wanted to ascertain, if there was any official document.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I have been desired by two of the officers to say this: Last night the learned counsel stated that Mr. Gillock, the labour master, had been dismissed, and that statement got into the press. When I drew attention to the inaccuracy of the statement, the learned counsel agreed, but by saying that he was requested to send in his resignation. I have seen Mr. Gillock last night, and I am desired by him to state, as publicly as his character was attacked, that after ten years' service he retired on pension; and instead of there being any allegation against him, he holds the highest testimonials from this Board, and the only reason he quitted the service was that the post of superintendent of works was abolished. Then Mr. Haswell desires me to say he holds a certificate of exemplary character and conduct given by the board of guardians as late as the end of last year. I am desired in justice to these two officers, who have been improperly attacked, to make that statement on their behalf.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I am asked to make statements on behalf of a number of the guardians who have been attacked here. They are anxious to repair their characters, and ask to be allowed to go into the box and give denials to what has been said. At the present time I don't know what the charges are. I advise them to wait until the case of the Local Government Board and the Poplar Municipal Alliance is closed. When that case is closed the onus will be thrown upon them, and they will give evidence in the certainty that when the whole facts are known you will be the first to say their character has been completely cleared.

(*The Inspector.*) As to the order of calling the relieving officers?

(Mr. Grant.) The first witness is Crosbie. I haven't had an opportunity of cross-examination.

(The Inspector.) I hoped—

(Mr. Grant.) I haven't asked him anything yet.

(The Inspector.) If you in cross-examination leave that part of the case in reference to—

(Mr. Grant.) I give no undertaking to leave any part of the case.

(The Inspector.) Then the agreement between Mr. Crooks and myself is at an end.

(Mr. Crooks.) The information as to the removal of goods.

(Mr. Robb.) I am not going to be dictated to by Mr. Corrie Grant as to what I have to do. I came to what I thought was a fair arrangement to expedite the proceedings with Mr. Crooks. Last night Mr. Crooks asked for this information, and said he would take steps at once to probe the matter to the bottom, and prosecute, if necessary, any persons. On that I acquiesced in your request this morning. The learned counsel takes a course at variance with that taken by Mr. Crooks. It is a somewhat peculiar method of expediting the proceedings.

(Mr. Grant.) That is the first I have heard of any arrangement. As to the statement made, there was no undertaking on Mr. Crooks's part that we should not go into any case at all. All Mr. Crooks said was that he was getting the information about these alleged thefts; he would put the police in possession of that at once, and do his utmost to prosecute to a conviction. If Mr. Robb chooses to give information and take criminal proceedings—

(The Inspector.) I said at the beginning of the proceedings that the charge and what it amounted to was misappropriation of stores. It had nothing to do with

the guardians, and I think the guardians might be trusted in this matter to protect the property of the union, and I suggested, with the concurrence of Mr. Crooks and Mr. Robb, that Mr. Robb should give to Mr. Crooks all the evidence he had, on the understanding, of course—I rely upon Mr. Crooks implicitly—that Mr. Crooks will take such steps as he deems necessary to protect the property of the union. There the case closes.

(Mr. Grant.) That is the first I have heard of it. If it is to be in any way, I have not the least objection if you say the charge put forward of allowing the Master to steal the stores of the guardians of which Crosbie was speaking is now swept out of the Inquiry altogether.

(Mr. Robb.) I will not submit to this. I will not enter into any contract, and I withdraw every offer made to the learned counsel.

(Mr. Grant.) That is far the better way. I never made any arrangement behind the backs of the public. Whatever the arrangement was, let Mr. Robb keep his information, whatever he has got. We will get it from another source.

(The Inspector.) This does not expedite the Inquiry. What I was anxious to do, for the sake of the guardians, was to clear their characters at all events. It continues the Inquiry in the rut of the workhouse.

(Mr. Grant.) That we cannot help. The Inquiry has been taken in a particular way.

(The Inspector.) Call the next witness.

(Mr. Robb.) I regret the necessity to go into a disagreeable matter which possibly does not affect the guardians at all, but I am driven into the position of having to go into that disagreeable matter which personally I would prefer not to do. Mr. Corrie Grant's blood must be upon his own head.

WILLIAM CROSBIE; recalled, and further examined.

(Mr. Robb.) Now, Mr. Crosbie, have you ever seen anyone drunk in the workhouse?—That requires consideration. It requires an expert to say that.

Q. Just give it consideration?—Well, if I answer truthfully, I should say yes.

Q. Whom have you seen drunk in the workhouse. The name, please. You need have no fear, for I am sure the Inspector will look after your interests?—I have no fear. I want no fear or favour from anyone.

Q. Tell us the name of the individual, please?—I have seen Mr. McCarthy the worse.

Q. The worse for drink?—Yes.

Q. Have you seen him supporting himself on anything?—I have.

Q. On what?—On a screen that goes round the stove where my telephone is.

Q. What was Mr. McCarthy doing at that screen?—He was holding on.

Q. Have you any doubt he was the worse for drink?—No, so far as I am concerned I have no doubt, but then I say it requires an expert, a doctor, to certify that a man is drunk.

Q. Have you ever seen Mr. McCarthy and the matron together?—Oh, yes; I have seen them together outside.

Q. Where?—Where? Going towards the stores on several occasions; indeed, I may say they were always together. That will cover everything.

Q. Always together?—When he was there, but there is some little discrepancy in yesterday's papers—

Q. We will deal with that in a moment. Have you seen Mr. McCarthy and the matron together in the beer cellar?—I have not seen them, but know they have been there.

Q. Was there any other person present at that time?—You see it was late at night, just as I left the telephone. It was after nine. I leave there a little after nine every night.

Q. Do you swear. You pledge your oath that Mr. McCarthy and the matron were down in the beer cellar together after nine o'clock?—Oh, this is not a criminal court. I am not going to take my oath. Oh, no; you won't get at me like that.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Crosbie, you are on your oath?—If you are on your oath you kiss the Testament.

Q. You kissed the Testament?—Well, I did, but that was not to day.

Q. You are on your oath all the same. The oath lasts.

(Mr. Robb.) I perhaps owe you an apology for the form of the expression I employed. Of course, you are on your oath. I ought not to have put it to you in that way. I merely wanted to impress upon you the gravity of the charge, and you should only tell us what you actually know. I am not asking this at my own desire, or for my own pleasure. Mr. Crosbie, now tell us exactly what you know about Mr. McCarthy and the matron?—Well, it is difficult for me to say what transpired between a man and a woman.

Q. I want to know anything you have seen?—I cannot say I have seen anything I could make a criminal charge against.

Q. I am not suggesting anything of the kind. Have you seen anything that would be subversive to discipline?—Yes.

Q. What have you seen?—I have seen them always together, and you said you would let that stand. I wanted to inform you of a discrepancy in the Press.

Q. Well, we will deal with that in a moment. I want to know what you have seen between Mr. McCarthy and the matron contrary to discipline?—You cannot see through doors.

Q. I am quite well aware of that?—It is like this. They were always together in the room—the matron's private room, her sitting room, or drawing room.

Q. Yes?—And I saw nothing then.

Q. No?—I am not going to say any hearsay.

Q. No, certainly not. When was the occasion on which you saw them going to the beer cellar together after nine o'clock at night?—When?

Q. Yes?—On several occasions. Not only once, I may say. I daresay seven or eight or a dozen times.

Q. When was the last occasion?—That I cannot tell you. I did not keep a note of these things, because they did not interest me at all.

W. Crosbie.

22 June.

W. Crobie,
22 June.

Q. Were they in the beer cellar long?—They were when I went to bed, and I did not go until twenty minutes past nine on several occasions. My time to go to bed is a quarter past nine. Of course, I am told to be there from the first thing in the morning to a quarter past nine or nine o'clock at night. I clear up, I sweep up, and make things nice and comfortable for the next morning when I come down, and that makes it a quarter past nine.

Q. How long would they be in the beer cellar together at any one time?—I could not tell you. I am supposed to be in bed at nine.

Q. Yes; but what is the longest time you have known?—Well, at nine o'clock I leave, and when I get to bed it is a quarter past nine, and they would be there then.

Q. What do you think they would go there for?—I cannot tell you. That is out of my latitude altogether. I do not know that. I could understand, and I have my own ideas, but that is nothing. That does not count. I suppose you have your own ideas.

(The Inspector.) I should like to say this: As a preliminary to this Inquiry I asked Mr. Lough to be good enough to see me at Whitehall. I told him I had to hold this Inquiry, and that it would be a very painful Inquiry. I said I was extremely anxious to keep out of it the names of all women, and I asked him why the master resigned. He was not able to give me a reply I suppose. Up to now we have steered pretty clear of the more disagreeable part, and I wish to say this now, because—

(Mr. Robb.) I deplore the fact that I have been compelled to go into these matters. I sincerely deplore it, but I have been driven into this position?—You are like me. I am a victim, too.

Q. Now, Mr. Crobie, was what you saw between the matron and Mr. McCarthy conducive to the good discipline of the house?—I should say it was quite the reverse.

(Mr. Robb.) I leave it there.

(Mr. Grant.) You do not answer the main question I want you to answer. When was the first time that you say you saw Mr. McCarthy and the matron go into the beer cellar together?—Are you addressing me.

Q. Yes?—Why?

Q. Will you answer my question, please?—I will. What was it?

Q. When was the first time you saw Mr. McCarthy and the matron go into the beer cellar?—It is unreasonable to ask me that. How do I know the first time or the second time? It was every time. I did not take notes. I am not supposed to do so. I am supposed to see nothing in my position.

Q. Tell us what you did see?—Well, I told this gentleman here.

Q. Well, I want you to go on telling us. You say you saw them go into the cellar seven or eight or a dozen times. When was the first time?—That is a question I cannot answer.

Q. Was it six years ago or six months ago?—No, it was not six years or six months.

Q. Which was it?—It might have been three months.

Q. The first time was three months ago?—I began to take notice of things then. I saw things were going very dicky and queer, although I have no business to see. Oh, I have very good sight, although one of the Press accused me of being a deaf old man. I can assure you I am not deaf.

(The Inspector.) Just answer the question. Keep to the point.

(Mr. Grant.) Then these meetings of Mr. McCarthy and the matron in the cellar have all taken place within the last three months?—As far as I know. What took place before I did not take any particular notice of. I did not feel interested, and saw nothing at all.

Q. I do not ask you to speak of what you did not see?—Oh no, you cannot ask me. What I did not see I cannot tell you.

Q. Who else saw them go into the cellar besides you?—It so happened at that time there was no one else about on account of everyone having gone to bed.

Q. Why was it subversive to the discipline if nobody else saw it but you?—It was the talk of the house. Is that not subversive to discipline?

Q. Certainly?—It was the talk of the whole house, the illiterate and the literate. They are a funny lot of fellows there when they get talking.

Q. What was the talk of the house?—About the goings on of the matron and Mr. McCarthy, him being there feeding, and all that sort of thing—living on the ratepayers, and so on.

Q. Do you mean the inmates were talking about McCarthy and the matron being in the beer cellar?—Yes—No, no. Oh, no, because they did not know they were in.

Q. You just told me it was the talk of the house?—Yes.

Q. How was it the talk of the house if nobody saw it but you?—Now you are trying to get at me again. Never mind, I think I have an answer.

(The Inspector.) Answer the question?—It is this—you say why was it the talk of the house if no one saw it but me? I was not on that subject at all then. I said it was the talk of the house—the inmates—the goings-on of Mr. McCarthy and the matron.

(Mr. Grant.) Then they must have seen something else besides the beer cellar?—Of course they did, but I never interested myself. I never hardly had any conversation with any of the inmates. I was in quite a secluded position, and am very proud to say I kept myself to myself as far as I could. But you must say, "Good morning," and so on, to some of them.

Q. Besides what happened in the beer cellar you never saw?—Oh, I did not see anything in the beer cellar.

Q. I said what went on in the beer cellar. You also said that McCarthy and the matron were always closeted together in the matron's private room, her sitting room or drawing room?—I say so. Yes.

Q. When did that begin?—A long, long time ago; when things were beginning to go queer.

Q. How long ago?—It's been going on for twelve months. I know the master; he always used to go—

Q. Never mind the master. We shall come to the master presently. We are on the matron at present?—Yes.

Q. Do you suggest that there was anything improper between McCarthy and the matron?—No, I don't; but, then, I don't suggest such a thing because I really don't know, and you must know in order to suggest anything like that.

Q. You ought to?—Well, I know something. I can speak from experience. I know if I had been closeted with a woman for hours and hours something would occur.

(Mr. Crooks.) Order, order.

(Mr. Grant.) You must not interfere to keep order, Mr. Crooks; it is not your business. (To witness.) What time of day was it that Mr. McCarthy was in the private room of the matron—daytime or evening?—One week it was dinner-time. He would go in about eleven.

Q. With the matron?—Yes. Mr. Madeley was there at that time. The matron and Mr. McCarthy were allowed to ramble at their leisure. The master used to get away, or he had his business to attend to.

Q. How often was this meeting taking place in the private sitting room?—I tell you, sir, daily.

Q. It began twelve months ago?—Yes, even longer than that.

Q. And you say it was the talk of the whole house?—It was.

Q. The inmates of the house?—It was the grand topic.

Q. And the inmates of the house, at any rate, did not hesitate to suggest what the reason was?—No, and they did not hesitate, either. There is no hesitation in them when they once make a start.

Q. Were women as well as men talking about it?—Oh, yes. I don't know anything about that—about the women.

Q. For a twelve-month the matter was the talk of the house?—Yes, I say so.

Q. Now let me go to another question. You said yesterday you had seen things being taken into the master's room?—I have.

Q. And there are two classes of things that you spoke about?—What was that. What were the classes?

Q. Things that were taken in before the master resigned; things that were taken there after he resigned?—Yes; I know nothing about it, although things got a little bit shaky then. I was speaking of the master's resignation.

Q. Let me just remind you. Where are the shorthand notes of yesterday? This is what you said in answer to Mr. Robb: "Have you seen any delicacies sent in?—I have." "Did you see salmon sent in?—Oh, salmon, I have." "Oysters?—I have." "Stewed eels?—Oh, yes, sir." Well, now, were these sent in before the master's resignation or after?—Both before and after.

Q. Now, when did that begin?—(No answer.)

Q. Well, I ask you when did that begin?—I cannot tell you.

Q. I did not want you to fix a date. I want to know within months or years?—I say it was perhaps twelve months, perhaps two years ago. I am speaking now about the delicacies.

Q. I want you to keep your mind on the delicacies alone. I am coming to the other things afterwards?—It might have been two years ago. Time elapses very quickly, you know—*tempus fugit*.

Q. How long did it go on from the time you first noticed it?—I suppose I noticed things almost on the first occasion, and this was a thing no one could help noticing.

Q. Quite so; and, therefore, you noticed it as soon as it happened. I want to know when it ended. Did it ever end until the master went?—I suppose it ended yesterday, when the matron went.

Q. Were any of these things sent in last week?—Yes.

Q. What?—That is all under cover.

Q. Some things were sent in, at any rate?—They were.

Q. Some delicacies?—Delicacies or not I cannot say. I suppose so, or else they would not be in there.

Q. I want to know not what you suppose, but what you know. When was it last you say you saw delicacies sent into the master's room?—I should say eight or ten days ago, as near as I can get at it.

Q. What was sent in?—That I cannot tell you.

Q. That is what I ask you?—I cannot tell you if I do not know. I say it was all under cover, and I cannot see through covers.

Q. How did you know it was salmon, then?—That is not eight or ten days ago. It is a long time ago.

Q. How did you know it was oysters?—From confidential information I had from other people, but I know it was oysters because I know the man was called out of the office at nine o'clock at night, and I can give the man's name. Avery is his name, an inmate the same as myself.

Q. Was he sent to fetch them?—He was sent to fetch them.

Q. That, you say, was some time ago?—It has been going on for a long time.

Q. For a long time?—Yes, on several occasions he has been sent out.

Q. Who by?—Well, the master had the only authority there to send anybody out.

Q. And who were the oysters for?—I do not know; I did not go in, but I suppose they were for the people inside.

Q. People in the master's room?—Yes.

Q. And on several occasions, at any rate, Avery was sent out for oysters?—Yes, on several occasions.

Q. Half-a-dozen or a dozen occasions?—What good would half-a-dozen oysters be? That is a ridiculous question.

Q. You misunderstood me?—I could go a couple of dozen myself. (A laugh.)

(Mr. Grant.) Do keep order. This is not a farce.

(The Inspector.) There is no evidence whatever as to who paid for the oysters, and as there is no evidence I cannot see this is a matter of the slightest importance.

(Witness.) I did not pay for them.

(Mr. Grant.) What I am cross-examining on is a charge made by Mr. Robb in his examination of this witness, evidently based on information he had, because he put leading questions to Mr. Crosbie about it, and as he has made a charge, until you tell me to stop—

(The Inspector.) My view of the charge is that it comes to nothing.

(Mr. Grant.) We are not trying what your view of the case is. We are trying a far wider thing than that. All we are trying here is for you to take evidence, and you will have to report the evidence to a higher tribunal, and unless you say you close the case on this matter and that no more evidence is necessary I shall have the whole matter of the charge sifted out, because the evidence will have to go before somebody else, and that somebody else will have to form a judgment on the charge made against the guardians; therefore, you are holding this Inquiry, not judging it.

(The Inspector.) I direct this Inquiry exactly as I see fit, and I have intimated to you that I think there is nothing in the charge by Mr. Robb as affecting the general body of the guardians.

(Mr. Grant.) Yes, sir; you say that—

(Mr. Robb.) I—

(Mr. Grant.) If I understand Mr. Robb is making an objection to what I say I will sit down.

(Mr. Robb.) I am raising an objection. I object, sir, to the perpetual statement that these charges are made by me. These charges are made by the guardians' own officials upon oath, and this man's position is as telephone attendant.

(Witness.) Don't call me an official. I am nobody, and do not count.

(Mr. Robb.) I am merely here to elicit such information as I can, and I will not have this cast upon me. I have told my learned friend—

(Mr. Grant.) Don't call me your learned friend.

(Mr. Robb.) I will call you what you please.

(Mr. Grant.) You are not entitled to say that without my sanction.

(Mr. Robb.) I will call you anything you require.

(The Inspector.) Do not call him anything. Let us get on with the question. I have intimated that I do not think there is anything in it.

(Mr. Robb.) Well, sir, I submit if this goes on I am entitled to examine.

(Mr. Grant.) Certainly.

(Mr. Robb.) Because it has been sworn to that certain guardians were in the house at the time.

(Mr. Grant.) Certainly. I have the shorthand notes of yesterday. Mr. Robb examined this witness, and put into his mouth all the delicacies which he charged. "Have you seen any delicacies sent in?—I have." He does not say what delicacies, but Mr. Robb then proceeds to ask him: "Did you see salmon sent in?" The witness answered, "Oh, salmon I have." "Oysters?" "—I have." "Stewed eels?—Oh, yes, sir." "Do you know if they were sent in for Mr. McCarthy?" That is what Mr. Robb calls not making charges. That is the way in which he puts into the mouth of the witness the evidence he wants him to give, and then, when I cross-examine about it, he objects. Now, sir, you have not ruled me out of order, I may go on.

(Witness.) I wish you to understand I am a witness. You say something is put into my mouth. I do not want anyone to suggest anything to me. I am speaking about food, and truthfully, and as far as the guardians are concerned, as I said yesterday, I have the highest respect for the guardians. I am not saying it against them. I am called here to give evidence.

(Mr. Grant.) I have not complained of what you said?—No; don't complain, because if you do I shall certainly retaliate.

Q. Let us go back to where I was when I was interrupted. I was asking about the oysters. Do you say oysters were sent in six times, twelve times, or twenty times?—No.

Q. How many?—You say six, twelve, or twenty times. They are all even numbers. It may have been odd numbers. I daresay I have seen them something more than six.

W. Crosbie.

22 June.

W. Crosbie.
22 June.

Q. And less than twelve?—Perhaps so; that I cannot say.

Q. I do not want to tie you down to any particular number. You have been there six years?—Nearly; between five and six years.

Q. If on one occasion Mr. Madeley sent out for oysters for himself, there would be nothing in it?—No, I do not suppose so. If I had the pieces I would have sent out for some myself very often.

Q. If, on the other hand, Mr. Madeley had a dozen guardians in his room, and sent out three times a week for oysters and all sorts of things there would be something in it?—Yes.

Q. I want to find out which of the two it is. Whether it was oysters obtained for the master, or whether he had in his room when they were sent for a number of guardians. You say there were six to a dozen occasions on which oysters were sent for?—Perhaps more.

Q. Were they at long intervals or day after day?—Not day after day.

Q. Week after week?—Occasionally. Perhaps once a week or once a fortnight. Give a little scope.

Q. When they were sent for it was always in the evening time, of course?—Oh, yes.

Q. And were there always guardians in Mr. Madeley's room when they were sent for?—No.

Q. Were any guardians in his room?—Yes.

Q. How many?—Sometimes only one, and sometimes there might have been two or three.

Q. Was the highest number ever there three?—Yes, I should think so.

Q. Now, then, first of all, who was the one?—You have asked me that question so many times.

Q. I have not asked you before?—As I told you yesterday, I do not like to be personal, because I am not in a position to be personal.

Q. No one wishes you to be personal. All we wish you to do is to be truthful?—Every word I have said is truth.

Q. I am not suggesting it is not. What I want to remind you is that you are sworn to speak the truth; always see you speak the whole truth?—I do speak the whole truth. I have no fear or favour, and do not wish it from anyone. I may say I do not fear anyone.

Q. The responsibility, Mr. Crosbie, for asking you for these names and giving these names is not yours. The responsibility is mine.

(Mr. Robb.) May I say I object to these discussions between counsel and the witness. They may be very edifying, but they waste an enormous amount of time. Why cannot the question be put without all this preamble?—The waste of time is because you are repeating the question over and over again, and I can only give one answer.

(The Inspector.) Give the answer.

(Mr. Grant.) What is the name of the guardian?—The name of the guardian? Well, it would be mostly Mr. McCarthy.

Q. Who were the others?—I have also seen Mr. Anderson there, and there was another one. These were on committee nights, when they held the committee at the house.

Q. Then oysters were always sent for when the guardians were there on committee nights?—Not always.

Q. Sometimes they were sent for by Mr. Madeley when he was alone?—No.

Q. Who else besides the guardians had them?—I was not there to see.

Q. You have told me that oysters were not always sent for when the guardians were there?—Not always; no.

Q. Well, when the guardians were not there who was there?—When the guardians were not there there was no one there.

Q. Then nobody sent for oysters?—No; they did not send for oysters when they were not there.

Q. That is exactly opposite to what you have just told me?—No, it is not.

Q. Never mind, I am getting what I want?—I hope you will soon come to a conclusion.

(Mr. Robb.) I thought my learned friend was getting what I wanted.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, about the salmon. Was that sent for when the guardians were there?—No; guardian, not guardians.

Q. When a guardian was there?—When a guardian was there.

Q. Who was the guardian there?—Mr. McCarthy.

Q. Those are two delicacies that were there when a guardian or guardians were there. Tell me any other delicacies sent for. I have finished with oysters and salmon?—I should think—as far as I am concerned—I think it was a little bit of a “beano” and supper between two or three gentlemen. They were having oysters. One knows they are luxuries. I think it is a luxury.

Q. I should agree with you. I want to know what other luxuries were sent for?—I do not know anything else that was sent for.

Q. When Mr. Robb put the delicacies, he put into your mouth the evidence he wanted you to give?—He did nothing of the sort. I am straightforward. You told me just now I was here to speak the whole truth, and I was speaking it.

Q. I have not complained?—I want no one to give me the cue.

(The Inspector.) Do not talk. Answer the question?—I have not been asked a straightforward one yet. He is trying to land me somewhere or other, and I do not think he will.

(Mr. Grant.) The other delicacy, Mr. Crosbie, was stewed eels?—Well, yes; is that a delicacy?

Q. I don't know?—I have often had fourpenn'orth myself outside.

(The Inspector.) Be quiet.

(Witness.) I know, but that is not a delicacy. It is a poor man's delicacy, but not a rich man's.

(Mr. Grant.) It was your own description of it. You described it as a delicacy?—I did nothing of the sort.

Q. Yes, you did. “Have you seen any delicacies sent in?”—Yes. “Salmon?”—Yes. “Oysters?”—Yes. “Stewed eels?”—Yes?”—Yes.

Q. So you did describe it yourself as a delicacy?—Surely, you cannot make a point of that.

Q. I am not. I only want to see exactly what all this comes to. Are there any other things you remember during the six years you have been there?—Where?

Q. I want to have them all?—I have a good memory, you know, but I do not see what you are getting on, at all.

(The Inspector.) Don't talk so much. Answer the question?—But he must give me a point what he wants. There are so many things. Just specialise one of them.

(Mr. Grant.) I will put one to you. Hitherto we have been speaking about delicacies sent by the master's order. Were there any sent in by the matron's order?—I did not say by the master's order. I said sent for by him.

Q. Sent for by the master and carried to the master's room, and consumed so far as you know?—By the servant. It was not the messenger that went for them.

Q. The servant told you what went on?—I did not want telling. I could see.

Q. What was the servant's name?—Mrs. Monk.

Q. Well, she is coming, so I need not trouble about that. Did you see any delicacies go into the matron's room?—The matron's room was the master's room.

Q. I did not know that. Then the room that Mr. McCarthy and the matron were together in was the master's room?—No.

Q. Where was it. You see, I do not know the work-house?—That is what I do not know. You know about as much of that as I know, because I don't know where the man went to, but I know he was very interested in masonic matters, and often went up to the lodge.

Q. You are going off on the master, and I am asking you about the matron?—He is a man I have always respected. He always acted as a gentleman to me, and

so, has everyone else connected as an official with the workhouse.

Q. You said just now Mr. McCarthy and the matron were together in the matron's room?—Well, I say so, yes.

Q. Just tell me what the room was, because I assume, perhaps wrongly, that the matron had a room to herself where she had meals, and the master had a room to himself?—So they did.

Q. How can I find out; because Mr. McCarthy will want to be heard from on this matter. Which was the room you say McCarthy and the matron were constantly in?—There are two rooms in the master's house; one is called the dining-room, and the southerly one is called the drawing-room. The meals were always taken in what was called the dining-room, the most easterly room.

Q. It was the drawing-room—the southerly room that McCarthy and the matron were together in?—Yes, that is called the drawing-room.

Q. I only want to know where it is?—If you like to go down I will show you round.

Q. I think I shall have to accept that invitation either to-day or to-morrow?—We shall be very pleased to see you, I assure you.

Q. I have finished about the delicacies. Now, you said you have seen goods go in quantities to the master's room?—I have; yes.

Q. I want you to tell me when that began?—Since the master's resignation. It has been carried on wholesale ever since.

Q. And when was the master's resignation?—I do not know. Some of these gentlemen may tell you.

(Mr. Marsh.) April 6th.

(Mr. Grant.) Now you say since that these goods have been sent into the master's private room from the stores of the guardians?—Every day without a break, almost.

Q. Now, first of all—

(The Inspector.) Before you go on with this, will the reporters please tell me when the next lot goes out to the Central News. In case nothing comes out I will ask you this: You say there was talk in the workhouse about the relations of Mr. McCarthy and the matron. Did you ever hear the name of any other guardian mentioned?—No, sir.

Q. You never heard any other guardian mentioned as being concerned in that business?—No, sir; emphatically no.

Q. The reason I put that question is this: I think it is only fair to the other guardians that the point should be absolutely clear?—No; emphatically no.

Q. Because suggestions might be made that there was something wrong going on in the workhouse with reference to the guardians.

(Mr. Grant.) Oh, yes, sir. About these goods. Since April 6th, after the guardians accepted Mr. Madeley's resignation, you say every day there have been goods taken from the stores into Madeley's room?—Yes.

Q. Tell me what inmates have taken goods. How have the goods got from the stores to the master's room?—Ah, there you are. The master and matron had keys of every room in the house. No one else could get at them at all, because they always used to be taken away. All these things occurred when the assistant matron, Miss Usher, was in the dining-hall, from half-past eleven to half-past twelve, attending on the women inmates.

Q. Miss Usher was in the dining-hall, then the master and the matron?—No, not the master. I said the matron. I did not say anything about the master. I am not bringing the master into it in any way, mind you.

(The Inspector.) Do not talk so much, Mr. Crosbie?—I cannot help talking.

(Mr. Grant.) It was only during the dinner hour this was going on?—There are two or three ways of getting round without even passing my show—the telephone corridor, or whatever you call it—because they could go out the other way and into the front of the house.

Q. Then you would not see them?—Certainly not. I never watched anybody.

Q. I don't want you to tell me anything except what you saw yourself?—I know lots of things went that way, but I did not see them.

Q. You say lots of things went that way but you did not see them. Let's dispose, first of all, of what you did see. Did you see the matron carrying these things?—Oh, no.

Q. Who did carry them?—That is personal.

Q. We cannot help it?—They were carried down, some of them, I think, by the matron's servant—her private servant.

Q. What was her name?—Monk.

(Mr. Robb.) I don't know whether the witness might be allowed to sit down?

(The Inspector.) He asked to stand up.

(Witness.) I like to address you standing.

(Mr. Robb.) I see. I thought you were tired. I am sorry. You know best.

(Witness.) A witness has no business to sit down.

(Mr. Grant.) What was the name of the matron's servant?—Mrs. Monk.

Q. Was there anybody else carrying these goods?—I won't mention names.

Q. No, no, please; I am very sorry. I must have every name you can give me?—Well, I am not going to give you any more. I have told you one. That is quite sufficient for your purpose.

Q. You must allow me to judge what is best for my purpose. You saw other people carrying goods?—I did.

Q. What were their names?—I tell you I only saw one; and there is another servant, an inmate, in the room. I have seen her.

Q. What was her name?—Kershaw.

Q. Besides her, was there anybody else?—Oh, yes.

Q. Who were they?—I am not going to say.

Q. I am not going to press you. There are other inmates. I want to put it to you quite plainly?—If I tell you the names and so on—it so happens that I like to be in perfect harmony with everyone, and if I—

(The Inspector.) Don't talk, Mr. Crosbie. You had better tell him the names?—I know, but I want to argue this point, and I want to tell you if I give the names and so on, I shall be looked upon—All my comfort gone, and the little bit of chat I have sometimes. I won't give you any more names.

(Mr. Grant.) There are other inmates, you know?—Yes, other men.

Q. Don't interrupt until you have heard the whole of the question. There are other persons who have been carrying goods since April 6th from the guardians' stores to the master's private room, whose names you know and you decline to give them?—Yes.

Q. Very well. What were the goods you saw carried?—I cannot say what goods they were. They were wrapped in sheets and all sorts of things, and carried away in that way.

Q. Big bundles?—Oh, yes.

Q. And how many bundles a day?—That is another question I cannot answer. If I tell you numbers it might perhaps be right, or you might find that I tell you a number that is too much.

Q. I have not suggested for a moment you are telling lies. I want to get out what your story is. There can be no pretence of saying that these things carried from the stores were the master's own property?—Certainly not. I know they were not.

Q. How do you know?—They went away first of all, in a Pickford's van. Then Clark's big van went full up with parcels, boxes, and cases made specially for receiving these things. And then there was a cab, which you have seen. Of course you have, and so have these gentlemen, seen a traveller's cab going round to the drapers' shops—

Q. Yes?—Well, it was packed in the same way, right up to the window. There was nobody inside, and no room either for another parcel. I saw that, and that went away. And then the grand finale was a pantechnicon full up.

Q. Besides the other three that you spoke of?—Yes, the pantechnicon was the last.

Q. That is four altogether?—Yes; and one of Clark's biggest, No. 8. I happened to notice that.

W. Crosbie.

22 June.

W. Crosbie.

22 June.

Q. And you noticed four carriages were sent away with a lot of the property of the guardians?—Most decidedly I did. Any reasonable man—it would be ridiculous to think otherwise—would know very well they did not belong to them.

(The Inspector.) Do you want to ask a question?

(Mr. Robb.) I want to ask one question.

(Mr. Grant.) You have spoken of four carriages altogether, have you not?—Yes.

Q. First of all, take the van?—That is right.

Q. That is Clark's?—No, Pickford's first.

Q. Then Clark's?—Yes.

Q. Then the cab?—Yes.

Q. And then Clark's pantechnicon, No. 8?—That is right.

Q. Do you know which were for the master and which for the matron?—I don't think I could tell you that. I think the master's might have been his own private property. There was rather a large number of parcels, and one parcel went away for the master in a private dogcart—quite a flash affair, decorated wheels, and so on. It was big and heavy, and just lifted up behind. Mr. Madeley went in front with the driver, Mr. Clover, the coachman. That was his own, I have no doubt. And then that Pickford's van came. I believe Frank, the son, was the chief mover in that. There was another case he had which was very large and heavy. Two strong carmen lifted it up into the van, and they said to young Frank, "Good God! What have you got in here. Got 'two or three dead 'uns in here.'" He could hardly lift it.

Q. I asked you which was the matron's. We will come to the matron's. I will say the covered van of Clark that contained the matron's goods?—I believe so; I know it.

Q. And it contained goods belonging to the Guardians?—It was a large van, and it was backed by canvas things that pull down behind. It was full up with parcels and packages of every description of the matron's, and when the pantechnicon came, I understood from a little private information I received that the house was really gutted—everything gone.

Q. Now, this began on April 5th or 6th?—That is so—the date the resignation was accepted.

Q. And you say from that date there were stores being taken away from the guardians?—I do, sir.

Q. When did it first strike you there was anything wrong about it?—Well, it struck me from the very first time. I am not one of those cuckoos. I have been all over the world.

Q. I hope you have not found any resemblance between yourself and that bird?—Very well.

Q. You say, at any rate, from the 10th April you made up your mind the guardians were being robbed?—I do, and know it now. I won't go back to the 10th April. I know now at the present time. If I could speak to them on an equality and as a man I could have told them so.

Q. When did you speak to anyone about it first?—I spoke to nobody.

Q. Oh, yes; you spoke to me about it?—When I had not seen you till about yesterday?

Q. You are speaking to me about it now?—Of course. I said I spoke to no one. I am not one of those men to blather these things about the house.

(The Inspector.) Do not talk so much. Answer the question?—I hope I am not tiring you.

Q. Yes, you are?—I am sorry. I am getting rather thirsty myself, and I cannot drink water, I assure you.

(Mr. Grant.) When did you first speak to anybody about it?—I tell you I have not spoken to anyone.

Q. You have spoken to Mr. Robb about it?—I never saw anyone until yesterday, on my life.

Q. You spoke to Mr. Robb yesterday?—I say yesterday. I am bound to answer any question that gentleman likes to ask me or you.

Q. When did you first say anything about these things?—I do not want to say. You are not supposed to blather things. If you blather things when there are all sorts and conditions of men, you might get into wrong.

Q. Might I suggest you are not doing yourself justice?—Who am I not doing justice to?

Q. Yourself?—Oh, yes, I will see to that.

Q. I ask you when you first spoke to anybody about these thefts?—I say I never spoke to anyone at all, not in a direct manner.

Q. I do not care whether it was directly or indirectly?—No, perhaps not.

Q. Anyway, Mr. Crosbie, you must tell me?—But I am not going to tell you more than I have. This is a public court, and I tell you I have nothing to tell anyone in public. As I said before, if any gentleman likes to speak to me individually, I am here, and will answer any questions.

(The Inspector.) Answer the question. The question was when you first began to talk about the removal of the goods?—I did not talk about it.

Q. You told us you thought it improper from the first?—I thought there was nothing but wholesale robbery, nothing less than wholesale robbery of the guardians' property.

(Mr. Grant.) Quite so, Mr. Crosbie. I am not going to worry you about it any longer?—You won't worry me, sir.

Q. I put the question once more—when did you first speak to anybody about these wholesale robberies?—I told you before, and I tell you now, I never spoke to anyone. Who should I speak to and blather this about?

Q. You have got to answer my question. You have spoken to someone?—Who is that somebody?

Q. How did the Inspector know you ought to be called on this Inquiry?—I suppose by telephone.

(Mr. Robb.) I think I can explain that. I sent the Inspector a long list of officers, nearly all the in-door principal officers, required to be called; there is no mystery about it.

(Mr. Grant.) I only ask one other question. Do you still give me that answer?—I do.

Q. Until you came here yesterday you have not spoken to a single soul about this wholesale robbery going on since April 10th?—I said so, and I say so now.

Q. You swear that?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Crosbie, you have mentioned particularly the name of Mr. McCarthy?—I have.

Q. Does he hold an important position as guardian. Is he the chairman of some committee?—I do not know what important position. I know he is a guardian.

Q. He is chairman of the visiting committee, is he not?—Yes, I suppose so; I do not know. I do not know whether he is chairman. Sometimes I read the paper and see he is chairman of so-and-so.

Q. I want to ask you this. You spoke of four vans and a dogcart leaving the master's rooms?—Quite right, sir.

Q. At what time or times did they leave?—Always at dusk. You know about a month ago it was dusk about eight. Well, this pantechnicon went away at the time all the guardians were meeting in the board-room. It was all cleared out, because some of the guardians, after the board meetings, sometimes came down to the workhouse to see how things were going on. But it was all gone. Everything was cleared before they would arrive. I do not remember anyone coming in that evening.

Q. Tell me as far as you know, was any inmate of the house employed in packing these vans?—Well, I am not certain, but I think there was a man. But they were very careful not to employ these inmates. That looked suspicious to me, because when things were on the square the inmates have been called—three or four of them. But everything was done without them, and on one occasion young Frank, when he had a heavy box, had a stranger to do it, and also at the time the van was packed.

Q. A stranger from outside?—Young Frank is the master's son. He had a stranger, and then the remark was passed after this van went away and all these parcels and packages and things.

Q. Just one final question. After his resignation, was the master in the habit of telephoning to any of the contractors?—Yes, sir.

Q. To whom?—All of them.

W. Crosbie,
—
22 June.
—

Q. How often?—Oh, when he used to go in. He used to go in two or three times a week and say, "Ring me up so-and-so," and of course I did.

Q. Were these persons contractors rung up by him after his resignation?—They were.

Q. Give us the names?—Well, we will start with Blott, the butcher; Mr. Lewsey, Bow Road—a new contractor, I think, last contract day; Percival, Blackfriars Road, general grocer; and Cartwright, the clothier.

Q. Was the master frequently on the telephone with these persons after his resignation?—Yes, sir.

Q. Of course, you did not know the purport of the communications?—Oh, no, sir; I could not hear anything. There was also Robert Jones.

Q. Who were the others?

(Mr. Grant.) This is entirely new matter not arising out of my cross-examination at all, so I shall ask your leave to pursue it further. (To witness.) The last name you gave us was Robert Jones. Who were the others?—Did not you hear? You accused me of being deaf yesterday.

Q. Who were the others, I say?—

(The Inspector.) Blott, Lewsey, Percival, Cartwright, Jones.

(Mr. Grant.) That is five. Were there any others?—Yes, Pocock Brothers.

Q. Any others?—There were others, but I cannot remember them.

Q. Do you mean you cannot tell me, or that you cannot remember?—I mean I cannot tell you. If I remembered I would tell you.

(Mr. Robb.) With your permission, I am going to take a course on behalf of my clients which I perceive to be in the public interest and in the interest of this Inquiry. I have other witnesses, but I submit that we have had ample evidence given as to the discipline of the workhouse, and that there is plenty of material for the guardians to deal with at large. I shall, therefore, leave it to them. It is distasteful for me to be obliged to go into the degrading matters which I was forced to drag out of Mr. Crosbie, and I will not pursue that position any further. I therefore leave that part of the case. I am quite content with what I have proved from that part of the case; and if Mr. Corrie Grant wants further witnesses on that I shall leave it to him to call them. I think we have dealt with that part of the subject sufficiently fully, subject, of course, to anything the guardians may have to say in answer. Therefore, to prevent this Inquiry dragging out, I take the responsibility of concluding that part of the case, and I am prepared now to go into the important question of out-door relief.

Mr. F. A. BERRY, Relieving Officer; sworn and examined.

(The Inspector.) What is your name?—Frederick Arthur Berry.

Q. How long have you been a relieving officer?—Since March, 1894.

Q. Did you have any previous experience?—Yes; five years assistant relieving officer at Stepney, and I was in the clerk's office at Stepney about four or five years previous to that.

Q. What is your district?—At present, No. 7 district in the union.

Q. Are you one of the relieving officers whose district has recently been changed?—I am, sir.

Q. What was formerly your district?—No. 11, sir.

Q. And had you that district in 1904?—Yes.

Q. Do you remember in October, 1904, an increased number of applications from able-bodied men?—Yes, sir; there was a gradual increase.

Q. Since when?—During the whole of that quarter.

Q. Was there at any time what might be called a sudden rush of applications?—Yes. The time when the applications were made was after the meetings of the unemployed.

Q. Was there a meeting of the guardians at which this was discussed. Were you present?—I was not present.

Q. What happened after that meeting?—The meeting of the guardians, sir? I cannot say what happened.

Q. You do not answer my question. Do you mean you cannot tell me or cannot remember?—Do not I say I cannot? There is no secret about it. I do not say I won't tell you, but I don't really remember them just at the moment.

Q. You have given me all the names you remember?—Yes, I have. Of course, there are others, but I cannot bring them to mind.

Q. How many others? Have you told me the bulk of them?—Yes. It is easily settled if you look through the list of contractors, because he has had communication with all of them.

Q. Do you mean at this time he was telephoning every contractor under the board?—I cannot tell you the remainder.

Q. You said just now he was communicating with all the contractors?—Did I say all? I say no. Give us a chance, you know.

Q. You don't keep your voice up, and I don't hear your answers clearly?—I did not say all. I said a contractor, and I was asked who they were, and I gave Mr. Blott, who I knew. I can tell you again if you wish me to repeat them.

Q. I don't want you to say the names over again. I want to know whether there were any others you remember?—Well, really, I cannot remember any special names.

(The Inspector.) Have we done with this witness. Good-bye?—Good-bye, sir. Thank you very much for your kindness. You won't want me any more?

(The Inspector.) No; I hope not.

(Mr. Grant.) I only want to say this: Mr. Robb, of course, conducts his own case in whatever way he likes, but he must not put it to me that it is subject to his right of calling further evidence. He must call all his evidence before I begin mine, and if he has got any more witnesses to call, now is the time to call them. I submit when he has closed his case we are not to have further charges alleged against us.

(The Inspector.) I think in the interests of the rate-payers, Mr. Robb's course is best. I think we will go on with the relieving officers. I have seen four of them. Is anything suggested as to the order? I propose to take them in alphabetical order. I have been asked to mention this: At the back of the Court—I don't know them—there are a good many of the officers of the guardians. Now, officers of the guardians have got their business to attend to, and it would be just as well if they did not put in so long an attendance here.

Q. Were a great number of the unemployed in the office?—Oh, yes.

Q. A crowd of them?—A crowd.

Q. And were they addressed. Did anyone make a speech?—Yes, the organiser of the demonstration made them a speech.

(Mr. Grant.) Give us his name?—I do not know.

(The Inspector.) Did you have an increased number of applications from able-bodied men?—Yes.

Q. How did you deal with them?—According to the instructions of the guardians.

Q. What were the instructions of the guardians?—The instructions of the guardians were these: The men's applications were to be taken in the usual course, and dealt with as ordinary applications for relief.

Q. Did you receive any instructions as to how you were to deal with them?—As ordinary applications for relief.

Q. How, as a matter of fact, did you deal with them?—In the best way that was possible having regard to the opportunities.

Q. What was that best way having regard to the opportunities?—Well, not in the ordinary way we deal with applications for relief, for we had not a chance of getting proper information and dealing with the cases in the way we ordinarily do.

Mr. Berry,
—
22 June.
—

Mr. Berry.
22 June.

Q. Owing to the rush of applications you were not able of yourself to make the enquiries which you would make in the ordinary course?—That is so.

Q. How, then, did you as a rule deal with applications?—Well, I saw the applicant personally, and questioned him as to the time he had been out of work, the members of his family, the amount of rent; anything that would prove to me he was deserving of relief—the assistance provided by the guardians.

Q. Had you then assistance. I am alluding to the very first?—I think at that time, the time referred to, the first meeting we had assistance; not previously to that, so far as my recollection serves me.

Q. Well then, what did you do. You gave them relief in kind?—Relief in kind.

Q. As sudden and urgent cases?—In the first instance, of course, as cases of sudden and urgent necessity.

Q. Now, there is an object in this question. Did you deal with them under the General Consolidated Order as cases of sudden or urgent necessity or as of sudden and urgent necessity?—As cases of sudden or urgent necessity.

Q. And gave relief in kind?—Yes.

Q. And did you relieve any of them in any other way?—Only those afterwards who were under the instructions of the Local Government Board allowed it—the wives of those men who had been sent to Laindon.

Q. And all the rest?—Were relieved in kind.

Q. Did you make any exception to them?—No.

Q. Did you test any other cases?—We tested them as far as we possibly could by investigation and other methods.

Q. Did you have any special instructions from the guardians as to how you were to deal with these cases?—Yes, sir. These cases—the particular cases—were to be entered on a special relief list.

Q. Who wrote up the cases in this relief list?—I did myself.

Q. Were there a great number of them?—There was a great number of them.

Q. Will you tell me how many your maximum number was?—Yes; if I take the week before Christmas, 1904—I find I have not the book here, sir.

Q. There was a very large number?—Oh, yes, a very large number. I should say, speaking from memory, they went up to something like 800 or 900.

Q. Had you many cases?—Individuals?

Q. How many cases would that be?—Oh, something like 150 cases where applications were reported—to 200 a week.

Q. What would be the ordinary number?—The ordinary number in that district would be about 50 or 60.

Q. And that would seem to imply your numbers went up threefold?—Oh, yes.

Q. You are quite certain of that?—Not quite certain of it, but there was a very marked increase.

Q. At what time did you get additional assistance. I understand you had assistance given you after a time?—Yes, we had assistance after a time. I should say about November, 1904. I cannot exactly remember the date.

Q. What did these assistants do?—They entered up the reports. Of course, we had to report the applications that were made to us, the circumstances of the family, the number of children, and the amount of kind given, for the approval of the guardians, and they assisted me in making up accounts of the visitations to the applicants' homes.

Q. This assistance, I suppose, the need for it was rather urgent?—It was urgent.

Q. And did you manage to get any with experience?—Well, perhaps some experience. I got as good assistants as was possible to be obtained. Of course, you cannot get good assistants.

Q. You have not been surcharged on the ground of relief given without due enquiry?—I have not.

Q. Your relief, I understand, was given in kind?—Yes.

Q. How is relief given in kind. Do you have tickets given on a relief station?—I have a ticket book with the several articles I am allowed to give specified, and that

ticket is written out and issued to the storekeeper, who issues the relief on my order. That, of course, is duly reported to the guardians.

Q. So I understand you gave no money to these able-bodied?—I gave no money whatever.

Q. The whole of the relief was in kind?—Yes, the whole of the relief was in kind.

Q. When that came before the guardians, what happened?—They approved of what I had done. The special cases to which I objected were brought before the guardians, and those applying to see the guardians were allowed, of course, to see the committees.

Q. We will take, first of all, ordinary cases. Did the guardians simply confirm the relief and leave it to you again, or did they make any order?—They made no order whatever. They might put a particular case in the care of the relieving officer, which would imply I was to relieve as necessary.

Q. Did you wait for the applicant to make a fresh application?—I assumed his application finished every week.

Q. And did not give him any additional order unless he made another application?—That is so.

Q. There was a certain set of cases which you said were reported to the guardians. Were there many?—No, there were not many.

Q. There were cases who in your judgment were not worthy to be recipients of out-door relief?—Yes.

Q. What was done in those cases?—Oh, I generally was sustained by the committee.

Q. Your committee generally sustained you. How would they treat those cases?—Well, orders for the workhouse. There were not many. I have not to complain of any want of support from my committee so far as that is concerned.

Q. Have you any instructions from the guardians?

(Mr. Grant.) I have not heard the last two questions. Might we stop when a waggon is going past outside. Half of us did not hear it?—The purport of the question Mr. Davy asked me was whether my objections in any particular case were confirmed by the committee. I answered in the affirmative.

(The Inspector.) In most cases the objections were sustained by the committee?—Yes.

Q. And in some of them orders for the workhouse were given?—Yes.

Q. Had you any instructions from the guardians as to the mode in which you were to deal with cases on their first application?—No instructions whatever.

Q. Were you told you had to give them out-door relief pending the next meeting of the guardians?—Yes, that was a general understanding.

Q. Is it a general understanding for fresh cases to be relieved certainly until the next meeting of the guardians?—I think, sir, on the occasion you refer to, the first demonstration in the hall, the men were told the relieving officers were receiving their applications and they would be relieved by them. That was the first public expression of opinion I heard from the guardians.

Q. Was in any case any pressure put upon you by any individual guardian in respect to a particular applicant for relief?—To a very slight extent, sir; I may say, generally speaking, that I have not been subjected to it.

Q. Do you know from your own knowledge any case of abuse by a recipient of out-door relief, such as selling the relief in kind?—No, I cannot say any such case came under my knowledge. I have heard that such cases have occurred, and cases have come under my notice afterwards where food has been given and it has not been used.

Q. Yes, this would be the sort of case you would have expected from your experience as relieving officer in a time of pressure of that sort?—They always creep in.

(Mr. Grant.) Were there cases where they changed goods for drink?—I do not know. None came under my notice.

Q. Have you heard of them?—I heard of them, but not in my district.

Mr. Berry.
22 June.

(The Inspector.) How long did this state of things go on. I put it to you until about March last?—In its acute form it continued right on to the end of the March quarter.

Q. This last March?—No, sir, the ensuing March. A less acute condition prevailed during the summer and the succeeding winter because we had no demonstrations.

Q. There were no demonstrations. Then your knowledge at that time was that demonstrations urged the people to apply for relief?—They did, sir.

Q. And would that be on the ground of some supposed failure in dealing with the unemployed?—I should say it was, sir.

Q. The men were to go to the Poor Law?—Yes.

Q. And the Poor Law would relieve them in kind without labour?—That is so.

Q. Did you ever attempt any form of labour in your district?—Not since the winter of 1894 and 1895. We had a labour yard then.

Q. The labour yard was not a conspicuous success?—It was not.

Q. Well, now in ordinary cases do you think these applicants to you could properly be described as sudden and urgent cases?—No, sir.

Q. A great many of them were not sudden and not urgent?—They were not sudden, of course, having been relieved for successive weeks. I am not speaking of this particular period, but afterwards. I may say I did not relieve any cases which in my judgment were not fairly urgent, having regard to the condition of the children.

Q. That is to say, when you got proper assistance you were able to investigate the cases so as to find the worse ones?—Of course we could deal with them better with a larger experience of them.

Q. Did you find many cases in which you could fairly refuse relief?—I found a good many, sir.

Q. Did some of the trouble come from insufficient investigation?—Oh yes, of course; a larger staff of officers could deal with the matter much better.

Q. Were not some of these sudden and urgent cases getting relief in that way during the whole year?—In the district in which I am at present that happened.

Q. You had cases who received relief as being cases of sudden and urgent necessity throughout the year?—Yes.

Q. What was their scale of relief?—We generally gave it to them according to the number of children.

Q. But you had a scale?—No, we gave it at discretion.

Q. So much bread. What articles did you generally give?—Bread, meat, butter, rice, grocery.

(Mr. Grant.) Would you give us one normal case—an ordinary case of a man, wife, and children. What did you give?—

(The Inspector.) A man, wife, and three children?—It would depend upon the time of the week in which he applied. If he applied on Monday he had to go through the week until the next committee meeting, and, of course, the amount would be increased. If he applied in the middle of the week, about Wednesday, I should give about four quarters loaves, 4 lbs. of meat, some rice, butter, and grocery.

Q. A bare subsistence?—Yes.

Q. You therefore gave them relief to the end of the week, until the meeting of the guardians?—That is so. I generally suppose to end it on Saturday.

Q. It has often been urged in cases of sudden and urgent necessity—

(Mr. Grant.) I hope the witness won't misunderstand you. You are saying in sudden and urgent necessity, the words of the order are sudden or urgent necessity, which is a very different thing.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Berry, in these cases it has often been alleged that the proper way is to give relief for a period not exceeding, say, 48 hours. You were to keep on feeding them. Would that, in your judgment, be the right method?—To keep on for 48 hours? Oh, no, sir; they might obtain work in the meantime.

Q. That is the object—they might have obtained work. But the point was, was it in the interest of the applicant. It would be better to give shorter hours?—Yes.

Q. Owing to the rush of applicants, that was not practicable to a large extent?—That is so.

Q. When did these cases of sudden or urgent or sudden and urgent necessity—it depends whether you use the Consolidated or the other Order—

(Mr. Grant.) I do not want the witness to confuse action under the Consolidated Order with action under the special Order.

(The Inspector.) He knows all about it. When did these cases cease. Have they ceased. Have you got any on the books now?—A very small number.

Q. About how many?—Not above seven.

Q. As against some 100 or 150?—Yes.

Q. When did they begin to go off?—

(Mr. Grant.) Which district are you speaking of?—I am speaking of the district I am in at the present time. I think that would be best.

Q. How long have you been there?—

(The Inspector.) If you will kindly allow me to finish. I know he has changed his district and is telling me.

(Mr. Grant.) If I put it in cross-examination I shall have to get up and repeat all that has been said. It is much better when giving evidence to get a point cleared up at once than to leave it to cross-examination.

(Mr. Robb.) There are many things I would like to ask, but I am going to exercise a little more restraint than Mr. Grant, and if he will leave your examination and not interrupt I will do the same.

(The Inspector.) It only puts me off.

(Mr. Grant.) If you say you would rather it be left—

(The Inspector.) Oh, no, do as you like. We will clear up that point. (To witness.) You are giving numbers now which, of course, you will compare with what they ought to be compared—with numbers in your present district. Did your present district exist then actually?—It did not exist until October last year.

Q. I put it to you, you formerly had many times more than now?—Oh yes.

Q. Well, when did the decrease begin?—You are alluding to my present district?

Q. The decrease in your present district?—As soon as I took it over in February.

Q. Last February?—Last February.

Q. The numbers began to go down?—Yes.

Q. How many were they when you took it over?—I should say 70 families of this particular class were being relieved.

Q. Did they cease to apply for relief?—No, they did not cease to apply.

Q. How then did you deal with their applications?—I paid very strict attention to the investigation.

Q. You made investigation, and were you still guided by the order of the guardians to give out-door relief in every instance until the first meeting?—Where necessary.

Q. Of course, it must be where necessary. Were you doing it in any other direction?—Not at all.

Q. Has there been any change?—No change whatever.

Q. When did you begin to deal with them in a more strict way?—Well, the guardians asked me to take over this special district, so I assumed I had something to do in that direction.

Q. And you did it?—I did it.

Q. The result is, your pauperism now has gone down. First of all, can you give the number of cases when you went into the district and now?—Yes; I think there were about 70 families the first week I went. I am speaking from memory. (Witness here referred to his book.) No, there were 99 able-bodied men relieved the first week I took it over.

(Mr. Grant.) What week?—The seventh week of the Lady-Day quarter, 1906.

(The Inspector.) Which, being translated, is?—About the second in February.

Q. How many individuals would that make?—About 99 men classified as being in health, a corresponding number of women, and I should say about 250 children.

Mr. Berry.

22 June.

Q. About 450 altogether?—Yes.

Q. What was the cost of the relief?—The amount of the relief in kind was £50 13s. all classes.

Q. What is it now?—£13, sir.

Q. The relief in kind has gone down from £50 to £13, and the number has gone down from 450 to what?—Not more than 40 or 50, sir.

Q. From 450 to about 40 or 50. Had these cases been on relief for a very long time?—Some of them.

Q. You would not know that?—Oh, yes I should, sir.

Q. What has become of these people knocked off the list?—Well, it is difficult to say. Some of them, a great number of them, have obtained work.

Q. None of them starving, of course?—Not to my knowledge.

Q. You would get to know of it if there were, I suppose?—I think I should.

Q. So they are off the list?—Off the list.

Q. And you think some have obtained work?—Yes.

Q. As far as you know, is the working prospect better than it has been?—I should have no hesitation in saying that.

Q. Is it to that reason—the increased work—you attribute the falling-off in the relief cases?—Not altogether.

Q. That would be a contributory cause?—Yes.

Q. What is the main cause?—More stringent administration, to some extent.

(Mr. Grant.) There is a difficulty about this memorandum. Only one copy. I have applied for more. They have given me one more. I have been told there were 100 printed. I am sure the Local Government Board would see we have at least 20 sent us. We want one for each guardian. We have only had seven altogether. They ought to have sent at least one for each guardian.

(Mr. Robb.) I understood you to say that in November, 1904, the sharp rise in out-door pauperism grew?—Yes.

Q. And I gather you attribute that to the demonstrations which took place at that time?—Yes, they helped undoubtedly. You allude to that portion of the demonstration which eventually reached here?

Q. We will deal with that in a moment. I am dealing with the demonstrations generally. You said in a rather significant aside, "We have had no demonstrations lately"?—No, we have not.

Q. You were asked to specify a cause of the recent reduction, and amongst other things said, "We have had no demonstrations"?—I may say that that fact had a considerable influence upon the relief. During last winter we had no organised applications for relief, and I think it had great effect upon the amount of relief given.

Q. At the end of 1904 you had organised applications for relief?—I think I may say it was so.

Q. You saw the organisation?—I cannot say that. I explained, I think, that out-of-work meetings were held in the neighbourhood. They usually marched to the office. That was a daily occurrence.

Q. Was the whole thing then systematic?—I should say it was.

Q. Did that have the effect of forcing up the out-door relief to an abnormal figure?—Decidedly.

Q. In your opinion, from your investigations, were the majority of those persons demonstrating deserving cases?—Well, I could not say about that. You see, a good many black sheep creep in when these things are upon us. Once having admitted the principle, there are plenty of people willing to avail themselves of the opportunity.

Q. From your experience as relieving officer, does it strike you as wise to admit the principle?—Of what, sir?

Q. Of this organisation you speak of. You said, you know, "Once you admit the principle"?—Personally, I should not be in favour of permitting applications from an organized point of view. I think they should be made individually by applicants who wish to come for relief.

Q. There was something behind forcing these men on?—Undoubtedly, of course.

Q. And what was this power behind the throne?—The organisation I explained before.

(The Inspector.) What organisation?—It was an organisation on behalf of the out-of-work men in the district.

Q. Was that an organisation in which any of the guardians participated?—I could not say.

(Mr. Robb.) Were any of the guardians taking part?—There might have been one guardian who took part in it.

Q. I suppose you refer to Mr. Lansbury?—No, I refer to Mr. Watts.

Q. I beg Mr. Lansbury's pardon.

(The Inspector.) What was the organisation called?—The Social Democratic Federation.

(Mr. Robb.) That was the organisation?—Well, I dare say that it had a lot to do with it—with the movement.

Q. It was a movement?—It was.

Q. I mean, you recognised there was something abnormal in the whole situation?—Yes, it reached a climax at that time. It had been gradually working up. The general charitable public have been active in this particular thing from year to year. The out-of-work question has been well before the public at that time of year.

Q. And at all events, one guardian was connected with this organisation?—Yes, I think I may say that.

Q. Is it not a fact that several guardians took part in these unemployed processions. And led them?—They did not lead them here. I cannot say that they were here when the crowd reached here. But I cannot say the guardians led them here.

Q. Is it not common property that Mr. Lansbury and others led them to Whitehall?—Yes, but it would not be true to apply that to leading the crowd here.

Q. It was the Poplar unemployed demonstration?—Yes.

Q. You had on the one side the driving force of organisation, and on the other the relieving body of guardians?—Yes.

Q. You had gentlemen who were members of both bodies?—Yes.

Q. Now, the principal question to which you refer was when the demonstration took place and people came here?—Yes.

Q. About what date was that?—I cannot say that I have got the particular date. It would be somewhere about the commencement of November, according to my recollection.

Q. Did Mr. Crooks, the chairman of the board, address the meeting?—I suppose he did.

Q. Did he tell them that they could claim all the food they wanted?—No, I cannot say. It would not affect me if he had. The general impression was the men were to make their applications in the ordinary way, and their cases would be dealt with in the ordinary way, as ordinary applications for relief.

Q. Did not Mr. Crooks say the guardians would see that they and their wives and children would have plenty?—He did not say that, but said they would be attended to. He would give them to understand they would be relieved.

Q. What did you find when you got to the office next morning?—The same conditions. I explained these marches were a daily occurrence.

Q. You have named this demonstration as a starting point. I suggest it was the starting point of an acute situation. The day after that speech the offices were crowded with applicants?—Yes, it is probable it was so.

Q. And you had constantly thrown upon your relief organisation a strain which it could not bear?—That is so.

Q. And that, as a consequence, it was a sheer physical impossibility to deal with cases on their merits in the ordinary way?—I should say so.

Q. And necessarily a certain amount of relief had to be given indiscriminately?—Yes.

Q. Now what was your procedure when you got an application; was a form filled up?—No, we proceeded in the usual course. A rough record was taken of the case for future reference, containing the name of the man or wife, the number of children, the trade union or sick club, or anything which would be likely to give assistance to the

applicant or anything of the sort, and afterwards the cases were entered in the application and report book, which was submitted to the guardians at their committee meetings.

Q. Did you attend the committee meetings?—I did.

Q. Was each case considered by the committee?—No. If there was any particular case which I thought could be affected in any way by the interference—I will not say interference—by the attention of the guardians, I drew attention to it. Otherwise the amount of relief was passed.

(Mr. Grant.) As to the number of applications?—They had reached some hundreds at that particular time.

(Mr. Robb.) So obviously they would not be considered individually?—That is so.

Q. The result of that is that in some instances the relief was improperly given?—Yes. From subsequent experience I should say it was so.

Q. To undeserving cases?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) You got rushed into it?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you ever been approached by any individual guardians upon a case after the decision of the committee?—I have been, but not to any serious extent.

Q. I would like to have the extent?—Yes, I can give you the circumstances of one case. I only remember two cases, as a matter of fact. There was the case of Hemmings, I think.

Q. Did that come before the committee?—Perhaps I am wrong in saying that. I had previously refused the man relief upon my own responsibility.

Q. What happened subsequently?—I heard from a guardian who wished me to further investigate the case.

Q. Who was that guardian?—Mrs. Cordery.

Q. Was the communication written or verbal?—She telephoned me.

Q. Did she ever write to you?—She has written to me once.

Q. Can you produce the letter?—I don't know that I can at this particular time. I believe I might produce it. I don't know that I attached sufficient importance to the letter to keep it.

Q. It is rather an important letter?—I did not think so. If it was done to any large extent in my case I should think it important.

Q. You know it has happened in other cases. Do you think you could produce the letter?—I think I can. I generally retain all my correspondence.

Q. Is there any other instance of that kind of thing?—I believe Mr. Phillips once wrote to me about a case. Of course, these things are quite within the province of the guardians in an ordinary way. Personally, I have no great complaints to make of that.

Q. Do you suggest it is in the province of the guardians to interfere with the relieving officer's discretion?—No, I do not.

Q. You do not suggest it is the province of individual guardians to interfere with the relieving officer's discretion?—Not to put pressure upon the relieving officers. To give relief in cases where it is undesirable to give it in the opinion of the officer.

Q. Has it been done?—In my case it was not done to any extent.

Q. You had a feeler or two thrown out?—Oh, yes, perhaps so.

Q. There is a relief book kept with counterfoil forms?—It is a relief order—the order on the storekeeper.

Q. Is the book deposited with lodging-house keepers?—Not in my experience. I generally use cards.

Q. Yes?—The deputy does not send any case to me unless they are genuine lodgers in that place.

Q. How many were issued per month to any particular lodging-house?—Latterly the number was smaller than when I first came into the district. I had large quantities of applications from these lodging-houses.

Q. And you investigated them?—I did.

Q. And refused them?—And refused them.

Q. Before you took over the district, had it been much pressed by applications from common lodging-houses?—Yes.

Q. Which I suggest had been dealt with more or less indiscriminately?—I would not say that, but I might say the guardians' attention was called to this particular class of applicant, and what occurred.

(The Inspector.) Were any inmates of common lodging-houses given this amount of relief?—They were all refused—every man jack of them. We had a good many applicants, but in no case was relief given to a denizen of any lodging-house.

Q. Never?—Not in my case.

(Mr. Robb.) You are speaking of your own district?—Yes.

Q. Did you know of any being sent to Laindon from common lodging-houses?—Oh, yes.

Q. Was there about this time an influx of people into these lodging-houses?—Oh, yes. About November, 1904. We had a good many men applying from these lodging-houses, who were sent to Laindon. But we had a direction from the guardians that no one who was not practically settled in the union should be sent to this place.

(The Inspector.) Did you give orders for Laindon without going to the guardians?—Yes, I regarded it as an able-bodied workhouse. We communicated with the superintendent, and he gave us instructions if it was possible to send them.

(Mr. Robb.) I think you quarrelled a little with the term "indiscriminate" when you told us your close investigations largely reduced the number of applications from common lodging houses?—Yes, I think I can claim that.

Q. Surely it follows that the investigation had not been sufficiently strict before?—I should not say that at all. The district was administered by a very careful officer.

Q. A good deal depends upon the officer's instructions?—Naturally it would depend upon the particular attitude to that particular class of case. I personally had rather an objection to them.

Q. Did the case of Mrs. Carey come under your notice?—What address?

Q. Barchester Street?—That would not be in my district.

(The Inspector.) Do you remember the incident of women going to Mr. Balfour?—I have the printed minutes, and looked at it the other day.

(Mr. Robb.) There is a Mrs. Carey, who said she had a widowed mother, five children, and her husband out of work?—Mr. Miles would have that.

Q. Have there been in the last few months meetings of relieving officers?—No.

Q. I won't press it if you say so?—You can take it; it is perfectly true.

Q. You made two changes of district, did you not?—The guardians allocated the new districts in November, and I took up one; and then afterwards I took up another one at the request of the guardians.

Q. What was the reason for the change?—The increased amount of work.

Q. Then four additional officers were appointed?—That is so.

Q. And I think two have since been dispensed with?—That is so.

Q. Was there any special reason?—The guardians approached me, and the clerk explained to me it was hardly fair to give an old officer of the guardians like myself, having done years of slumming, a hard district. Newcomers should have the hard work if anything was done.

Q. It would hardly have been wise to put inexperienced newcomers in the busy district?—If it is not wise, I am very pleased it is so.

Q. Surely, the more difficult district would require the greater experience?—Yes.

Q. Particularly under such abnormal conditions as these?—Yes.

Q. Do you think, without reflecting on your brother officers in any way, that the other relieving officers had sufficient experience to deal with the state of things?—I should like to be excused the question.

Mr. Berry.

22 June.

Mr. Berry.
22 June.

(The Inspector.)—I do not think he can be asked that question. You see, the situation is created. The relieving officers are not made in a day?—That is so.

(Mr. Robb.) The second change was when you went into the district of Mr. Miles. What was the state of things you found there. Was it satisfactory?—If it had been satisfactory I should not have been asked to go.

Q. In what respect was it unsatisfactory?—The amount of persons receiving relief.

Q. Can you tell us the amount given in cash and kind by Mr. Miles in this last week?—About £48. in money and £50. in kind.

Q. In round figures about £100. a week?—Yes.

Q. How was it last week?—The money had increased by about £5, and the kind had decreased by about £34.

Q. To what do you attribute the decrease in kind?—The dominant cause was the change of the season. Conditions always improve in the summer time. There is more work about. And, of course, personal effort had something to do with it.

Q. Can you give us any comparison between June, 1904, and 1905?—The districts are not the same. You cannot compare any ordinary district. In my own district in 1904 it was £45. 12s.

Q. I think you told us the reason of the change?—But then this would be a larger district.

Q. Tell us again what you say it was in your new district in this present June?—In my new district about £54. in money and £13. in kind.

Q. Is it not a fact that there has been a considerable all-round reduction since February last?—Yes; all round.

Q. To what do you attribute that?—Since February there have been several reasons. The Unemployed Committee got to work about that time, and set men to work. There have been hundreds of families emigrated, and I think it is a fact that throughout the whole country there has been a general diminution in the amount of relief granted. I should say the guardians have taken up a more stringent attitude.

Q. Do you know the percentage of the reduction?—No.

Q. It has been very marked in Poplar?—It has been.

Q. The matters you have mentioned would only account for a small reduction?—The great increase was caused in the amount of work which has increased in the district—in dock work there. Timber and that sort of thing comes in.

Q. Do you think the increase of employment as compared to this time last year in Poplar was more than 5 per cent?—No, I should not say that.

Q. The percentage of reduction of out-door relief was enormously greater?—Yes.

Q. Don't you think there is some other circumstance to which that circumstance is attributable?—I cannot say.

Q. Are the applicants discouraged now by the greater strenuousness of the investigations?—I should say they are to a considerable extent. That is the main factor.

Q. This reduction synchronises with the commencement of the investigations by the Local Government Board?—Well, hardly, you see; as a matter of fact, the guardians—I have not the particular date.

Q. I do not know if you can give us the date when it was first decided?—It was commenced about March, I believe.

Q. I suggest it was about February. And the reduction in March, about the seventh week of the first quarter?

(The Inspector.) Is it in your district?—Not to a considerable extent. There was a diminution in the amount of relief in my whole district. I think about the seventh week to the Lady Day quarter there began to be the decrease in the amount of relief. That is when the relief started to decrease.

(Mr. Robb.) This reduction is not altogether unconnected with the investigation which has led to the present Inquiry?—I prefer you do not ask me.

Q. This organisation that has been so active in 1904 has been less prominent?—I do not think it has been prominent this last winter at all.

Q. Not active?—Not active.

Q. And there has been a complete absence of the unemployed demonstrations in Poplar?—Yes, as far as we have been concerned. There have been meetings as usual, but they have not reached us.

Q. And the result of all the opposition is this marked reduction?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) Whatever produced the extreme pauperism in Poplar, did you receive at any time from the guardians any special directions for dealing with it?—No special direction, but we were given to understand that relief was to be given. That was the method the guardians adopted to meet the emergency.

Q. We have heard about the organisation of the unemployed, but I suppose if a man is in full work he does not join the demonstration of the unemployed?—Well, no, he does not.

(Mr. Robb.) He does not seem quite sure about it.

(Mr. Grant.) I think Mr. Berry thought it was an ironical question?—He might want to aid the movement.

(The Inspector.) He might want to aid the movement, you say?

(Mr. Grant.) A large contingent of men and women from Poplar joined the procession to the West End?—Yes, from Laindon and applicants for relief.

(The Inspector.) From Laindon?—The men who were sent to Laindon.

(Mr. Grant.) I think you must be wrong there. You said there were no organisations for the unemployed last winter?—I hardly meant to imply that. I meant there were no organised applications for relief.

Q. You have some ten years' experience in the East End?—Nearer twenty.

Q. How long have you been engaged in this administration of relief?—About seventeen years.

Q. There is always a bad time in winter?—Yes.

Q. And in some winters there is an exceptionally bad time? Was that an epidemic winter?—It was an exceptionally bad winter in 1904.

Q. Was that the worst you have known?—No. We had a worse in 1895, when the Thames was frozen and the dockers could not get work.

Q. With that exception this last year was the worst you have known?—Yes.

Q. These are the figures showing the number of recipients of outdoor relief: December 31st, 1898, 1,675?—

(Mr. Robb.) Might these start at 1895?

(Mr. Grant.) I have not got it now. In 1900, 2,078; 1901, 2,399; 1902, 2,946; 1903, 3,444; 1904, 8,599; 1905, 7,086. December, 1904, was a time of exceptional strain upon the whole machinery of the union?—It was so.

(The Inspector.) Where did you get the figures from?

(Mr. Grant.) They are supplied me by Mr. Lough. With 8,600 as compared with 3,400 in the previous year you would want more than double the staff of relieving officers. There was only one case of interference by Mrs. Cordery. Do you remember the case?—Yes, it was a skilled labourer, Carroway; in my judgment he should not have been here at all. I refused to give him relief. I had a letter from Mrs. Cordery asking me to relieve him until the next meeting when the case would be considered.

Q. What was the relief?—About 4s.

Q. What was the case of the other man?—He said his name was Bodger. I refused the man relief. Mr. Phillips said the man ought to be relieved.

Q. What happened?—He was relieved—a pensioner.

Q. Who told you to?—Mrs. Cordery.

Q. That was Mrs. Cordery's case, too. Were there any other cases?—Only this.

Q. Three instances spread over six years?—That is so.

Q. Was there ever any relief given twice without enquiry. You say that men who came to you destitute, you were to relieve them?—I do not think I made a statement to that effect. We were told to relieve in the ordinary manner. That was by visitation to the home and investigating as far as possible.

Mr. Berry.
22 June.

Q. Then came the emergency cases?—That is what I refer to. Mr. Crooks told me he and several guardians and the clerk formally interviewed the Local Government Board and he had no doubt some provision would be made to meet special emergency cases.

Q. And in the meantime what were you to do; go on?—Relieving in the ordinary way.

Q. You could not do it all. If your full number of cases was 60, you could not examine 160?—I did. I examined as far as possible. I took every individual statement.

Q. Before you gave relief?—Yes.

Q. And used your judgment on the cases?—On the cases.

Q. Is there every year a reduction in the East End as soon as the spring begins?—I should say yes; always so.

Q. The burden of pressure is heaviest in the winter?—Yes. It gradually works off.

Q. You got an exceptional winter in 1904?—Yes.

Q. And then the relief begins with the spring?—It diminishes with the spring.

Q. How long was it from 1904 before your relief got back to normal?—I do not think it ever got back to normal.

Q. All through the summer you had pressure?—Yes.

Q. But not so bad as in the winter of 1904?—That is so.

Q. In December, 1905, the figures were 7,000 as against 8,500. Has their relief got back to normal now?—Yes. I should say the relief at the present time in this district is lower than ever I expected it to be.

Q. You had last winter the Unemployed Committee at work?—Yes.

Q. You said something of what they spent. I do not know what it was?—I do not know.

Q. The unemployed work was done—the organising work relieved the pressure on you?—I think it started to relieve the pressure about the end of January. I do not think any men were put to work before January.

Q. There were migrations, and in addition was there also a considerable improvement in the amount of employment that was forthcoming. Trade improved generally?—Yes.

Q. Quite apart from the normal improvement from winter to spring there was improvement in trade?—It is right to say that.

Q. In the cases of lodging-houses, if a man applied to you for relief did he get it on the mere application?—No.

Q. I understand all you have to do if a man applies to you, you have to satisfy yourself that he is destitute?—Yes. I look for more than that.

Q. That is the broad principle?—That is the law. It is the law, but it is not my practice.

Q. You have nothing to do with deserving cases?—If a man came to a lodging-house ill, it would not matter if he was the biggest scoundrel under the sun.

Q. If he was a thief, drunkard, or scoundrel?—If he has the need, that is the law.

Q. You don't give relief at all to a man who comes from a lodging-house?—Out-door relief. In no case would I give out-door relief to anyone in a lodging-house, unless I have supplied brandy, or in cases of collapse I know food has been granted.

Q. What is this about Laindon. I do not think the Inspector quite followed it?—

(The Inspector.) I did. The relieving officer treats Laindon as a branch workhouse.

(Mr. Grant.) Have you had in your district cases of men who have had relief by misrepresentation?—Yes.

Q. Have you had transactions with guardians?—Not in my district.

Q. Can you tell me when you consider that extraordinary pressure of 1904 began?—Will it do if I read out the totals of relief as they grew during the quarter?

Q. They do not tell me which was emergency and which was ordinary?—

(Mr. Robb.) It would be more instructive to have the actual figures than the mere opinion.

(Mr. Grant.) Tell me the numbers in the first entry?—8 men in health, 2 in sickness; second week, 11 in health and 3 in sickness, then 19 and 4, 16 and 6, 33 and 7—that is the end of October—52 and 10.

Q. Do you think by the first week in November the emergency period had begun?

(The Inspector.) What was the next week?—85 able-bodied men and 1.

Q. What was next week?—129.

Q. Next week?—156 and 11.

Q. Next?—147.

Q. Is that the apex?—191 on December 19th—the week previous to Christmas.

(Mr. Grant.) As there was a little charity going?—It should be less then, but it was larger. You will remember it was a particularly foggy week. The ships could not get up the Thames. The following week I refused every dock labourer and reduced the number to 68, because the ships were up.

Q. At the beginning of this time did the guardians see every individual case from your district?—No.

Q. In October, 1904?—No.

Q. Were you present when the guardians saw the cases?—Yes. They do not see every individual case. Only those who wish to see the committee and pursue their applications further, or those I summoned to attend.

Q. The guardians were sitting from one or two in the afternoon to seven at night dealing with this special emergency?—That is correct.

Q. The guardians purposely shifted you because of your experience. With regard to the emergency, I understand your assistants did the clerical work and you did the work of enquiring into the applicants. A good deal of detail work was thrown over to your assistants?—As far as detail work was concerned. As far as estimating the character of a man, I did that personally; as far as visitation to the home was concerned, that was done by an assistant appointed.

(The Inspector.) It is suggested that the relieving officers became for a time a sort of clerks?—The question of the home and deciding the enquiry was the important branch of the work.

(Mr. Grant.) Seeing applicants and taking down statements—which was the first thing to do?—I regarded that as the most important. I can form a pretty good estimate of a man by an interview with him.

Q. Was the location of your work settled by the guardians, or did you tell your assistants how to work?—There were special visitors appointed by the guardians for special visiting purposes.

Q. Did you ever give money to able-bodied men?—No. Except some wives, who were very few in number.

(Mr. Robb.) May we know what was given to wives?—It differed in districts. In some districts they adopted the Mansion House scale.

(The Inspector.) What would be the ordinary Poplar scale for the widow and children?—A widow and four children would get about 2s. 6d. each child—about 10s. a week.

Q. Nothing for herself?—No, sir.

Q. The Mansion House scale would be 10s. for the widow?—And 1s. for each child.

(Mr. Grant.) It is put to me that the Mansion House scale did not relieve the woman.

(The Inspector.) I understand in some districts women and wives of men sent to Laindon were relieved on the same scale as wives of men under the distress committee.

(Mr. Lansbury.) The resolution of the guardians was distinctly that all cases were to be dealt with at the discretion of the committee. The board did not, and as far as I know no committee definitely adopted it. They had to discriminate.

(The Inspector.) May I take it the wives of the men at Laindon were relieved on different scales?

(Mr. Lansbury.) Yes. And under the same committee on different scales. No committee adopted a hard and fast rule.

(Mr. Ford.) In the case of a woman and her husband at Laindon, the woman was given her rent. I expect 5s. she was allowed—5s., and I think 1s. 6d. each child.

Mr. Berry.
22 June.

(The Inspector.) Had you any misgivings as to the payments to able-bodied men?—Yes.

Q. Did you make any demur to doing it?—Yes.

Q. And so finally you decided to make the payments?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) Has the Auditor since passed the payment?

(The Inspector.) He passed the payment three times and then he surcharged. The surcharge is not yet discharged.

(Mr. Grant.) I am told the Auditor has surcharged only one case.

(The Inspector.) One case, a test case.

(Mr. Lansbury.) The Auditor signed the accounts except in that one case.

(Mr. Grant.) It is better that we should go regularly. We do not look upon that as a test case at all.

(The Inspector.) I say I suppose it is a test case. At the next audit there will be more cases.

(Mr. Lansbury.) There has been another audit.

(Mr. Robb.) I protest against this. I think Mr. Grant is the most irregular person here.

(The Inspector.) As to the body for the relief of the unemployed. What are they. The Borough Council?—The Borough Council and two or three charitable.

Q. Did the same guardians always sit on the same committee?—Yes.

Q. And did they always have the same chairman?—Yes.

Q. So that the relieving officer always comes before the same body?—Yes.

Q. You told us that the Laidon men joined in one of the unemployed processions?—Yes. I read it in the papers.

Q. Did you pay any extra relief for their expenses?—I paid none.

(Mr. Robb.) Do I understand that men were brought from Laidon to take part in the procession? It seems rather extraordinary.

(The Inspector.) I think he said the guardians relieved, but he did not pay relief. Do I understand that after a hard winter there would be a fall in the spring?—It must go back.

Q. After a hard year there is a residuum of permanent cases left?—Yes.

Q. Apparently after this last bad year there has been no such residuum. The relief has fallen to something lower than it has been for some time?—The relief in kind. Permanent relief has slightly increased.

(The Inspector.) Who is the next man on my list? I must get through some more. Mr. Evins.

Mr. J. EVINS, Relieving Officer; sworn and examined.

Mr. Evins.
22 June.

(The Inspector.) How long have you been a relieving officer?—Five years.

Q. Which district is yours?—No. 7.

Q. Have you always been in the same?—No, sir.

Q. How long have you been in your present district?—About ten months.

Q. You were surcharged by the Auditor in 1905?—Yes, sir.

Q. In respect of how many cases?—I believe there was one.

Q. What was the man's name?—James Gibbons.

Q. And you have not heard from the Local Government Board with regard to it?—No.

Q. At the next audit shall you have cases of the same kind?—Yes.

Q. How many?—I could not say. That surcharge would be my old district.

Q. In the new district have you cases of the same sort?—No, sir.

Q. You have not given any relief of that sort?—Occasionally.

Q. None of them will come under audit again?—The cases will come under audit, but this was a special case in which the relief was continuous.

Q. Have you any cases like Gibbons?—No, sir.

Q. So you are in no fear of the Auditor next time?—I do not know that.

Q. You heard what Mr. Berry said as to the increase in able-bodied in November, 1904?—I did not hear that portion.

Q. You remember the occasion when there was a great increase in the numbers for relief?—Yes.

Q. How long were you without assistance, or did you have assistance at first?—At that time I think I had assistance.

Q. What did the assistants do for you?—I had assistants to do the clerical work.

Q. Who visited the cases?—There were special visitors appointed.

Q. What do you think is the most important work of a relieving officer?—Undoubtedly investigation.

Q. In these cases the investigation was not done by you, but the visitors?—Yes.

Q. Have you refused relief in kind to able-bodied men?—Yes, I have.

Q. Have you given an order for the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. I am talking of this time when able-bodied men applied?—Orders have been given.

Q. What were the special circumstances?—As men applying for admission to the workhouse.

Q. I am talking of able-bodied men who are applying for relief and are relieved in kind?—Oh, no.

Q. Were there instructions?—I did not know that there was any question.

Q. What made you give relief in that way?—I had to deal with applications as they came along.

Q. Was there no common understanding as to how these cases should be dealt with; you did it out of your own head?

(Mr. Grant.) I do not think that is quite fair.

(The Inspector.) I am judge of what is fair.

(Mr. Grant.) I am also endeavouring to be fair. You put it to the witness he did it out of his own head. The witness knows what the duties of the relieving officer are. They are laid down in the Orders. He does not do them out of his own head.

(Mr. Robb.) You can say that at the proper time.

(The Inspector.) Don't interrupt my examination.

(Mr. Grant.) I shall interrupt if I think it right.

(The Inspector.) How many cases were there?—About 150 to 200.

Q. You gave them no money?—No money—relief in kind.

Q. Had you a definite scale?—No.

Q. Had you no understanding?—No.

Q. Uniform with the other relieving officers?—There was no scale laid down. Simply guided by the reports.

Q. No understanding with the other officers?—No arrangement whatever.

Q. You gave as many days as they would want until they came up again?—I will not say that. I simply relieved according to their necessities, not with a view to their coming again.

Q. And their prospective necessity?—The day of the week when they made their application influenced me.

Q. Did you have complaints of abuse of the out-door relief?—Do you mean personal abuse?

Q. Had you complaints of improper use of the relief?—I heard it stated as a matter of rumour, but I have not had direct complaints myself.

Mr. Evans.
22 June.

Q. Were you subjected to any pressure from any guardian to give relief in particular cases?—I do not know that I have been subjected to any pressure.

Q. Have you had any influence to bear upon you to relieve a case which you thought was not fit to be relieved?—I have received a letter; sometimes a card.

Q. Advising the relief?—I have been requested to relieve.

Q. What did you do?—Investigated the case, and made further enquiry, and felt somewhat compelled to relieve, pending the meeting of the committee.

(Mr. Grant.) You ought in fairness to ask him how many of these cases there were?—They happened occasionally. I do not know how many.

Q. Half-a-dozen?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Do you relieve emergency cases?—Cases have been relieved by me.

Q. Did any of these cases go on throughout the winter?—No.

Q. Did any go on for a number of weeks?—In my old district that was the subject of the surcharge.

Q. To what do you attribute the fact that you have not received the applications?—I think I told you. The influence of the committee. Men got work and went away.

Q. What is your present district? What part of the world?—No. 9. Just about here.

Q. That is not the poorest part?—No.

(Mr. Robb.) To what cause do you attribute the increase in out-door pauperism in November, 1904?—We were flooded with applicants. They were organised. There is no doubt about that. I suppose it was one of the contributory causes.

Q. Organised?—Undoubtedly. They came in numbers, with a man at the head of them.

Q. Did the great rush come immediately after the speech made by Mr. Crooks?—I cannot say.

Q. Do you remember a number coming to this building, who were addressed by Mr. Crooks?—I remember a number coming.

Q. You had a tremendous influx of applicants?—The usual number. They were coming up morning after morning, and had to be dealt with.

Q. What did you hear about Mr. Crooks' speech?—I know nothing beyond what I have taken the trouble to find out.

Q. The acute situation in 1904 you attribute to the organised number of applications?—Yes.

Q. The applicants came up in bunches week after week?—Yes.

Q. Do you know of any men staying away from work to join the demonstrations?—No.

Q. You know men were brought from Laindon to participate?—I heard it, and saw a picture of the procession and one of the banners.

Q. So these demonstrations were swollen by inmates of the workhouse?—I simply know the men from Laindon took part.

Q. What steps did you take in these special circumstances?—I received the applications, visitors were instructed, and I had to relieve according to their reports.

Q. Don't you think that with the enormous increase and the character of the whole thing you ought to have applied for special instructions?—The circumstances were known to the clerk and everyone. Representation was made to the clerk by the whole of the officers at that time.

(The Inspector.) Was there any application from the officers?

(Mr. Lough.) Undoubtedly there was. I am not sure if it was in writing. We were in consultation from day to day.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Berry told us it was well understood what the instructions to the guardians were?—I never received any instructions from the guardians.

Q. Then Mr. Berry must be mistaken?—Undoubtedly.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Berry never said anything of the kind. I do not care to interfere with what I believe is still called the examination-in-chief, but Mr. Berry did not say anything of the kind.

(The Inspector.) My belief is—no instructions from the guardians, but an understanding relief should be given to the next meeting.

(Mr. Grant.) The guardians instruct me—applicants should be dealt with as ordinary applicants for relief.

(Mr. Berry.) (to the Inspector.) You are correct, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) You had had three or four years' experience up to 1904?—Yes.

Q. And being suddenly faced with out-relief going up 300 or 400 per cent., you sought no advice?—Representation was made to the clerk with regard to providing assistance.

Q. Had you no doubts as to the legality of the relief distributed? You told us it was continuous?—The surcharge case was.

Q. In that district week after week relief was given to able-bodied men?—Yes.

Q. What investigations were there?—I received the applications personally.

Q. Were the visitors guardians?—They were appointed by the guardians.

Q. Have you heard of any meeting of the relieving officers?—No.

Q. You say a guardian had approached you after you had refused a case. Can you give us the name?—Mrs. Cordery.

Q. In some instances asking you to relieve able-bodied men in work?—In work! I never said such a thing.

Q. Had you other communications from Mrs. Cordery?—I have received telephone messages.

Q. Urging you to relieve?—I will not say urging. She has brought cases before my notice.

Q. Cases which had already been brought before your notice?—Some had.

Q. So the individual guardians were a court of appeal from the relieving officer?—They went to individual guardians.

Q. Did any other guardian communicate with you?—No, sir.

Q. Was it customary for the guardians to put pressure on you after you had exercised your discretion?—It has happened.

Q. Have you been compelled to relieve against your better judgment?—With regard to the case I have admitted and mentioned.

Q. I will stop till six o'clock if necessary, but I want an answer?—I have relieved against my better judgment.

Q. Have you been compelled?—I suppose I must say "Yes."

(Mr. Grant.) In five years how many cases have you relieved against your better judgment?—We were inundated with applications of all sorts at that particular time.

(Mr. Berry handed the Inspector a note from Mrs. Cordery.)

(The Inspector.) "Four children. He has had three 'breaks' in ten weeks. Please give him some food and 'bring him to the committee next week.' What does 'three breaks' mean?"

(Mrs. Cordery.) He had had so many weeks of relief for so long a time.

(The Inspector.) The Inquiry stands adjourned until Thursday.

SEVENTH DAY.

Thursday, June 28th, 1906.

(Mr. Grant.) Before the general business, may I just say a word of personal explanation. I am afraid from what happened on the other day when we were here an impression may have been produced in your mind which I had no intention of, of personal discourtesy to you. If that was so, may I say at once I had no wish or intention of doing it, and whether it is worse to intend or not to intend to do it, yet do it, I don't know. But we have never met before on Inquiries, and I think you will accept my assurances that I had no intention of discourtesy to you.

(The Inspector.) I accept it in the fullest possible way, Mr. Corrie Grant. I hope the Inquiry will go on without the slightest ill-feeling.

(Mr. Grant.) I want to remove that because of something which did happen over a trifling matter. I want to deal with one or two trifling matters before going to the evidence. I am asked by the guardians to thank you for your kindness in not sitting last Monday. It has enabled us to get on with our evidence much further than we expected to do, and to make preparations for our case which we otherwise would not have been able to do. I am still in a difficulty, and I am bound to tell you about it, because the circumstances make up a *prima facie* case—I don't put it higher than that—I can make a *prima facie* case of ground for complaint on the part of the guardians. Now, sir, I may remind you that on the 24th May you sent to Mr. Lough—or your officials did—I don't mean you personally—sent to Mr. Lough a type-written copy. What came to us—reached us on the 25th May—was a type-written copy of what was afterwards printed as a memorandum on pauperism. On the 6th June Mr. Turner—this is the memorandum; it is a good many pages, and a number of charts and tables—all, if I may say so, containing the gist of the charges which we have to meet with regard to the management of the Union. That was sent to us and we received the first copy of it—a type-written copy—on the 25th May. On the 6th June Mr. Turner writes to us from the Local Government Board—I understand one of the officials—Mr. Davy wishes him to send six copies of the memorandum, with tables and charts, copies of additional charts, showing out-door pauperism this year. That is from Mr. F. L. Turner. As there are 24 guardians, six copies were manifestly insufficient for the purpose of meeting the serious accusations—I can call them nothing else—contained in the memorandum. The 6th June was the day before the Inquiry, so the 6th June was the first opportunity the Guardians had of studying this memorandum or what was contained in it, and therefore Mr. Lough, the clerk, was authorised to apply to the Local Government Board at once for more copies. He applied, sir, and on the 22nd June he obtained from the Local Government Board Office one printed copy. Then, sir, on the 23rd June he wrote for 30 copies and at the hearing of the Inquiry here I applied for copies, and you, with the courtesy I have always received from you, said at once that we should have copies. Therefore we wrote to the Local Government Board again and received a letter from them dated 26th June—"Sir, I am directed by the Local Government Board to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd inst., with reference to the Inquiry being held into the general conditions of the Poplar Union,

and to state that the memorandum referred to therein has been put on sale by the Stationery Office and copies can be obtained from Messrs. Wyman & Sons, Fetter Lane, or any bookseller.—John Lithiby." Mr. Lough on the 27th June sent to Messrs. Wyman for copies and could not obtain them, and this morning at five minutes to ten, an application was made on behalf of the guardians, and they were told they were not on sale. I am going to put evidence into the box to prove this statement, because I want to have them on the notes. The Poplar Municipal Alliance have had copies of this memorandum. I also read in the local newspaper here—

(Mr. Robb.) May I say, sir, in this matter—

(Mr. Grant.) I am still in possession of the court.

(Mr. Robb.) I thought this particular point had been disposed of.

(The Inspector.) Let us clear the point.

(Mr. Robb.) I have a similar complaint.

(Mr. Grant.) I have the local newspaper here showing that the memorandum had been sent to a board of guardians—presumably by the Local Government Board, because there was nobody else to send it—a board of guardians which had nothing to do with this Inquiry at all, yet they were furnished with a copy. I am reading from the *East London Observer* of Saturday, June 23rd. A member of the Bethnal Green Board of Guardians, Mr. Bailward, said he understood the clerk was in possession of certain charts issued in connection with the Poplar Inquiry, contrasting the position of various East End unions. He thought it would be interesting to have the charts exhibited in the board room. It was decided to send copies to each member of the board. We shall prove to you in regard to this board, except Mr. Crooks, Mr. Lansbury, and perhaps Mr. Ford, not a single member of the board yet has seen the memorandum issued by the Local Government Board in which their conduct is impeached. I am going to call Mr. Lough to prove this, and call witnesses.

(The Inspector.) There is nothing to prove. Have you any copies.

(Mr. Robb.) My clients, the municipal alliance, comprising 2,500 members—I have a grave complaint that I haven't been supplied with copies for every one of those members. We have only had three copies, but we have handed them round from one to another, a simple course which perhaps did not occur to the guardians. Some people got them from Messrs. Wyman, and the stock was exhausted.

(The Inspector.) I am at a loss to know what happened about this.

(Mr. Robb.) We should like to have copies for each of our members.

(Mr. Grant.) Let Mr. Lough go into the box and be sworn.

(The Inspector.) I am not going into this matter. It is not so important. Accept what Mr. Lough says.

(Mr. Lough.) I have received seven printed copies.

(The Inspector.) I should have thought seven would be ample.

(Mr. Grant.) I want to point out: I want to ask who sent the copy to the Bethnal Green Board of Guardians?

(The Inspector.) I think I did.

(Mr. Grant.) I have had none at all.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Bailward is a friend of mine. He saw these papers at my office and asked for a copy, and the clerk of the Bethnal Green Guardians asked for 20 copies and we told him he could not have them, as, I believe, they were out of print.

(Mr. Grant.) How many were originally printed by the Local Government Board?

(The Inspector.) 100.

(Mr. Grant.) Out of that—

(The Inspector.) You had half a dozen. It is not usual to send copies to every member of the board of guardians. It is usual to send copies to the legal adviser.

(Mr. Grant.) The only experience I have of a similar Inquiry to this was an inquiry at Wallingford at which Mr. Johnston was concerned, and it was conducted by Mr. Murray Browne, your predecessor, and in that case Mr. Murray Browne ordered that the guardians should have counsel and the master should have counsel, and required that the persons who made the charges against the guardians should specify each particular individual charge.

(Mr. Robb.) I object.

(The Inspector.) That is quite a different thing. I wish the guardians had had counsel from the start.

(Mr. Grant.) Without troubling you with evidence, will you allow me to say we made application to Messrs. Wyman for these copies, and will you allow me to state that Messrs. Wyman said they knew nothing about it.

(Mr. Robb.) Rather late in the day—five minutes to ten.

(The Inspector.) They would be ready yesterday.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Lithiby says on 26th June they were on sale. "The memorandum referred to has been put on 'sale' by the Stationery Office and copies can be obtained 'from Messrs. Wyman and Sons, or any bookseller.'" I won't trouble any more about that. I hope I shall get that in time to reveal the question we have to deal with here. There is another matter which I should like your direction upon. You will remember on 31st May Mr. Robb wrote on behalf of his clients dealing with the request that his clients should bring forward their charges against the guardians, and in the letter he says: "I agree that it is reasonable the guardians should know 'to some extent the nature of the case they have to meet' and I am willing therefore on behalf of my clients to 'indicate in general terms the matters to which they propose to draw attention at the Inquiry.'" Then he makes some reservations and goes on to say—

(Mr. Robb.) Please read the rest.

(Mr. Grant.) I will read the whole letter. Perhaps I had better begin at the beginning:—"79 & 82, Temple Chambers, Temple Avenue, 31st May, 1906. POPULAR INQUIRY. Dear Sir,—I have to acknowledge your letter of yesterday's date forwarding me copy of the correspondence which you have had with the guardians of the Poplar Union with reference to the Inquiry which, I understand, is to open on Thursday, the 7th June. With reference to the last paragraph but one of the clerk of the guardians' letter of the 25th inst, I am not aware what authority there is for the assumption by the guardians that my clients have undertaken to bring forward charges against them at the forthcoming Inquiry. If you will refer to the correspondence I have had with the Local Government Board, I think you will find that all my clients have asked is that they might be legally represented at the Inquiry, and be given the opportunity of making a statement, of cross-examining witnesses, and of tendering evidence. However, I agree that it is reasonable that the guardians should know to some extent the nature of the case they have to meet and I am willing, therefore, on behalf of my clients, to indicate in general terms the matters to which they propose to draw attention at the Inquiry. It must, however, be distinctly understood that in giving this information for the convenience of the guardians my clients must not be taken to have in any way suggested the limitation of the scope of the Inquiry or bound themselves as to the

"nature of the case they intend to present or the evidence they propose to call in support thereof. Subject to these reservations I would state that the general nature of the case my clients intend to present at the Inquiry is (as the guardians are well aware) that they have been guilty of wasteful and deliberate extravagance, and that instead of administering the Poor Law with judgment and discretion, they have unduly and improperly fostered and increased the pauperism of the district. It is obviously impossible at the present time and in the absence of the books of account, contracts, tenders, &c., of which my clients have been unable to obtain production, to state in detail the whole of my clients' criticism and complaints concerning the guardians' administration, but amongst other matters my clients propose at the Inquiry to deal with the following subjects:—1. The general system of contracting for supplies, including rejection of low-priced tenders without good reason. 2. General system of administering out-door relief, and appointing and entrusting sums of money to relieving officers. 3. Indiscriminate and wasteful granting of out-door relief both in money and food without proper investigation or regard to the circumstances of applicants. 4. System of managing farm colonies and cost of maintaining paupers thereat. 5. Omissions to provide suitable work or tasks for paupers. 6. General method of appointing, administering and remunerating the staff and the conduct of the master, matron, and other officers, and the circumstances attending their proposed resignations. 7. The provision of refreshments at the cost of the union for certain of the guardians. 8. Extravagant expenditure upon the school buildings, &c. 9. The method of preparing the annual financial and statistical statements and abstract of accounts and certain inconsistencies and variations appearing therein. Yours faithfully, (Signed) E. ELVY ROBB." I only want to refer to 4, 8, and 9; up to the present time Mr. Robb, I think I am right in saying, has put forward no facts or evidence. They may be coming. We have received on 25th June this letter from Mr. Robb. Same address, 25th June, 1906. Addressed to Mr. Lough, the clerk to the Poplar board of guardians:—"POPULAR INQUIRY. Dear Sir, In view of the desire expressed by the Inspector to expedite this Inquiry as much as possible, I venture to ask if you can furnish me with the following information:—1. A return dealing with the generation of electricity for power and lighting at Poplar Workhouse and comprising the following details: (a) Capital cost of plant and installation of date. (b) The annual expenditure under all heads, including interest and sinking fund (if any), wages, material, depreciation, and other outgoings. (c) Number of units generated per annum for the last three years and number of units actually used for power, lighting, or other purposes during the like period. 2. A return of the travelling and other expenses incurred by the guardians, officials, and colonists during the past three years in going to and from the various farm colonies. 3. A return of the cost of maintaining Laindon Farm Colony since its inception, such return to include the cost of maintaining colonists, salaries, and cost of maintenance of the staff, sinking fund charges, maintenance and repairs to motor waggon and plant generally, keep of horses, and payment or allowance to dependents of colonists. 4. A return showing the expense paid or allowed on behalf of each guardian during the past three years in respect of journeys and cognate matters. 5. A return as to the total amount expended upon the medical officer's residence, distinguishing between site and structure. 6. A return as to the expenses incurred in respect of the proposed home or hospital for phthisical patients in the Isle of Wight. I think you will agree with me that it is important that the foregoing information should be supplied in the course of the present Inquiry, and that it is impossible to elicit it from the published accounts. I don't hesitate to state that if you will furnish the foregoing information it would obviate the evidence of several witnesses.—I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully, E. ELVY ROBB."

In regard to 2 and 4 in which they ask for a return of travelling expenses and expenses allowed to the guardians, this shall be prepared at once and handed to Mr. Robb by Saturday, or, at latest, Monday morning. In your opinion, are the other things such as ought to be asked of us when we are in the middle of the Inquiry, when we still haven't a full case presented in the evidence, and

when all our officials are more than overwhelmed in work in preparing the defence of the guardians. I will tell you on Monday what time the other figures can be supplied, and if the Local Government Board have no objection to our engaging an extra staff to supply information, we shall do it at once. I think the ratepayers of this union ought not to be charged with the expense of providing further information to the Poplar Alliance, especially as they are so wealthy a body and can bear the expense.

(*The Inspector.*) That is a suggestion on the part of Mr. Robb to save time. I cannot ask for these returns except as a matter of courtesy, but I can compel the production of the books.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Is that so?

(*The Inspector.*) Yes.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I thought you sent your officials down and took it from our books, and we could not prevent you.

(*The Inspector.*) That is so. I have no doubt one of our ordinary staff could do it.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Would it not be fairer to get it out?

(*The Inspector.*) I think it would.

(*Mr. Grant.*) It would be fairer in every way if you would accept that suggestion at once.

(*The Inspector.*) The only thing is, is it necessary?

(*Mr. Grant.*) Mr. Robb thinks it is necessary.

(*The Inspector.*) If so we had better postpone the consideration of what we shall do. There is one return here which I think is very important to the guardians and everybody, and that is the return as to the cost at Landon.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I think the most important was the two items asked for on the return of what they had spent on these.

(*The Inspector.*) And probably is the most important for the guardians. As to number 6, have you got a proposal for a home for phthisical cases in the Isle of Wight?

(*Mr. Lough.*) It is a proposal laid before the Local Government Board at the time. If you are in a hurry, Mr. Robb—

(*Mr. Robb.*) I am not in a hurry, but if my clients had access to the books they would get this information out readily. They don't want to put the guardians to expense. I attach very great importance to that item regarding the electric light installation and unless I get that return I shall ask to put Mr. Giles, the electrical engineer, in the box, and I shall have to go through all these details with him.

(*The Inspector.*) We will see if we can, and I shall consider how best to do it.

(*Mr. Grant.*) We shall prepare 2 and 4 at once and the other items the Local Government Board will undertake to prepare or tell us where to prepare them. One other matter of far more importance than what I have been dealing with and for which I am going to ask for your kind permission, the persons whose characters were besmirched in this room last week. Crosbie charged wholesale robbery, drunkenness against Mr. McCarthy and adultery between Mr. McCarthy and Mrs. Madeley.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I did not hear him.

(*Mr. Grant.*) He over and over again charged it on the notes and I shall show you.

(*The Inspector.*) I know—

(*Mr. Grant.*) I ask you first of all to hear. First as to wholesale robbery, you will remember what happened. You asked Mr. Crooks to have it investigated, and Mr. Robb said he had information in his possession about it, and that Mr. Robb refused to—

(*The Inspector.*) Mr. Robb offered to give Mr. Crooks all the information in his power, and I suggested that would be the best way—trusting Mr. Crooks to protect the property. It was you who would insist upon going on. The advantage of Mr. Robb giving the information was not to cross-examine.

(*Mr. Grant.*) It is in the shorthand notes.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I ask my friend to show me—Mr. Corrie Grant, I asked on the shorthand notes not to cross-examine Crosbie.

(*The Inspector.*) We will clear it up.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I am accused of making a condition that Mr. Corrie Grant should not cross-examine. Mr. Grant

says it is on the shorthand notes. If it is I shall admit it, but I ask Mr. Corrie Grant to refer me to them.

(*The Inspector.*) I have no recollection of it. I am greatly disappointed that part of the case is gone into.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I know from Crosbie's statement; I knew from what he had said the day before that it was an exceedingly disagreeable matter. I offered to discontinue the further evidence of Crosbie and offered to give any information I had, and Mr. Grant insisted upon going on, and if anyone's character was besmirched it was Mr. Corrie Grant who was solely responsible.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I am reading from the third page of the shorthand notes:—"The Inspector: As to the order of calling the relieving officers. Mr. Grant: The first witness is Crosbie. I haven't had an opportunity of cross-examination. The Inspector: I hoped— Mr. Grant: I haven't asked him anything yet. The Inspector: If you in cross-examination leave that part of the case in reference to— Mr. Grant: I give no undertaking to leave any part of the case. The Inspector: Then the agreement between Mr. Crooks and myself is at an end. Mr. Crooks: The information as to the removal of goods? Mr. Robb: I am not going to be dictated to by Mr. Corrie Grant as to what I have to do. I came to what I thought was a fair arrangement to expedite the proceedings with Mr. Crooks. Last night Mr. Crooks asked for this information and said he would take steps at once to probe the matter to the bottom, and prosecute, if necessary, any persons. The learned counsel takes a course at variance with that taken by Mr. Crooks. It is a somewhat peculiar course. Mr. Grant: This is the first I have heard of any arrangement. As to the statement made there was no undertaking on Mr. Crook's part that we should not go into any case at all. All Mr. Crooks said was that he was getting the information about the alleged thefts; he would put the police in possession of that at once and do his utmost to prosecute to a conviction if Mr. Robb chooses to give information and take criminal proceedings. The Inspector: I said at the beginning of the proceedings that the charges and what it amounted to was misappropriation of stores. It had nothing to do with the guardians; and I think the guardians might be trusted in this matter to protect the property of the union, and I suggest, with the concurrence of Mr. Crooks and Mr. Robb, that Mr. Robb should give to Mr. Crooks all the evidence he had, on the understanding, of course—I rely upon Mr. Crooks implicitly—that Mr. Crooks will take such steps as he deems necessary to protect the property of the union. There the case closes. Mr. Grant: That is the first I have heard of it. If it is to be in any way, I have not the least objection if you say the charge put forward of allowing the master to steal the stores of the guardians, of which Crosbie was speaking, is now swept out of the Inquiry altogether. Mr. Robb: I will not submit to this. I will not enter into any contract and I withdraw every offer made to the learned counsel. Mr. Grant: That is far the better way. I never made any arrangements behind the backs of the public. Whatever the arrangement was, let Mr. Robb keep his information, whatever he has got. We will get it from another source. The Inspector: This does not expedite the Inquiry. What I am anxious to do, for the sake of the guardians, was to clear their characters at all events. It continues the Inquiry in the rut of the workhouse. Mr. Grant: That we cannot help. The Inquiry has been taken in a peculiar way. The Inspector: Call the next witness. Mr. Robb: I regret the necessity to go into a disagreeable matter which possibly does not affect the guardians at all, but I am driven to the position of having to go into that disagreeable matter which personally I would prefer not to do. Mr. Corrie Grant's blood must be upon his own head."

(*Mr. Robb.*) Mr. Corrie Grant, one moment. I ask you to show me any justification of the assertion you made that I imposed a condition on you with reference to the cross-examination.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I am not concerned—

(*Mr. Robb.*) Yes you are concerned. You get up and deliberately charge me with having imposed on you certain conditions and you undertook to substantiate that charge or assertion from the shorthand note. I ask you as a member of the Bar, to withdraw that statement or substantiate it.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Mr. Robb seems to be under a misapprehension. I have not to justify my conduct to him.

(The Inspector.) You offered, Mr. Grant, to justify what you said from the shorthand note.

(Mr. Grant.) And the shorthand notes do justify.

(The Inspector.) No.

(Mr. Grant.) The shorthand notes don't do so? I don't quite understand.

(Mr. Robb.) I want that point cleared up. I am being perpetually misrepresented, and I object to this chronic misrepresentation.

(The Inspector.) I think the matter has gone quite far enough. I regret it very much indeed, because I feel that if the examination went on these lines we should be going into matters which would be very unfair to the persons whose names are mentioned because unfortunately people take a hard view. It is difficult to catch up with these assertions, and therefore I feel that it would be perfectly fair to leave the question of the property of the guardians to Mr. Crooks. We are in this unfortunate position, that persons wish to say that evidence is not true.

(Mr. Grant.) Very good.

(The Inspector.) I am going to take a very unusual course, not with reference to the removal of goods, but with reference to the personal aspect of the question, and I will allow Mr. McCarthy an opportunity of denying—

(Mr. Grant.) And Mrs. Madeley—

(The Inspector.) Of course, an opportunity of denying statements made with reference to themselves.

(Mr. Grant.) We must not be afraid of the truth.

(The Inspector.) We are not afraid of the truth, as you say.

(Mr. Robb.) What will that involve, sir. I cannot object to Mr. McCarthy and Mrs. Madeley going into the box and giving denials on that. But, if the evidence goes further, I may have to consider the possibility of calling other evidence after.

(Mr. Grant.) I have no objection to that.

(The Inspector.) I have the greatest objection. This is a charge which is a large charge—a charge of general extravagance on the part of the guardians in administration, and we are in the unhappy position of mixing other charges up with that—of mixing up with the larger charge matters of this shameful and terrible description.

(Mr. Grant.) May I suggest that Mrs. Madeley's character is just as valuable to her as that of any other woman in the land.

(The Inspector.) Certainly.

(Mr. Grant.) What I propose to do is this. I propose first of all to call your attention to evidence with regard to the wholesale robbery, and then I propose to call the solicitor, Mr. Marsh, who will tell you that there is no truth in the assertion at all. Then I will call Mr. McCarthy and ask him what he has to say with regard to the charge of drunkenness against him, and the charge of adultery, and then Mrs. Madeley and ask her—

(The Inspector.) I cannot have that. If Mr. McCarthy wants to go into the box in that sort of way, and we have other things besides the personal matter introduced, and if he were to be cross-examined it might alter the whole trend of the Inquiry and other guardians would want to go into the box.

(Mr. Grant.) I told you that, although a number of guardians were charged in that way, I did not intend to call them before the case of the Local Government Board had finished. Before the witness went into the box I did not know what Mr. Crosbie was going to say.

(The Inspector.) I did not know what he was going to say, I can tell you.

(Mr. Robb.) Since the last day of the Inquiry I have received a letter from Mr. Marsh—

(The Inspector.) I am not in the position of presiding over a court. Mr. Robb wishes to help me. Here we have been sitting for an hour and have got no further advanced. How can you help me, Mr. Robb?

(Mr. Robb.) I suggest that the matter be left in abeyance for the moment. I don't believe that the guardians have made their investigations yet. I understand that the whole arrangement has been repudiated, as appears from the shorthand note, Mr. Corrie Grant said,

"Let Mr. Robb get his information." I have received on the 23rd June this letter from Mr. Marsh, solicitor:—"71, East India Dock Road, Poplar, E. Dear Sir,—You offered to give the guardians all the information in your possession relative to the alleged removal of the guardians' stores from the workhouse by the late matron or late master so as to enable the guardians to make full enquiry and to take original proceedings in respect thereof, which they will do if the necessary evidence is obtainable for the substantiation of and proving such a charge. Will you kindly let me have the same and the names of witnesses who can give the necessary evidence. Yours truly, ERNEST J. MARSH." I replied to that—"Dear Sir,—I am in receipt of your letter of the 23rd. You appear to have overlooked the fact that as counsel representing the guardians did not acquiesce in the Inspector's suggestions, I withdrew my offer and stated that I declined to enter into any compact. I am under the impression however, that if the guardians will question their own officials and the inmates named by Mr. Crosbie in the court and his evidence they will have no difficulty in eliciting the facts. If, however, I have been incorrect in this surmise and you will let me hear further from you upon the subject I will, notwithstanding the fact that the arrangement was disclaimed by the guardians, take my clients' instructions upon the matter. Yours faithfully, E. ELVY ROBB." That means, sir, that if the guardians could not get the necessary information from the workhouse any further information at my disposal and subject to my clients' approval might be given to them. Well, sir, I don't think this Inquiry should be interrupted and that there should be interposed in the box the evidence of every person whose name may be mentioned incidentally in the course of the proceedings. It is inevitable that in the course of an Inquiry such as this that reflections be made on persons. It is most regrettable. These reflections are not made by persons I represent. They are made by persons in the box. There is a proper time for refuting any such charges and I suggest for the purpose of preserving continuity of the proceedings we should wait until the proper time when these people can go into the box. If Mr. McCarthy goes into the box I must subject him to a long cross-examination, and therefore I do plead that the continuity of the proceedings may be preserved.

(Mr. Grant.) May I point out before you give your decision that it is not in the least necessary to subject Mr. McCarthy to a long searching cross-examination, because in the first place Mr. McCarthy is simply going into the box specifically to deal with charges of drunkenness and stealing food. I will put him in the box again and examine him at considerable length with regard to his connection with the management of the workhouse. But I think that when a man's personal honour is impeached, as Mr. McCarthy's has been, and a woman's chastity is impeached, as Mrs. Madeley's has been, it is hard to say you will wait until the end of the proceedings to give them an opportunity of denying those charges. It is a proceeding I have never heard of in a court of justice. I agree that this is not a court of justice, but a Local Government Board Inquiry, but the same argument applies just as well.

(The Inspector.) I am much obliged for the suggestion in your last words, Mr. Corrie Grant. What I propose to do, and intend to do, is to put Mr. McCarthy and Mrs. Madeley in the box and question them. But I won't allow any question to be asked except by me, and on the understanding that they won't be cross-examined now.

(Mr. Grant.) May I suggest then, sir, that those are rather unfair terms to me?

(The Inspector.) I cannot help it.

(Mr. Grant.) Surely I may point out that it is unfair that my witnesses may not be examined by me, but by you.

(The Inspector.) These witnesses are not your witnesses for this purpose. They are simply here as an act of grace to enable them to, as far as possible, undo what evil was done at the last examination.

(Mr. Grant.) I ask then that Mr. Marsh may go into the box and tell you what enquiry he has made into these charges of wholesale robbery.

(Mr. Robb.) Then I will ask you—

(The Inspector.) We will do as I said.

(Mr. Grant.) I will ask Mr. McCarthy first.

Mr. J. T. MCCARTHY, Guardian; sworn and examined.

Mr. McCarthy. (The Inspector.) What is your name?—J. T. McCarthy.

28 June. Q. Is there any truth in the allegation?—

(Mr. Grant.) Surely you will ask him what he is and how long he has been in the district.

(The Inspector.) That will come later on?—I have lived in the district all my life.

Q. What is your occupation?—Civil Servant.

Q. In the Post Office?—Yes, at Clerkenwell.

Q. How long have you been a guardian?—Since February, 1903.

Q. And you are chairman of the workhouse visiting committee?—Yes.

Q. Is there any truth—

(Mr. Grant.) I am sorry to interrupt. I did not hear the answer to the last question. There is no reason why the witness should not keep up his voice?—I have been a guardian since February, 1903, and I am at present chairman of the workhouse visiting committee.

(The Inspector.) Did you hear the evidence given by Mr. Crosbie?—No, I did not.

Q. Is there any truth in the allegation which he made that he had seen you in a compromising position with the matron?—Not the slightest.

Mrs. MADELEY, late Matron of the Workhouse; sworn and examined.

Mrs. Madeley. (The Inspector.) Mrs. Madeley, what is your name?—Mrs. Madeley.

28 June. Q. How long have you been matron of the workhouse?—12½ years.

Q. Is there any truth in the allegation made by the witness that he had seen Mr. McCarthy and yourself in a compromising position?—The whole thing the man has said is a tissue of falsehoods from beginning to end. I deny everything. It is an infamous lie from beginning to end.

(Mr. Grant.) Will you ask Mrs. Madeley why she resigned her position, because I know and you know and the guardians know.

(Mr. Robb.) Are we going into this. If that question is asked—

(Mr. Grant.) Will you, Mr. Robb, keep quiet? This is a most infamous thing. It is known to Mr. Robb, to Mrs. Madeley, and you, sir, as well as to the guardians. You shut her mouth.

(The Inspector.) I don't know what you mean.

(Mr. Grant.) I mean the adultery between the master and the nurse.

(The Inspector.) What has that to do with Mrs. Madeley?

(Mr. Grant.) Why it has driven her out of her post. Her husband was master. He committed adultery and by reason of the action of the Local Government Board Mrs. Madeley was removed from her office to poverty.

(The Inspector.) The reason you resigned was because the master resigned?

(Mr. Grant.) He was dismissed and did not resign.

(Mr. Robb.) It is understood that at the proper time these witnesses will be called and submit themselves to cross-examination. Well now, sir, that indulgence having been granted to the guardians, I have to ask a little indulgence at your hands.

(The Inspector.) Don't call that an indulgence.

(Mr. Robb.) An act of justice then.

(The Inspector.) I want to be fair all round.

(Mr. Robb.) Perhaps I should not have put it that way. Your correction is a just one. I am going to ask to interpose with a witness who will only take a few minutes. That is Mr. Palmer, who I will undertake to call on the question of the dust pans. He has to leave and he tells me he may have to be away some weeks and if I don't call him now I will lose his evidence. It is very important. I think I gave Mr. Lansbury an undertaking that I would call him.

Q. Do you wish to add anything?—I wish to deny most emphatically any suggestion made with respect to the matron and myself.

Q. You deny that there has been any misconduct?—Absolutely and most emphatically I deny it.

(The Inspector.) I don't think there is anything else.

(Mr. Grant.) But there is something.

(The Inspector.) I don't think there is anything in the evidence as to the removal of goods.

(Mr. Grant.) But I want you to ask Mr. McCarthy one or two other questions. I want you to ask him when he first heard of this charge that he had committed adultery with Mrs. Madeley?—I never heard it before until I read it in the newspapers.

Q. And I want to ask him, had he had any communication from the Local Government Board or from Mr. Robb telling him that such a charge was going to be made against him?

(The Inspector.) Of course he has not.

(Mr. Robb.) The charge was not made by us.

(Witness.) No, I have not.

(The Inspector.) The master resigned through ill-health, so the guardians say. The master resigned on the 5th April and wrote a letter to the guardians saying he resigned his position. And on the 14th we had a letter from the guardians enclosing a medical certificate or certificates.

(Mr. Grant.) And then what followed?

(The Inspector.) He was given leave to resign, and the resignation was to take effect on the 25th June, and on the 20th we dismissed him, in order to prevent him getting a pension which he had not earned.

(Mr. Grant.) When you heard of the scandal. And because Mr. McCarthy was trying to do all he could to keep this woman in her position, he was charged with guzzling at the expense of the ratepayers.

(Witness.) I entirely deny all the allegations made by the man Crosbie. There is no truth whatever in his statements.

(The Inspector.) I should have asked you more specifically with regard to the removal of the goods?—What about them?

Q. It was suggested that the goods which were removed were not your property?—Not my property? I removed nothing but what belonged to me. It cannot be proved that I did otherwise. You must remember that I have been 12½ years in the workhouse and had a great accumulation which anyone would have who spent such a long time in a place. There were many large things, such as a piano, a sewing-machine, a great quantity of books, china ornaments, and other things, and I employed a large pantechinon to remove them, and I suppose I had a right to remove them and I did it.

Q. At any rate, you deny the statements made?—I totally deny what the man said.

(Mr. Lansbury.) The understanding was that we should have the man who supplied the evidence and hear what he had to say. It is unfair to bring the witness and say it is done because I asked for it. This man has libelled the whole of the council. This man is an infamous liar.

(A ratepayer.) Can you prove that?

(Mr. Grant.) Quiet, Lansbury. You are spoiling your own case.

(Mr. Robb.) I ask that that gentleman may be allowed to come into the box at once as an act of justice and repudiate the statement that he is an infamous liar made by Mr. Lansbury, surely a gratuitous insult.

(Mr. Lansbury.) No, it is not.

(Mr. Grant.) Lansbury, go out of the room, if you won't keep quiet. I cannot go on with the case. It is quite impossible to conduct this Inquiry when other

people interfere with it. Mrs. Madeley sat here and Mr. McCarthy sat here and heard their characters assailed and they did not interfere, and their characters are as valuable to them as Mr. Lansbury's is to him. You must sit and wait patiently.

(Mr. Robb.) I have not heard Mr. Lansbury's character assailed. I have said I should call Mr. Palmer, and it comes like a bombshell.

(Mr. Grant.) The suggestion is that when Mr. Robb said Mr. Palmer was called there was a pledge given to Mr. Lansbury that whenever Mr. Palmer was called another person should be called.

(Mr. Robb.) I call for the shorthand notes again. Please prove from the notes, Mr. Grant. These inaccuracies, these constant inaccuracies, are a little trying. I ask you to prove from the shorthand notes the statement that I gave a pledge to call another person. My promise was made when the Inspector said, "Of course, Mr. Robb will call Mr. Palmer," and I said it would be so. I gave Mr. Lansbury an undertaking that I would call Mr. Palmer. Mr. Palmer has to go away, and when I want to fulfil my undertaking and put him in the box there is all this hubbub.

(Mr. Grant.) The whole of the guardians did not know of these charges, and I am uninstructed as to them. For a large portion I have to take Mr. Lansbury's words as to what happened about Mr. Palmer. The suggestion is that if Mr. Lansbury is right there was such an undertaking, and if Mr. Palmer is going into the box the other witness should be here, and both heard at the same time.

(The Inspector.) Who is the man?

(Mr. Robb.) He is not going to attack anyone. He is simply going to say that the guardians paid an extravagant price for certain articles in the workhouse at their discretion in making such purchases. There is no attack on anyone.

(Mr. Grant.) At the present time I am in ignorance. I don't know what the articles are, and don't know whether it is in the shorthand notes. I have not been able to study the shorthand notes.

(Mr. Robb.) I think it is a great pity Mr. Grant has not studied the shorthand notes.

(The Inspector.) Both of you gentlemen are under a pledge to me to expedite the Inquiry, and it is clearly to the interest of your clients that the Inquiry should be expedited. From time to time we appear to forget that this is not a trial, but an Inquiry by the Local Government Board, and I am certain that many things about tenders, contracts, &c., will be of great assistance to the guardians.

(Mr. Palmer then entered the box.)

(The Inspector.) How far are you going away?—Sir—

(Mr. Robb.) Speak out, Mr. Palmer.

Mr. J. W. PALMER: sworn and examined.

(Mr. Robb.) Now, Mr. Palmer, are you sworn?—Yes.

Q. Where do you live?—213, Bow Road.

Q. What are you?—Director of the Bow Iron and Metal Works.

(The Inspector.) And have you another occupation?—Also a common lodging-house keeper.

(Mr. Robb.) In November last did you supply some dust-bins for the use of the guardians?—Yes, sir.

Q. What was the size of those?—24 by 18.

Q. What was your ordinary price each for those dust-bins?—Our ordinary price, not galvanized, is 45s. a dozen, after being galvanized, 48s.

Q. That is 4s. 6d. each?—Yes.

Q. Will you put in the price list?—Yes.

Q. 4s. 6d. each?—And galvanized after, 4s. and 5s.

Q. Do you know of your own knowledge what price the guardians paid?—I know what price they were going to pay.

Q. What?—14s. 6d.

Q. 14s. 6d.?—Yes.

Q. They paid 14s. 6d. for an article which is in your list at 4s. 6d. each?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Are you going to leave the district?—No, sir, but I am a traveller and may be away. As Mr. Lansbury has called me a liar both in the council and other places, I wish to give evidence. I knew the guardians wanted some articles, and—

(Mr. Grant.) Please, if you are going to give evidence that is another matter?—I am called a liar by your clients, and I think I am as much entitled as Mr. McCarthy to go into the box.

(The Inspector.) That comes from being soft-hearted. We are getting into irregularities, but I suppose the information is valuable as to prices.

(Mr. Grant.) If we are going to have his evidence I must have him recalled.

(The Inspector.) Are you going away?—Oh, yes, I am going away for about four days each week in the summer.

(Mr. Robb.) We can take his evidence in ten minutes.

(The Inspector.) But then we may want him for cross-examination.

(Mr. Robb.) He has valuable evidence to give with regard to the figures, and I may lose his evidence if he is not allowed to go into the box.

(The Inspector.) It is with reference to the prices for certain articles? I cannot summon him from more than ten miles?—I am prepared to come if it is urgent, and I am wanted for cross-examination.

(The Inspector.) You see my difficulty is this, I should like to take this witness. As I say, this is not a trial but an Inquiry, and he gives certain evidence and documents which may not be in the possession of the guardians—

(Mr. Robb.) They can enquire into them.

(The Inspector.) The guardians are anxious about this. The witness says he is going away, and I want to feel sure he will turn up for cross-examination?—I will undertake to do so, and Mr. Robb can have me at any time if he will give me 24 hours' notice.

(Mr. Grant.) Then why cannot he be called at some future time?

(The Inspector.) I think we had better have him.

(Mr. Grant.) I am entirely in your hands. I don't take any part in it.

(Mr. Robb.) I will be very brief.

(The Inspector.) You give evidence as a matter of convenience now, and pledge yourself to turn up for cross-examination?—Yes. May I just say a word with regard to what Mr. Lansbury said just now. I am not going to pass any aspersion on any firm, or the firm of Walber, of Millwall. Mr. Lansbury makes out that I am libelling that firm—

(The Inspector.) They don't make out anything of the sort.

Q. How did that come about?—Messrs. Walber, of Millwall, with whom we had business, rang me up on the telephone and asked me would I look at some things at Poplar Workhouse. Not caring to go to the Workhouse myself, I sent the foreman, who came back and told me what it was. Walber asked what we thought he should get, and I suggested 14s. 6d.

Q. Why did you tell him to charge 14s. 6d.?—Because I know on an average what they pay for most of their things.

Q. How?—It was common knowledge in Bow. I consulted a number of contractors and they suggested that we should try and get 10s. 6d. to see what the guardians would do. We suggested 10s. 6d., which they agreed to pay.

Q. 10s. 6d. for what?—For dust-bins.

Q. 10s. 6d. each?—Yes.

Q. I haven't that here?—45s. a dozen, and galvanized after, 6d. extra.

Q. How came it you charged Walber 10s. 6d., and that Walber charged the guardians 14s. 6d., for what you supplied at 4s. 6d.?—If the guardians are paying 14s. 6d., I, as a ratepayer, am entitled to some of my own back.

Q. I have it. That was a test?—Yes, sir, it was.

Mr. Palmer,

28 June,

Mr. Palmer.
28 June.

(The Inspector.) How many did you sell?—Two dust-bins and three water-carriers.

(Mr. Robb.) What is the price of the water-carriers?—18s. 6d. we charge for them.

Q. What is your ordinary price?—Half-a-guinea.

Q. Are they in this price list?—No, they are things not very often wanted.

Q. If you look at that invoice, the top item, you will see the guardians paid Mr. Walber 25s. 6d. You also supplied meat-hooks and skewers?—A few days previous.

Q. I think in Mr. Walber's invoice they are 9s. 6d. the gross?—Yes. They are things we never make as a rule.

Q. 9s. 6d. for ten dozen?—I have got the invoice.

Q. Let me clear this up. Look at these items marked in pencil on the fourth sheet. Four dozen meat-hooks; six dozen long skewers; 9s. 6d. for the ten dozen.—Yes, sir.

Q. What is the market price of these articles per gross?—We don't make them as a rule, but we laughed at the article and charged 6s. a gross. I find they could be got for 2s. 6d. a gross.

Q. A gross?—Yes.

Q. The guardians paid 9s. 6d. for ten dozen of the articles which you can buy at 2s. 6d. a gross at the meat market?—Yes.

Q. How do you account for that?—I could not tell you at all. I may say I saw Mr. Lansbury about other articles, but you see the result, I am afterwards called a liar.

Q. Have you offered to give information?—Yes, on the council business.

Q. You offered to give the guardians information?—No, through the guardians.

Q. Offered to give Mr. Lansbury information?—Yes. He got 22 votes to 11.

Q. For what purpose? Was it information to the same effect as this evidence?—It was rather more serious.

(The Inspector.) We cannot go into that.

(Mr. Robb.) Was your offer accepted?—No.

Q. It was not accepted. Did you do this as a test?—This was previous to that.

Q. It comes to this, that the price charged for the dust-bins was about 200 per cent. too much?—Quite so. I may say it was the best order we have had.

(The Inspector.) What is the total amount you got for these bins?—10s. 6d. each.

Q. How many?—Only two.

(Mr. Robb.) How much for the skewers?—6s. a gross.

Q. But you only got 9s. 6d. in all?—They got ten dozen in all.

Q. The listed price per dozen for dust-bins is 45s. Do you supply one?—We should not supply one under 4s. 6d. You will see from our invoice the average is 4s. 6d. or 5s.

Q. For an individual one?—Half-galvanised. Yes.

Q. The guardians did pay 200 per cent. in excess of the market price?—Yes.

Q. On that article?—Yes.

Q. As you told us somewhat similar cases were the water-carriers and the hooks and skewers?—Yes.

Q. You keep a lodging-house, don't you? One or two?—Three.

Q. Have you got a book left with you by one of the relieving officers?—Yes.

Q. I ask you to hand that in. That is a book for admission to the workhouse?—Yes, sir. We have had several, but that is the last one.

Q. Who handed you that?—The relieving officer.

Q. Which one?—Mr. Gard.

Q. Was that for all your houses, or for one?—For one house.

Q. Which house?—The Working Man's Home, in Bow Road.

Q. How many have been used since November last?—About 73.

Q. 73 is it?—Yes.

Q. Have you counted them?—I counted them this morning.

Q. Why didn't you fill up the counterfoils?—It is a nuisance altogether. Most of them stop one night in Bow to get to the workhouse, and we are bound to fill up the forms. In October I got disgusted and refused to fill up the books and burned them. Mr. Gard said he would take it as a personal favour if I would fill them up.

Q. Why did you burn them?—I burned them the same night Mr. Lansbury called me a liar in the Council Chamber.

Q. Why didn't you fill up the counterfoils properly?—Mostly they come round to our Ironworks Office. We turned it up. We didn't keep a staff of clerks to fill the Poplar Workhouse.

Q. Do you give to anyone who applies?—Yes.

Q. Why?—Bound to, according to the relieving officers.

Q. Who told you?—The relieving officers.

Q. Which one?—Mr. Gard.

Q. Told you you were bound to give to anyone who stopped one night?—No. We refused once, and he came round and said he demands an order.

(The Inspector) (reading) "The following particulars required—To give name and address, and religion." That is not an order of admission?—That is to send a man to the relieving officer.

Q. Merely for the information of the relieving officer?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) What is the form of that. Do they get orders upon that?

(The Inspector.) They may or may not?—We have men at our Stratford house. They come to Bow and lodge there one night and ask for a ticket to go to the Poplar Workhouse. Nine out of ten cases they get it.

(Mr. Grant.) You don't know that?—Yes. We have the bed empty.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you ever known a man being refused and coming back?—Only when he had seen the Doctor, and was unfit to go into the Asylum.

Q. How many men have you issued these kind of tickets to during the last three years?—The orders haven't been in existence more than 18 months. Previous to that we sent a piece of paper with the name and age on.

Q. How many have you sent in three years?—The average would be about 70 for seven months.

Q. What would it be in Poplar?—About 300 I should think.

Q. About 300?—Quite. In the winter we send more than in the summer.

Q. How many of these men have you known to go back the next night to resume their beds?—Not ten per cent.

(The Inspector.) In common lodging-houses they don't go back as a rule?—We have regular men in and out for ten years, and we know what a casual is and what are not.

Q. And when they fall ill you offer the relieving officer certain information?—

(Mr. Robb.) It amounts to something more than that. You told us you were informed by relieving officer Gard that you were bound to do this for every man?—Yes.

Q. What did he tell you?—First of all he said I was legally bound to do it. When I told him I was not, he said he would take it as a personal favour if I would do it, because if I didn't he had to inquire about each one who went.

Q. Can you say of your own knowledge if men have been attracted to Poplar from other districts?—Yes. Seventy from the Stratford lodging-house stopped one night in Bow and asked for an order.

Q. Why did they come to Poplar?—Because they didn't like West Ham.

Q. What is the attraction in Poplar?—I could not tell you.

(Mr. Grant.) The witness never used the word attraction. The word attraction was put into his mouth by Mr. Robb, as usual?—I know of no attraction. The only attraction I know of is 12s. in the £.

(Mr. Robb.) You say you know of your own personal knowledge that there has been an influx of people from other districts into Poplar?—Yes.

Q. And you instance 70 men from your own lodging-house in Stratford?—Yes.

Q. Who came here one night and qualified for the house?—Yes. There is one man in the house who has been regular for five years. He goes into the country for the summer and comes back in the winter. Davies is in the house to-day.

Q. That is a case, the case of an inmate named Davies?—Yes, he has done it for years. He makes a boast that he has never worked for years. He is over 61.

Q. His age is 61?—All give their ages over 60.

(The Inspector.) You don't know?—Yes, I have had ten years' experience.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you say you know of your own knowledge they misrepresent their ages?—I do, sir.

Q. Have instances come under your personal notice?—Yes, a man in the House named Griffiths.

Q. What about him?—He is over 60. I happen to know he is 51. He used to work for us.

Q. I want to be clear about the case of this man Davies. Is he a native of Poplar?—No.

Q. Do you know where he comes from?—Hastings, originally.

Q. What do you say exactly his procedure is?—Well, sir, he was generally among our men on his Sunday out. He comes about a week.

Q. To your lodging-house?—Yes, and then goes away to the country for the summer and comes back about September, stops about three nights and returns to Poplar Workhouse.

Q. For the winter?—Yes.

Q. He has done that for years?—

(The Inspector.) How do you know he has not a settlement in Poplar?—I have known him eight years and he has never settled more than a week, barring being in the union.

(Mr. Robb.) Have other instances come under your notice?—I don't know the men's names, but there are dozens of men in the workhouse; if I saw them I could tell.

Q. Is this sort of thing that you describe to us, coming to your house for one night?—It is a common occurrence. If you turn up the guardians' books you will find 70 per cent. of them for one or three nights.

Q. To what do you attribute that sort of thing?—I haven't been in Poplar Workhouse. I made a point of not going there.

Q. You are not able to explain this great influx?—No. One man, who was about 30, said he was never asked to do a day's work when there.

Q. I don't want that. I want your experience and knowledge as a common lodging-house keeper?—One half of the men who go from the lodging-houses are a fraud.

Q. Half the men who go from the lodging-houses?—Yes.

Q. Why do you say that?—I have seen so much of it. We have had a man with bad legs. They make them bad in the winter and go out in the spring-time.

Q. Personal instances?—Two or three.

(The Inspector.) Have you done, Mr. Robb?

(Mr. Robb.) Yes.

(The Inspector.) You mean to make your return? We shall have to find whether your Poplar men went to other workhouses and so on.

(Mr. Grant.) Can we have Mr. Palmer's invoices?—You can have copies of the cost. I object to my books being turned over as Mr. Jacobs' were. I shall leave copies.

(The Inspector.) Do you mind having them torn out?

(Mr. Grant.) I don't want to see the book. I am contented with the proof. When the witness was in the

box just now he said if the other pages were examined he said they would verify what he said?—I am prepared to show them to Mr. Davy, but I am not prepared to let Mr. Lansbury see them.

Q. You are imitating Mr. Robb?—No, Mr. Lansbury called me a liar on several occasions.

Q. Mr. Lansbury did not call you his friend?

(The Inspector.) Mr. Corrie Grant, have you seen these documents.

(Mr. Grant.) I haven't seen them.

(The Inspector.) You would like to?

(Mr. Grant.) I wish to cross-examine and I wish to impound all documents as far as I can. I ask you to impound all Mr. Palmer has quoted. What I ask is to let me on some adjournment look through his books.

(Witness.) You can tear out what you want and keep them.

(Mr. Robb.) No, no.

(Witness.) Relating to the case.

(Mr. Robb.) If you take Mr. Palmer's books—

(The Inspector.) Do you object to Mr. Grant seeing them?

(Mr. Robb.) I don't think Mr. Corrie Grant should have a roving commission.

(Witness.) I hand them to Mr. Robb, but I object to these labour people. Mr. Lansbury is like a red rag to a bull.

(Mr. Robb.) Witness has made a fair offer to tear out any items we consider necessary. Whether a witness should have his books gone through in detail and secrets investigated by hostile persons—

(The Inspector.) No one suggested that.

(Mr. Grant.) I am not proposing to keep a common lodging-house?—These are to do with Bow Iron Works.

(Mr. Grant.) I don't propose to trouble about iron works.

(Witness.) There are good people in the iron works, and there are dishonourable men at the Bar.

(Mr. Robb.) One thing I omitted. On the last occasion we were told Lawson Tait bedsteads were purchased in 25's at a time at 26s. Who are the makers of Lawson Tait bedsteads?—Walford, Limited.

Q. Do you obtain a quotation?—Yes, sir. It will be here in the course of the day.

Q. It has arrived. You received a quotation for 75 at 19s. 6d.?—Fifteen per cent. advance on six months ago.

Q. At the time when these bedsteads were purchased by the guardians, do you say the price was fifteen per cent. less than this?—Yes. I used to be in the trade. They would be then about 13s. 6d.

Q. 13s. 6d.?—Yes.

Q. The guardians bought 75?—Yes.

Q. What do you say is the price they ought to have purchased these 26s. bedsteads for three months ago?—About 14s., sir.

(The Inspector.) You will turn up when you are wanted?—I shall be only too pleased, sir.

(Mr. Grant.) Witness said Mr. Gard asked him to do a certain thing as a personal favour. Mr. Gard should have an opportunity?—I didn't cast any aspersion on Mr. Gard. It was only explanation.

(Mr. Robb.) It seems to me you only have to cast the slightest aspersion and they ask for that person to be called.

(The Inspector.) I hope we have got beyond that.

(Mr. Robb.) We don't appear to have done. We did not quite finish with Mr. Evans on the last occasion.

(The Inspector.) Is Mr. Evans here? I hope the relieving officers will be taken as short as possible.

Mr. Palmer.

28 June.

Mr. J. EVINS; recalled, and further examined.

Mr. Evans.
28 June.

(The Inspector.) What was it you were to show us?—I think Mr. Robb wanted some figures. May I take this opportunity of explaining a mistake I made when last here with regard to a meeting of relieving officers? At the time I said I was not aware we had a meeting. At the time it slipped my memory but it was recalled when speaking with some of my colleagues. There was a meeting of relieving officers. I apologise and make that correction.

(Mr. Robb.) Perhaps you will tell us a little more about that. When was the meeting called?—I could not give you the date.

Q. About when?—It would be just previous to the Inquiry, I believe.

Q. Just previous?—When we heard there was to be an Inquiry.

Q. When you heard of the Inquiry, you had a meeting?—Yes.

Q. How was that meeting called?—Simply arranged among ourselves.

Q. Was there any written or printed circular?—No, sir.

Q. Who asked you to attend?—I forget now. It was generally spoken of there was to be an Inquiry and it was thought advisable there should be a meeting.

Q. Who originated the meeting?—I can hardly say now. I don't know who originated the meeting. It worked automatically. We heard the Inquiry—

Q. Who took the chair at the meeting?—Mr. Berry.

Q. The first meeting?—Mr. Berry.

Q. I think Mr. Berry told us there was no meeting on the last occasion. Were you here when Mr. Berry gave his evidence on the last occasion?—Not all the time.

Q. I only speak from memory, and am subject to correction. Mr. Berry said there was no meeting. Mr. Berry took the chair?—Yes.

Q. What was the object of the meeting of the relieving officers?—We simply had a discussion among ourselves as to what our position would be when the Inquiry took place. I could not definitely tell.

Q. What your position would be?—Discussing the matter as to possible or probable questions that might be put to us.

Q. You were apprehensive of something when you heard?—I don't know we were apprehensive. It was our duty to look after ourselves.

Q. Who had you been looking after before?—Simply doing our duty, sir.

Q. It was your duty, then, to look after yourselves?—We simply discussed our positions as relieving officers with regard to the Inquiry.

Q. Yes. Why was it your duty, then, to look after yourselves?—I don't quite follow you in regard to that question.

Q. You said just now that you heard there was to be an Inquiry, when it was your duty to look after yourselves?—It was simply a matter to discuss our position with regard to the proposed Inquiry.

Q. Your position?—Yes.

Q. What was your position. You were doing your duty as officers. What had you to fear?—Nothing.

Q. Do you admit calling a meeting?—Simply to discuss among ourselves.

Q. Is that the best explanation?—That is the best I can give.

Q. And you forgot all about this meeting on the last occasion?—Yes.

Q. And denied there had been any meeting?—Yes. I did not remember until we discussed it downstairs.

Q. Who was present at the meeting. Mr. Berry was in the chair. You were there?—There were three absentees—Messrs. Pitt, Powell, and Wilson were the absentees.

Q. Pitt, Powell and Wilson?—Yes.

Q. The remaining relieving officers were present?—Yes.

Q. Including Messrs. Stone and Gibbs, who have since been suspended?—Yes.

Q. How long did the meeting take?—About half-an-hour I should say.

Q. Were any resolutions passed?—No, none at all.

Q. No understanding come to?—It was a friendly sort of gathering among the relieving officers. There were no minutes.

Q. What was it about. You really must tell us a little more. What did the chairman say in opening the meeting?—It was hardly a meeting in the proper sense. It was discussed among ourselves.

Q. But you had a chairman?—Mr. Berry.

Q. Mr. Berry opened the meeting in the ordinary way with some explanation of reasons for which it was called. What did he say?—He said that we were simply here to discuss our position as relieving officers with regard to the coming Inquiry. Then there was a general discussion.

Q. What did Mr. Berry say your position was as relieving officers with regard to the Inquiry?—What our position was?

Q. Yes—please be a little frank. What did Mr. Berry say your position was—the position you wanted to discuss?—I don't know Mr. Berry said anything particular. We were discussing our positions as relieving officers. I don't know he said anything in particular.

Q. In what respect were you discussing your positions?—As to what questions might be put to us at the Inquiry.

Q. Did you anticipate that I might question you at this Inquiry about that meeting?—No.

Q. I don't suppose you did. It was a meeting to prepare the evidence you should give at the Inquiry and you arranged a common line of action?—No, we could not prepare a common line of action because we did not know the questions to be put to us.

Q. A common line of action?—We didn't know the questions to be put to us.

Q. Is that the only explanation you can give?—There was no definite results.

Q. No definite?—Nothing really absolutely done.

Q. What were you apprehensive of?—I don't know we were apprehensive. I don't admit we were apprehensive. We simply discussed the Inquiry.

Q. How is it it was your duty to look after yourselves, implying that you hadn't done it hitherto?—No, I don't mean to imply that.

Q. You withdraw that expression?—I do.

Q. For what other reason was the meeting called. It is not usual for relieving officers to meet together in that way to discuss their position?—No sir.

Q. There was nothing to discuss was there?—We didn't know what would be asked at the Inquiry.

Q. You simply met together for nothing. The whole thing was nullity, came to nothing?—The Inquiry coming along we met as relieving officers to know what questions might possibly be put to us.

Q. What questions did you think might be put?—We didn't know.

Q. What was the use of meeting. What did you anticipate would be asked?—I don't know.

Q. What were the questions you were most afraid would be put to you?—I suppose we discussed with regard to the able-bodied question. That was the thing most in our minds.

Q. You supposed?—That was the thing we had most in our minds.

Q. Let me be clear. Do you know or suppose what occurred at this meeting?—We discussed the able-bodied question.

Q. That was only a few months ago. I don't want supposition. I want fact. You did discuss the able-bodied question?—Yes. That is the only thing I really remember about the meeting; it was in regard to the able-bodied. We were concerned about that.

Q. Concerned about that?—Yes.

Q. Why?—Because it was very freely discussed outside.

Q. What were you concerned about?—Simply we had it discussed.

Q. You said you were concerned about the able-bodied question?—We discussed the able-bodied question among ourselves, and we thought that would be the line taken up by the Local Government Board.

Q. You thought that would be the line taken up by the Local Government Board?—Yes.

Q. Are we to understand this was a combination of officers to agree upon a story that they would tell to the Local Government Board?—Certainly not.

Q. Come now?—No, sir, certainly not.

Q. Was this a hole and corner meeting of relieving officers to decide upon a common line of action?—No.

Q. What was it?—We discussed our positions with regard to the Inquiry.

Q. You said there was nothing in your positions except the question of the able-bodied that gave you any cause for enquiry. Why had the question of the able-bodied poor given you cause for enquiry when you arranged the meeting?—It was a very anxious time and caused a lot of work.

Q. A lot of work. That would not be a matter of complaint against you by the Local Government Board?—We thought possibly the Local Government Board would inquire into the able-bodied question.

Q. Why?—I don't know.

Q. Why should they?—It suggested itself to us.

Q. Was there anything wrong about it?—No.

Q. Why did you fear any examination?—The difficulty of relieving the able-bodied man. There is a difficulty.

Q. What is that difficulty. What was the difficulty you expressed personally?—With regard to my surcharge, was the matter in my mind.

Q. Did you discuss your surcharge. It didn't occur then?—Yes.

Q. You discussed it?—Yes. It was freely discussed, my surcharge.

Q. You did not know what it was you discussed. Your memory is improving. You first remembered the meeting and now you are remembering some of the details?—Yes, sir.

Q. Did any gentleman say the meeting was called to consider whether you should give the guardians away or not?—No, sir.

Q. Come now?—I don't know.

Q. Come, was that expression made use of?—I didn't hear it.

Q. To consider whether you should disclose the whole facts to the Local Government Board?—I didn't hear it.

Q. Do you swear it?—I do swear it.

(Mr. Grant.) In ordinary cross-examination the name of the person who is alleged to have said it, what he said, is given, and the witness is asked if he heard it.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Evans, was the meeting called—

(Mr. Grant.) May I ask for your ruling. Are we to have the name of the person who said it?

(The Inspector.) He didn't hear it.

(Mr. Grant.) In the ordinary course Mr. Robb ought to have put it.

(Mr. Robb.) If I name any person that person jumps up and wants to be called as a witness, and I propose to name as few persons as possible.

(The Inspector.) The relieving officer said he never heard.

(Mr. Grant.) You don't appreciate—the procedure is—

(The Inspector.) I don't want you to explain the procedure. What can be done now. The witness said he never heard the thing said.

(Mr. Grant.) The next thing will be the person who did say it will be called and he will say he did say it.

(The Inspector.) And the relieving officer will be there.

(Mr. Grant.) Then I shall have to recall Mr. Evans to give his explanation of the whole proceeding. Instead

of getting it by bits, it is better we should have it altogether.

(Mr. Robb.) Now, is that all you remember about this first meeting?—Yes.

Q. There was adjournment of that meeting?—I don't quite follow.

Q. The meeting was adjourned—the meeting of the relieving officers. No resolution was come to at the first meeting. I know all about it. You need not be afraid?—I don't know about it.

Q. We get it bit by bit if we stop here until six o'clock. The meeting was adjourned, you say?—Yes.

Q. It was adjourned?—Yes.

Q. Why?—Because it was finished. The meeting was finished.

Q. Without any resolution being arrived at?—There was no resolution arrived at.

Q. I suggest that the meeting was adjourned. A further meeting was held?—I really cannot remember. I cannot recall the second meeting.

Q. Within the last six weeks?—I have no recollection of a meeting within the last six weeks.

Q. No recollection. Will you swear it didn't take place?—The meeting of the relieving officers?

Q. Yes, a meeting of the relieving officers?—I don't remember a meeting in the last six weeks.

Q. Surely?—I don't remember. You say you know. Perhaps you will tell me when it was held.

Q. We will come to that at the proper time. I will take your answer?—I have no recollection of the meeting.

(Mr. Grant.) You infer this to the witness. Mr. Robb knows the place where the meeting was held and all about it; but he has not put to the witness a single place or fact.

(Mr. Robb.) I am testing the witness first.

(Mr. Grant.) I have said over and over again, he is here to assist the Inquiry. When I point out how he should conduct a reasonable cross-examination—

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Corrie Grant, when I want your instruction as to cross-examination I shall come and consult you.

(Mr. Grant.) I am addressing the Inspector. I want the witness given a fair opportunity to meet the case.

(Mr. Robb.) I don't desire to say anything except to point out that Mr. Berry swore he knew nothing of the matter.

(The Inspector.) I have a letter from Mr. Berry in reference to the matter, saying he was reminded after giving evidence that he had attended a meeting of relieving officers.

(Mr. Robb.) I don't want to comment, but it is extraordinary that both relieving officers—I could understand one failing—but it is extraordinary when the point was specifically put to them these relieving officers should not—

(The Inspector.) He says, "It was left to me to draw up certain heads, but nothing further ever came of the meeting—we have not met since. The only other meeting of relieving officers was in 1904, when we decided to apply to the guardians for assistance." He says he discussed it afterwards.

(Mr. Robb.) That is after the denial. Have you and Mr. Berry met since last Friday?—Yes, sir.

Q. And discussed this matter?—I was reminded by the caretaker of the offices with regard to this meeting. When I left here, at the time I had no knowledge of the meeting. I was then speaking the truth.

Q. Then you mutually reminded one another?—No, not at all.

Q. The caretaker of the offices has a better memory than the persons present at the meeting and conducting the discussion?—It quite escaped my notice in the box.

Q. Was there any reason for desiring to hide this meeting?—None whatever. It escaped me when you put the question in the box on the last occasion.

Q. And Mr. Berry was in the same position. I must put this to you—Was this meeting called to consider whether you should disclose all the facts within your knowledge or not?—No, sir.

Mr. Evans.
28 June.

Q. Was that topic considered at all?—I don't remember that topic being discussed at all.

Q. Then you pledge your word?—Yes, I do.

Q. I want you to give me, please, one or two weeks from your books. Moneys paid. I want the last two weeks in October, 1904?—Last two weeks in October, sir?

Q. If you please. Give me the money first and the relief in kind next?—Money, £33 11s. 6d.; that is the fourth week for the quarter ending Christmas, 1904. Money, £33 11s. 6d.; kind, £24 10s. 6d.

Q. Then the fifth week of that quarter?—Money, £33 9s. 6d.; kind, £21 11s. 3d.

Q. Then that was at the end of October?—Yes.

Q. First week in November please. The seventh week?—Seventh week?

Q. It will be the sixth; that is it?—Money, £33 10s. 6d.; kind, £29 17s.

Q. We could not quite catch that?—Money £33 10s. 6d.; kind £29 17s.

Q. That is the first week in November?—That is the sixth week in Christmas.

Q. 1904 you are dealing with?—Yes.

Q. Now the second week in November?—The second week in November, the fifth week?

Q. Yes?—Money £33 9s. 6d.; kind £21 11s. 3d.

Q. That is the fifth; now the seventh?—£33 16s. 6d.; kind £39 13s. 4d.

Q. Eighth week?

(The Inspector.) What is the date of that?

(Mr. Robb.) Week ending 9th November, the seventh week in the Christmas quarter, 1904. Next week?—Money £33 2s. 6d.; kind £43 12s. 9d.

Q. Ninth week?—Money £33; kind £51 8s. 11d.

Q. Tenth week?—Money £32 16s.; kind £48 16s. 4d.

Q. And the eleventh week?—Money £33 4s.; kind £63 14s. 8d.

Q. £63?—Yes.

Q. Was that the peak, the highest, the maximum in that quarter?—No, sir, the twelfth week.

Q. What is the twelfth week?—Money £68 13s.; kind £98 5s. 3d.

(The Inspector.) That is Christmas?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) Double relief?—Yes.

Q. That would account for such an abnormal week as £68, the highest apparently?—Yes, sir.

Q. Now I don't want you to trouble to go right through it, but give us the 2nd, 8th, and the 11th weeks of 1905, same quarter?—8th week?

Q. 2nd first?—This will be a different district, sir.

Q. Oh, your district was changed?—Yes.

Q. Never mind. Let us hear?—Money, £54 16s. 6d.; kind, £22 9s. 1d. Eighth week—money, £57 4s. 8d.; kind, £25 14s.

Q. Well now—At that time you had not only altered your district, but there were twelve relieving officers instead of eight?—Yes.

Q. The eleventh week then?—Money, £59 8s. 9d.; kind, £24 18s. 2d.

Q. I want just two other comparisons. The first week in June, 1905, and the first week in the present June?—They have gone for the books.

Q. You will give us that later on?—Yes, sir.

(The Inspector.) At the last meeting I was asked for two things. I promised to give one. This is a copy of the report of Mr. Gerald Walsh on his visit to the workhouse, 24th October, 1905. Here it is. It is a report which was not sent to the guardians because it got mislaid in some way. There is no minute or anything except the note on it that it was mislaid. It was never sent to the guardians. It is to this effect—At Mr. Lockwood's request he visited the workhouse for the purpose of seeing what work is given to the able-bodied men. All tasks have been done away with, stone-breaking and cakum-picking have been abolished and except cleaning and coal-carrying the only work is wood-chopping. He added, "There is still a probability of making the able-bodied loafer's life disagreeable. The guardians are getting out a return. . . . The return was not complete on date of my visit." He thinks that half the able-bodied will be found to have been in the house five years and upwards. Similar returns for able-bodied women showed that 54 out of 138 had been in the house for five years or more. The women, however, owing to laundry work, are more usefully employed than the men.

(Mr. Grant.) I just observe that able-bodied means under 60. That is the definition of able-bodied.

(The Inspector.) I don't know. It means, I fancy, Class I. for diet. Then there was another return you asked me for. You were anxious I should supply you with a letter addressed to me by Mr. Genery, or to Mr. Oxley by Mr. Genery. Well, now—

(Mr. Grant.) You refused it on the ground it was privileged.

(The Inspector.) I refused it on the ground of privilege. The communications written to the Inspectors are considered confidential, and it is not a principle I would like to break through lightly, but as Mr. Grant has made a point of it, I wrote to Mr. Genery and asked him if he had any objection to the letter going to the guardians. He said he had no objection.

(Mr. Grant.) You have misunderstood my point. I wanted that letter because it was a type. There are other letters to the Local Government Board and I wanted to get at the whole of them.

(Mr. Robb.) I am raising a point of vital importance to my case.

(The Inspector.) Here it is.

(Mr. Grant.) I know what is in that letter. It is merely a request to see somebody on the Board—what I want to have and what I am entitled to have when attacked in this way is for communications going from

an officer to the Local Government Board. You have gone through every one of our books, you have seen all our papers, searched through everything. The municipal alliance have had our reports, minutes and agendas and got on 31st May the printed indictment of us which we have to answer on the 6th June, and when I ask for those documents, you offer Genery's letter, which is merely a communication.

(Mr. Robb.) May I call attention—

(Mr. Grant.) We must have some order.

(Mr. Robb.) How on earth—

(Mr. Grant.) I do ask that we have some sort of order.

(Mr. Robb.) I ask that Mr. Grant shows courtesy.

(Mr. Grant.) I am asking for some sort of order in these proceedings. I am addressing you. I have given way over and over again to Mr. Robb, but I will not give way any longer until I get the ruling from the chair.

(The Inspector.) Perhaps you will allow me to finish my sentence. Now you assert there are a number of other letters. I don't think there are. We receive a good many communications anonymously. It is extremely improper, personally to the guardians, because they reflect upon private individuals. You cannot expect the Local Government Board to send on all communications. That is the only letter from an officer.

(Mr. Grant.) May I be allowed to finish? I was only asking for letters when several members had a conference at the Local Government Board with our officers who were present. I have got out the fact there was a conference. I now want to know who were there and what notes were made and I want to see those notes.

(The Inspector.) No.

(Mr. Grant.) I am telling you what I ask for.

(The Inspector.) This letter is this. It is dated 7th March. "Dear Sir, If you would make an appointment with me one evening this week I think I could supply you with some useful information re Poplar Workhouse. In making this request I do so with the utmost respect and if you consider the same *infra dig* please destroy this and think no more of the matter. My only reason for doing so being that, knowing unless this information is given *sub rosa* there is not much chance of arriving at the root of the evil. Apologising for the liberty taken, I am, dear sir, yours very respectfully, (Signed) Charles W. Genery, master's clerk, "Poplar Workhouse." That is addressed to Mr. Oxley.

(Mr. Grant.) That is followed by an interview at which Mr. Oxley was present.

(*The Inspector.*) On April 27th, some time after, I directed Mr. Oxley to write to this man—"Referring to your letter I should be obliged if you will make an appointment to see Mr. Davy any time convenient to yourself." The reason in sending that was that some information would be forthcoming on which I had none. That is to say, the master's claim to a pension. I sent for this man and asked him what the state of things was, and he told me, more or less, and there it ended.

(*Mr. Grant.*) May I ask was there any note of what Mr. Genery said?

(*Mr. Robb.*) Are you cross-examining the Inspector?

(*Mr. Grant.*) Yes, I am trying to get out the whole truth. I am sure you will allow me to say part of the temper I show in this Inquiry is due to the great injustice practised by the Local Government Board to my clients. At this moment whatever I have done in the Inquiry I haven't been able to read the whole of the papers in the case. I only had two hours' sleep last night, working on this case. I came down here last evening, and now I haven't got the facts.

(*The Inspector.*) You have the facts with regard to Genery.

(*Mr. Grant.*) And I want the things with regard to the interview. You know what Genery is. He is a convicted felon.

(*The Inspector.*) When I look at Genery's record, what happened is that the prosecution said he had given them all the information in his power and as a matter of fact his sentence was postponed and he was sentenced to come up on his own recognisances.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Is it fair to put it that way. The man pleaded guilty and the contractor pleaded guilty, and the contractor promised to pay every penny robbed from the Mile End Guardians, and the Recorder saw this man was ruined already. He remanded him.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) Keep your junior counsel quiet.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I cannot fight against yourself, the Inspector and Mr. Robb.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) I will go out. We shall deal with Mr. Davy elsewhere.

(*Mr. Grant.*) You have no reason to say that, Mr. Crooks.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) I apologise.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I was telling you about Genery. His history was: he was master of Mile End Workhouse, a similar position to Mr. Madeley. He was charged with conspiring to rob the guardians and the contractor was charged with him. And he pleaded guilty. The two of them pleaded guilty—the contractor and Genery—and Genery was ruined. He had lost his position, lost his place, and the contractor was the person the Recorder wanted to deal with.

(*The Inspector.*) I think Mr. Geoghegan said Genery got no money out of it.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I haven't the report, but whether he did or not—

(*Mr. Robb.*) I object in the absence of the report to the great confidence—Words are put into the Recorder's mouth. The learned counsel has no report, yet with the greatest confidence he tells you what the Recorder said on that occasion.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I shall allow Mr. Robb to say what he wants to say. We have had the report here. The report was read and we can have it fetched again, but if Genery had pleaded guilty, Mr. Geoghegan said he had made no money out of it and was ruined: if all the money was paid and the costs paid; if the contractor restituted to the authority, Genery might be released without any punishment.

(*The Inspector.*) I don't agree.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I am speaking from recollection. Mine is a longer report than yours.

(*Mr. Robb.*) You will please—

(*Mr. Grant.*) Keep quiet, Mr. Robb. Mr. Davy, may I quote—

(*Mr. Robb.*) I object to a newspaper report in this matter.

(*Mr. Grant.*) It is already in.

(*Mr. Robb.*) It is not in. I object.

(*Mr. Grant.*) You cannot object.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I object to a newspaper report.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Well, the case is full of newspaper reports.

(*Mr. Robb.*) You want over and over again to charge this man as a convicted felon. Get the proper shorthand note of the trial.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Am I to have any sort of protection in this Court?

(*Mr. Robb.*) It is simply an attempt to draw a red herring across the trail. It is no more the object of this Inquiry—

(*Mr. Grant.*) Genery is the author of the Inquiry.

(*Mr. Robb.*) It is the tactics of the defeated.

(*The Inspector.*) Mr. Robb, please.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Now, sir, with your permission I will read the whole of the report. It has never been read before. I read from the *Local Government Chronicle*, October 31st, 1893—"Mile End Workhouse Scandal. George William Genery and Edward Lauderdale surrendered to their bail 'before the Common Sergeant to answer a charge—'"

(*Mr. Robb.*) Our man is not George Genery. Our man is Charles Genery.

(*Mr. Grant.*) The man admitted in the box—

(*Mr. Robb.*) You are reading about George. The man who gave evidence is Charles.

(*The Inspector.*) I don't know.

(*Mr. Robb.*) It shows the value of the report, the accuracy of the report. It simply shows something may be read that does not—

(*The Inspector.*) I think we are practically all of one mind as to what happened.

(*Mr. Grant.*) All I am asking is that the statement that Genery made to you and Mr. Oxley when he came to the Local Government Board may be submitted so that I may see what he said.

(*The Inspector.*) You cannot have that.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Mr. Davy, just consider. This is not a question of privilege. There is no privilege.

(*The Inspector.*) What I have to consider is what is the public interest. The guardians asked for a public Inquiry and said they would help the Local Government Board in every possible way. When I heard evidence was not forthcoming, or statements not forthcoming with reference to statements about the master, I sent for someone who could tell me what was going on. I didn't attach any great importance to what he said except as showing it was known at that time the master was having immoral relations with a nurse.

(*Mr. Grant.*) May I just cover the whole way of this scandal which has resulted?

(*Mr. Robb.*) I object to further subjects at this time. The whole of the morning has been taken up with interruptions and subjects that lead to nothing.

(*The Inspector.*) You give your own account of the way this Inquiry—

(*Mr. Robb.*) Let it be done at the proper time.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Am I to read the newspaper report about Mr. Genery?

(*The Inspector.*) I think we had better adjourn for luncheon.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I am still in possession of the Court.

(*The Inspector.*) You also asked for the Auditor's report. Will Mr. Robb make formal application for that.

(*Mr. Grant.*) We have made it. (*Adjournment.*)

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) Will you allow me, without any words at all, to apologise to you for my interruption this morning. I am extremely sorry I allowed my feelings to run away.

(*Mr. Palmer.*) Do you apologise to me?

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) No.

(*The Inspector.*) I accept your apology.

MR. J. EVINS; recalled, and further examined.

Mr. Evans,
28 June.

(Mr. Robb.) First week in June, 1905, and the first week in the present June?—That would be the tenth week of the quarter ending Midsummer, 1905.

Q. I suppose so?—£94 in money; kind, £68 14s. 11d.

Q. That was last year?—1905.

Q. This year?—I haven't got that book.

Q. But I want to make a comparison. That is the only value of the evidence. You will kindly send for that?—Yes, sir.

Q. Then I have had an opportunity of looking at Mr. Berry's letter. He says he was reminded—

(Mr. Grant.) I haven't seen Mr. Berry's letter.

(The Inspector.) It was read.

(Mr. Grant.) If it was handed to counsel—

(Mr. Robb.) I asked in Mr. Lough's presence. Don't let us have these innuendoes. I asked if the Inspector would allow me to look at it. Let us get on.

(Mr. Grant.) I only ask for that—

(Mr. Robb.) There is an improper insinuation behind all this.

(The Inspector.) I do appeal. It is a very painful, very troublesome and extensive Inquiry, and if we can expedite it, while obtaining the facts, it will be an advantage to everybody, and I think you are desirous of expediting it.

(Mr. Grant.) It is difficult because the procedure adopted is entirely wrong.

(Mr. Robb.) We are not discussing procedure.

(Mr. Grant.) I haven't had an opportunity of discussing procedure with you. If I had I would not allow the Inquiry to proceed on the lines adopted.

(Mr. Robb.) We are not concerned with what you would allow or not.

(The Inspector.) I am sorry. I made a sort of suggestion.

(Mr. Robb.) We get a torrent of words which lead to nothing.

(The Inspector.) All right.

(Mr. Grant.) I don't recognize Mr. Robb in this Inquiry except as the assistant of the Local Government Board.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Corrie Grant may recognize me as he likes.

(The Inspector.) Now, Mr. Robb, please.

(Mr. Robb.) A simple thing like this, a letter is put to a witness and there is immediately a nasty innuendo brought in. The learned counsel jumps up with an insulting innuendo levelled at you and me. I ask for a letter which has been read in the presence of Mr. Lough. I ask you to allow me to look at that letter and because you have the courtesy to allow me, a bitter and improper innuendo is cast upon it. I strongly resent that sort of thing.

(The Inspector.) (to witness.) Have you got those figures now?

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Berry says in this letter that after giving his evidence he was reminded by a brother officer that he had attended a meeting of relieving officers. Were you the brother officer who reminded him?—No. I was reminded by the caretaker.

Q. Mr. Berry had attended the meeting. As a matter of fact you told us he took the chair at that meeting?—Yes. June, 1906?

Q. Yes, if you please?—Money, £56 19s. 6d.; kind, £7 8s.

Q. That is food and so forth?—Food. Yes, sir.

Q. Present June?—Yes.

Q. Reduction from what in 1905?—1905, kind, £68 4s. 11d.

Q. Then you have reduced the out-door relief in kind from £68?—These are two different districts.

Q. I see?—A re-arrangement.

Q. I see. There has been an immense all-round reduction?—Yes.

Q. Has it been all round or only in kind?—In kind.

(Mr. Grant.) Are you quite doing yourself justice. Are the figures all from the same district?—No, sir; they are not.

Q. You told the Inspector that. There can be no comparison from different districts. What are the two districts you have given figures for?—1905 was No. 4 district, Bromley. I am now in No. 9, Poplar district, entirely different.

Q. Different in size?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) The only comparison is between the whole union?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) We shall get all and compare the aggregate.

(The Inspector.) I have got that, I think.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Evans, how long have you been relieving officer?—Five years.

Q. Which officer of the board are you under?—The clerk of the guardians, I presume.

Q. What is your relation to the superintendent relieving officer?—I am entirely responsible for my district.

Q. You know my difficulty is I don't know to whom some officers report?—My books are looked at or checked by the superintendent relieving officer.

Q. Your books are looked over?—Checked by the superintendent relieving officer.

Q. Is that merely an accountant check?—And the application and report book dealing with applications or applicants.

Q. For instance, if you had a doubt as to whether to relieve or not whom would you ask about it?—The responsibility finally rests with myself entirely. I don't know there is anyone I could go to.

Q. Anyone you have been to in the past when you have had difficulty?—No.

Q. Perhaps you didn't have any doubts?—I am entirely responsible for the district.

Q. The officer of the board to whom you are responsible is the clerk?—Yes, the clerk.

Q. You have heard the suggestion that the guardians have interfered with you in the discharge of your duties?—Yes, sir.

Q. Is it true?—I have heard the suggestion before.

Q. You have heard it here. Is the suggestion true?—Not entirely true. Simply in regard to this relief. I say I think. It is not denied the policy of the guardians with regard to the out-relief question—we have merely been carrying out their policy. We had to do that.

Q. Whether the policy of the guardians is right or wrong is a matter for them to settle with some-one else?—Yes.

Q. You, as one of the officers of the board, if you have got certain instructions from the clerk or from your superintendent, you don't question this in any way?—They have to be accepted, of course.

Q. I suppose, to put an extreme case—suppose a particular Local Government Order, defining the duties of relieving officers. Take the case of Mr. Davies. You told, or Mr. Berry told, me your most important work was investigation?—Undoubtedly.

Q. I don't know whether it is or not. Suppose it is laid down in a definite Poor Law Order the first and most important duty is investigation; suppose Mr. Lough comes and tells you you are not to investigate, to take the case and hand over investigation to some one else, you would obey?—Undoubtedly.

Q. Therefore this question as to your actions, you throughout had acted in accordance with the directions received from the guardians, and, except for isolated cases of guardians interfering with relieving officers in their work, you have loyally discharged and carried out what you understand to be your duties?—Yes.

Q. One or two cases were put yesterday, I think, at the last sitting, of guardians writing to relieving officers about particular cases?—Yes, sir.

Q. I suppose that always happens with every guardian?—No, I don't know that it does.

Q. It is open to these guardians who pay most attention to their duties?—I only speak from my own personal experience.

Q. How many of the guardians on the board have you come into contact with at all?—With regard to communicating?

Q. Yes. How many guardians in your recollection have come to you about particular cases they have thought ought to be relieved and were not relieved?—Four or five.

Q. How many years ago?—We have been relieving officers five years.

Q. And you have had four or five cases?—Four or five of the guardians came at different times.

Q. They have spoken more than once?—Once or twice.

Q. Each of them?—Yes.

Q. You mean it is not a fact that the guardians systematically interfere with you as to your duties as relieving officers, but there are isolated cases when they spoke about cases?—Yes.

Q. Any guardian who is steadily at work in any particular district would certainly have some cases in which he thought your judgment was wrong in a case?—That is so.

Q. You have given relief in a case of sudden and urgent necessity without investigation?—Without personal investigation.

Mr. G. PITT, Relieving Officer; sworn and examined.

(The Inspector.) What is your name?—George Pitt.

Q. Will you sit down. What are you?—Relieving officer for No. 8 district.

Q. How long have you been relieving officer?—Four years.

Q. Are you one of the relieving officers whose districts have been changed?—Yes, sir.

Q. What were you before you became relieving officer?—(No answer).

Q. How many years have you been in the service of the guardians?—34.

Q. Do you remember the events of November, 1904?—Yes, sir.

Q. Did you have instructions from the guardians as to how you were to deal with the able-bodied men applying for relief?—Yes, sir.

Q. To what effect were they?—That I was to relieve able-bodied men.

Q. Were you told to relieve them all?—Yes, sir.

Q. How were you to relieve them?—In kind, sir.

Q. Did you ever relieve them by giving them orders for the workhouse?—I was not allowed to, sir.

Q. How do you mean—not allowed to?—May I read this case, sir. The case of Thomas Davies, 53, of 15, Mauve Street. He had a fire in his house and was burnt out. He came to me the next morning, the 4th March, 1904. He simply had his waist-coat, trousers, a cap, an old pair of slippers on, and was perfectly destitute and did not know what to do or where to go. I offered him admission to the workhouse and made out an order for him. He took the order, and the same afternoon when I was in my house, Mr. Bellsham and a reporter of the *Daily Mail* or *News* called and asked me why I had offered him the workhouse. I said I acted in accordance with the law. The same evening a message came to my house and asked me to come before the contracts committee. They did not see him but a message was sent that I was to give him immediate relief. I took the man's wife out and bought the necessary articles of food. The case was dealt with by the relief committee on the following Tuesday. The case came on, and I may say that I had a very sultry time of it. Mr. Bellsham, one of the members, moved my resignation as a relieving officer, but eventually I was censured by the chairman, Mr. McCarthy, for not giving relief otherwise than offering the workhouse.

Q. What then?—I gave relief and food and the man and his wife had clothing to the extent of £3 15s. 11d.

Q. You gave them clothing?—Himself and wife to the value of £3 15s. 11d.

Q. Have you ever given it twice without personal investigation?—Yes, sir.

Q. How many times?—Several occasions, because during the very heavy pressure, visitors were appointed for that special work.

Q. Even although you have not investigated the case, it has been investigated by some-one?—Yes.

Q. They were appointed by the guardians and I believe their appointments are sanctioned by the Local Government Board. At any rate, when they did act was when there was particular pressure, when there was much poverty in Poplar Union?—Yes.

Q. I ask about the cases where the guardians interfere in order to secure out-relief. Have there been any cases in which the guardians told you you have given relief when it ought not to have been given?—Oh, yes, there have been cases.

Q. As many as of the other kind?—No, sir.

Q. How many cases altogether when they told you they were undeserving cases?—I should think about half a-dozen, as far as my memory serves me.

Q. Do you remember who the guardians were?—No, I could not specify. Guardians have come to me.

(The Inspector.) Were you relieving officer when the Poplar Guardians had the stone yard?—No, sir.

(The Inspector.) We will ask someone else. Who is the next witness?

Q. Is that a case where you were not allowed to do a thing that seemed right?—Quite so.

Q. Why did you do it?—Under pressure.

Q. How did the man live between the time you offered him the workhouse and the meeting of the guardians?—He had relief the same night.

Q. You gave him relief?—The same night.

Q. In kind?—In kind according to the instructions of the committee.

Q. And you say there were strong verbal instructions to give relief to everyone?—Not at that particular time.

Q. Have you any other cases?—I have, sir, that of Thomas Hills. He had a wife and three children. He came to me and I offered him admission to the workhouse, and made out his order. He said he would take it. Next morning I had a memorandum from Mr. McCarthy from the workhouse directing me to give relief in this case. This was brought before the committee on the following Tuesday. I gave relief. The committee sat on the following Tuesday, and I was again censured for offering him the workhouse.

Q. And why did you give an order for the workhouse?—Because he was an able-bodied man, sir.

Q. What became of the man after?—He had relief, sir.

Q. Any further cases?—I have one more, sir. The case of William Ross, wife and three children, of 2, Prospect Place. I offered him admission to the workhouse on the 8th November. I made out the order. The order was eventually brought back to me written on by Mr. Bellsham "See Mr. Lough." Of course, he could not relieve the case. I gave him food on that recommendation.

Q. Is that another case where your discretion was hampered by the guardians?—Yes, sir.

Q. Was the number of cases and applicants very great at that time?—They went up by leaps and bounds.

Q. Was that in your judgment due to any excessive distress?—There was certainly an amount of distress, but I think it was magnified. I went and consulted the clerk on the subject of able-bodied men.

Q. Did you fear a surcharge?—I did. I had a conversation with the clerk about it. He said he had talked till he was tired.

Q. I don't follow you?—I said, "Is the Poor Law a dead letter, then?" I said, "it goes against my grain to go against the Local Government Board." He said, "You cannot stem the tide."

(Mr. Grant.) I wish you would let him continue?—He said you must therefore do as the guardians wish. I

Mr. Evans.

28 June.

Mr. Pitt.

28 June.

Mr. Pitt.
28 June.

said, "There appears no alternative, and must submit to the inevitable." I then relieved everybody.

Q. What do you mean?—When they were out of work.

(The Inspector.) When did that interview take place?—About November, sir. I cannot call it exactly to mind.

Q. Soon after that you gave relief on a lavish scale?—Yes, sir.

Q. Was there any acute distress in the union before that time?—In previous years?

Q. I mean the same year?—There was a certain amount of acute distress. I don't think so much as was made out though.

Q. Did you give out relief to practically everyone who applied for it?—Yes, sir, practically.

Q. Provided they were out of work?—Yes, sir.

Q. Who did the investigation?—There was a man employed for that purpose.

Q. You did not make investigations?—No, sir, I could not.

Q. Can you give the numbers on your books?—I suppose, when the pressure was on, 500 families.

Q. That would be 2,000 individuals?—No, about 1,200.

Q. Well, then, the relief has gone down very much indeed?—Yes, sir, it has been re-arranged. My district is as large as it was then.

Q. When were they re-arranged?—Last September. I took on the district during October, 1905.

Q. Relief began to go down very sharply in March or April last?—March last.

Q. What do you attribute that to?—Well, I attribute it partly to a state of better trade, partly because of the Inquiry, but mainly to the non-interference.

Q. What do you mean by the non-interference of the guardians?—Why being left to myself, sir.

Q. Were you notified that you were to be left to yourself in future?—No.

Q. How did you know then that there had been any change?—I was left on my own to work on my own lines.

Q. Were you relieving officer when the stone yard was open?—No, sir, I was prosecution officer at the time.

(The Inspector.) I have no more questions.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Pitt, has anything been done to deter you from giving evidence at this Inquiry?—Nothing whatever.

Q. I gather from what you have said that out-door relief was given in an indiscriminate manner?—Of course, I am not here to blame the guardians.

Q. And in a wholesale manner?—I won't go so far as that. I am not here to condemn the guardians.

Q. I don't want to put you in an unfair position?—I had to do what I was told.

Q. Quite so. Was not the relief given in a wholesale manner?—That is a difficult question to answer.

Q. I quite appreciate the delicacy of your position?—If you ask me as an official I should say it was.

Q. And that is your conviction from personal knowledge. That out-door relief was given in an indiscriminate and wholesale manner?—Yes, sir.

Q. Now to what do you attribute the sudden expansion of the cases at the end of 1904?—There was an organisation, sir. We had a number of men brought up here by an agitator.

Q. By an agitator?

(The Inspector.) I don't follow?—We had a number of men brought up here. They filled the hall and were addressed by a Mr. Salmon.

(Mr. Robb.) Well. By whom?—By a Mr. Salmon.

Q. In the hall here?—Yes, sir.

Q. Did you hear Mr. Salmon speak?—I did.

Q. What did he say?—He spoke about various things, about being out of work. I could not recollect all he said.

Q. Anything of a strong nature?—He advised them to apply for relief. They were entitled to it, and all that sort of thing.

Q. Where is that gentleman now?—Ah, I don't know.

Q. Was he a resident of Poplar?—I have no idea where he came from.

Q. Were any guardians present on that occasion?—Mr. Crooks got up and made a speech.

Q. Mr. Crooks and Mr. Salmon both spoke?—Yes, sir.

Q. What did Mr. Crooks say?—He sympathised with the men and told them that the relieving officers would attend to them, and that if they wanted a bit more they were to ask for it.

Q. Anything else?—No, that is all I heard him say.

Q. And then I suppose there was a wild rush to the relieving officers?—There was. I was told not to go to my dinner, but I went.

Q. Told not to go to your dinner?—Yes.

Q. But you went?—Yes.

Q. When these men came in, in what manner did they ask for relief?—They were all out of work and had been out of work for some weeks. Their addresses were taken and they were relieved on the spot.

Q. Under instructions from the guardians?—Yes, sir.

Q. Were they relieved on the spot without any opportunity of investigating their statements?—There was no opportunity whatever at the time.

Q. Then what we understand is this. That there was an organisation which brought these men here. That speeches of a more or less inflammatory nature were addressed to them, and that they were told to go to the relieving officers. That there was a rush there, and by the guardians' instructions they were all relieved on the spot, in an absolutely indiscriminate manner and without any opportunity of investigation?—At the time.

Q. At that time?—Yes, sir.

Q. Well now, were some of these men continuously relieved?—Yes, sir.

Q. For how long?—Weeks and months.

Q. And years?—Not years.

Q. Months then. Were the cases subsequently investigated?—They were subsequently investigated by investigators employed by the guardians.

Q. And who were the investigators?—A Mr. Moore and a Mr. Cox.

Q. What was Mr. Moore before that?—I cannot tell you.

Q. Where did he live?—In Blackwall.

Q. What was he in his private capacity?—I don't know what he was.

Q. Had he any experience in Poor Law work?—I don't know what he was.

Q. And Mr. Cox, what was he?—He was a working man.

Q. Yes. A working man?—He was out of work and got the job of investigator.

Q. So that really unemployed men were taken on for the job of investigating their own cases?—You might say that. I don't blame the guardians for giving the chaps the jobs.

Q. May I put it to you that unemployed men without any experience of the Poor Law were appointed as investigators?—Quite so. Well, I think their reports were pretty faithful and true.

Q. Quite likely. They were not people experienced in this class of work?—None whatever.

Q. Was it found—do you remember an instance—in which the statements made by the applicants were not correct?—Yes, sir.

Q. Of course, it would follow that in these cases if they had been followed up by the investigators, in the first instance, relief would not have been given?—Possibly in some cases.

Q. And the ratepayers' money would have been saved?—Quite so.

Q. So that it must have been, as I say, a wasteful system?—I am sorry to have to report that it was not according to my idea of the working of the Poor Law.

Mr. Pitt
28 June.

Q. Did you think that the unemployed demonstrations at the time had anything to do with this sudden rush?—Oh, yes, most decidedly.

Q. Do you now think that any of the guardians took part in the demonstrations? Were there any demonstrations beside the one you told us about?—There were other demonstrations.

Q. Local, in Poplar?—No, I think not.

Q. You don't know. Do you think these demonstrations had any effect?—I do, most decidedly.

Q. The whole thing was an organised effort?—Yes, at that particular time.

Q. What was the organisation that was behind these men and bringing them up?—Ah, I don't know who the leaders were. You see I am at my office.

Q. You said just now that agitators brought them up?—Of course, I don't class Mr. Crooks or Mr. Lansbury as agitators.

Q. But there were persons of the class you have described who were organising the men and bringing up the applicants for relief?—I believe so, sir.

Q. Yes, well now—Do you know anything about this mysterious meeting that has been talked about?—This mysterious meeting?

Q. Of the relieving officers?—I should have liked to have attended the meeting but did not.

Q. You were invited to attend?—One of the officers invited me.

Q. Mr. Powell, I think?—I said I did not want to go. I knew quite enough of my duties and was going to keep out of it.

Q. What was the object of that meeting of relieving officers?—I don't know. I think something about their position. I did not go into particulars, and did not know what occurred. I was not present.

Q. Did you have an invitation to another meeting?—No, sir.

Q. Can you give us the date when you were invited to this meeting?—I cannot, sir. Some time this year. I do not know for sure.

Q. Have you ever been compelled to relieve cases against your judgment?—Well, yes, I have.

Q. Often?—Several times.

Q. Cases which you judged to be unfit for relief?—I have had cases.

Q. You have been compelled to relieve them?—I have.

Q. Have individual guardians put pressure upon you?—Well, yes, a guardian, as I said just now.

Q. And that was?—Mr. Bellsham.

Q. Anyone else?—Mrs. Cordery sent me a letter once.

Q. Mrs. Cordery does not live in your district?—She is a member of my committee.

Q. What was yours?—An afternoon committee.

Q. Where did they sit?—Here, down below.

Q. Who are the members of that afternoon committee; do you remember?—Mr. Lindsay, Mr. Smith, Mr. McCarthy, Mrs. Cordery, Mr. Ford; I don't know whether there were any others.

Q. And Mrs. Cordery wrote a letter or letters?—A letter.

Q. What had that reference to?—It was a reference to give relief to the person who bore the letter.

Q. Was the person who had the letter an applicant who had been previously refused?—Yes, I believe I had refused it previously.

Q. Has any other guardian approached you in a similar manner?—No, I think not. I am speaking from memory. I think not.

Q. Did you have any telephone messages from any of the guardians?—Let me see. Yes, I had a telephone message from Mr. Watts.

Q. What was that about?—About the case of a man named Snell. I had arranged to relieve the case previous to this telephone message.

Q. Any other communications?—No, I know of no others.

Q. Have you ever been requested by any individual guardian to relieve a case which had come before a committee and had been refused?—Never.

Q. Can you tell us when you were instructed to relieve every able-bodied case?—Yes, in the case of Hills in the committee.

Q. And that you refused?—Yes.

Q. Was there an understanding, from your own knowledge among the relieving officers?—I cannot say, I speak on my own account.

Q. Have you been present at a meeting of the committee when the applicants came before them?—Oh, yes.

Q. You have?—Yes.

Q. What procedure has been adopted?—The applicants told their story and the officers were told to supply them with food.

Q. Have questions been put to them?—Oh, yes.

Q. Have you ever been present at any committees with Mr. Diamond, one of the guardians?—I think he is a member of my committee.

Q. Have you ever heard any guardian object to searching questions being put to an applicant by another guardian?—No, I cannot say that I have.

Q. Have you ever heard searching questions put?—By whom?

Q. Guardians to applicants?—Oh, yes, I have heard them question cases, after I have read my report. The chairman has asked questions of applicants beyond what my report has said.

Q. General questions?—Yes.

Q. Was any attempt made to properly investigate the cases; to search out the man's antecedents and so on?—The chairman of the guardians did that.

Q. Yes?—The chairman of the committee I should say.

Q. Of course, so long as you were dealing with the general policy of the guardians there would be no need of any interference with you?—Quite so.

Q. That would arise when you departed from the general policy?—Yes, sir.

Q. Do you know anything about the case of Mrs. Carey, who was one of the ladies who accompanied the unemployed demonstration?—I have no knowledge of the lady.

Q. Have you been in the same district 12 months, comprising this June and June of last year?—Twelve months in September in this district.

Q. Then you could not give any comparison between June of this year and June of last year?—I could not offhand. You see they are different districts. There has been a re-arrangement.

Q. Have any cases of bread being sold for drink ever come under your notice?—No, sir, not one.

Q. Or being sold at all?—No, sir.

Q. Or being unused?—Not one.

Q. Did you distribute boots among other things?—I did.

Q. Women's boots?—Yes, sir, when directed by the guardians.

Q. Did you give away a greater number after the unemployed demonstration?—Not such a great number considering the number of applicants I had.

Q. Women's boots?—In some cases, but children's boots mostly. They could not go to school barefooted.

Q. Did you come into contact with common lodging-house keepers?—I have no common lodging-houses in my district.

Q. Then do you know anything about the ordering of cases to Laindon?—I had some cases in which the guardians ordered them to go there.

Q. What kind of cases were they?—Men with families mostly. Of course, when we had a family we relieved the family while the men were at Laindon.

Q. What was the scale of relief given to wife and family while the men were at Laindon?—To the best of my recollection it was 10s. to the wife, 1s. 6d. for the first two children, and 1s. for each of the remainder of the family.

Mr. Pitt.

28 June.

Q. Yes, sir?—To the best of my recollection.

Q. So that a man, his wife and five children would be costing the guardians 25s. or 26s. a week?—I have no doubt it would be that.

Q. It would be more than the earnings of a good many labouring men?—I have no doubt that is the case.

(Mr. Grant.) This is quite new to me. If you will allow me, I will postpone my cross-examination.

(The Inspector.) I will just ask one or two questions. How were the instructions of the guardians with reference to relief given to you?—From the committee.

Q. Direct?—Yes, verbally.

Q. Supposing you had not relieved these men in kind, what would have been the alternative?—They might have given me the sack.

Q. What would have been the alternative to the man, not yourself?—I should have offered him the house, and stuck to it.

Q. In cases of men of this kind?—Yes, sir.

Q. But the workhouse might have got full?—You can make it larger, can't you.

Q. But you might have had a sort of labour yard?—That would have been the best test without a doubt.

Q. Have you had any experience of a labour yard?—None, sir.

Q. Ever seen one?—I saw the principle of giving something for nothing.

Q. You have told us that you never saw any abuse of relief in kind?—Never, I had not one case brought to my knowledge.

Q. What became of the men who received relief in kind and who are not now receiving it?—They got work.

Q. Have they all got work?—Ah, now I cannot answer your question. They kept away from me.

Q. You don't get complaints that they are destitute?—No. Will you pardon me for making a remark affecting your department. I did hope that all this relief going up by leaps and bounds and the returns going up week after week that two or three more inspectors would have been sent down to guide the guardians.

Q. All right. That is enough?—Have you done with me, sir?

(The Inspector.) I have.

Mr. W. E. POWELL, Relieving Officer; sworn and examined.

Mr. Powell.

28 June.

(The Inspector.) Your name?—William Edward Powell.

Q. Are you a relieving officer of this union?—Yes, sir.

Q. How many years have you been relieving officer?—I was first appointed to this board on the 1st of April, 1902, as assistant relieving officer, and as relieving officer on the 9th of August, 1905.

Q. You have been relieving officer ever since?—Yes, sir.

Q. Have you always had the same district?—Not exactly the same district, but just in the immediate neighbourhood. I have the north-west ward and the west ward. They practically join one another.

Q. As I understand, the same relieving officer always comes before the same relief committee in the union?—My committee always meets on Tuesday morning.

Q. Yes. Now do you remember the events of November, 1904?—Yes. Let me see. The applicants, of course, began to grow in number about the 17th of November. We were first inundated with them then.

Q. Was that after the meeting when a man came down with the unemployed to this place?—There was a meeting in this hall, but I was not present when that meeting took place.

Q. Had you any instructions from your committee as to how you were to deal with the able-bodied men?—No instructions then, because the men came down a day or two after the committee met, as far as I can remember.

Q. Were any instructions given at the next meeting of the committee?—Only verbal instructions—no written instructions—that we were to help deserving cases.

Q. You were to help deserving cases. How; by relief?—By relieving them in kind.

Q. And did you think you were precluded from offering the workhouse in these cases?—I have offered admission to the workhouse in some cases where I was not satisfied. The first week I had 21 applicants, and I offered the workhouse in two of them. I was not satisfied. As a test I offered them the workhouse and reported the facts to my committee. The committee approved my action.

Q. So that you were not interfered with?—Not by my committee.

Q. Have you ever been by any other guardian?—I am sorry to say I have.

Q. Guardians outside your committee?—My committee, I must say, have always stood by me and on my report; they have made orders for the workhouse, and a good many orders too.

Q. Who was the chairman of your committee?—Mr. Poole. Mr. Crooks was another member, with Mr. McCarthy, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Jungblut, and Mr. Finden.

Q. You claim that your committee has exercised its discretion?—They have approved of what I have done. I don't remember they have disapproved of anything.

Q. Did you say you were interfered with by members outside your committee. Under what circumstances?—Yes, that is so. The first case, I have made a note of it. The first case was a man named Hayes, living in Sophia Street. He applied on the 21st August, 1905. He informed the committee that he had worked for the borough council for 8 months. He finished his work on the 9th, so that only 12 days elapsed. He came up with the crowd and applied for relief. Admission to the workhouse was offered in his case. On the 6th of October I was rung up on the telephone from the borough council offices by Alderman Sumner and was instructed by him to give relief. I explained to him that there was an order made by the committee if this man applied to offer him the workhouse. The man came to me in the afternoon and I relieved him to the extent of 3s. 5d.

Q. You relieved him?—Yes.

Q. What was your justification after the committee refused?—I did not want to come into conflict with Mr. Sumner.

Q. What happened. Did you relieve that case until the next meeting of the committee?—Unfortunately, after that I became ill and was off duty for 8 weeks.

Q. Have you got another instance?—The next case was a man named Symonds, of Buxton Terrace. This man applied to me for relief on the 24th October last year. I relieved him in kind and he applied again on the 8th of November. I relieved him again. On the second occasion I told him that if he wanted further relief he would have to see the committee. He did not attend the committee and was marked absent. Another application was made on the 15th of the same month. I offered him admission to the workhouse. He declined that and said he would go and see someone else about it. He found his way round to Mrs. Cordery, I think. At any rate I had a communication saying that Mrs. Cordery had been round about the case. I attended the meeting of the board and was remonstrated with for not giving this man relief in kind, and that I had no right to offer admission to the workhouse as the guardians did not wish it.

Q. What did you do?—She said she was sending the man to see me the next morning. The man came and said that Mrs. Cordery said I was to give him relief.

Q. And did you give him relief?—I gave him some relief.

Q. And what happened about this report on your committee?—I reported verbally. I forget now what was said. I thought it was not right for any member to interfere with the case.

Q. What was the order?—They approved the relief in kind and made an order for the workhouse.

Q. Was that order taken?—He did not accept that order.

Q. So that was the end of the case?—No, he applied again. He came on the 5th November. The committee made an order for him to go to Laindon. He refused the order and made a sort of disturbance at the office

Mr. Powell.
28 June.

and said he would not go unless he knew what were the terms. I told him to clear out. He went and saw me the next morning and said he would accept the order. He was sent to Laindon and his wife came along the next week and was granted 14s. a week.

Q. How many children had she?—Three. There was 5s. given to her, 5s. 6d. for rent, and 1s. for each child. That was the scale given by my committee.

Q. Any other Laindon cases?—Yes, sir.

Q. How many cases of this kind?—I had six altogether. I have gone through my books from 1904 until now, and I find 6 out of 9 cases ordered have gone to Laindon.

Q. I ask you how many cases have you had of interference by the Guardians which you think improper?—Only two cases right through the whole time.

Q. Was the information given by the guardians sometimes useful to the relieving officers?—Yes, sometimes.

Q. Did you have many cases in your district who were not destitute?—Well, I can give you the figures if you wish it.

Q. They were not relieved?—Oh no, I was not satisfied they wanted relief.

Q. Who did your investigations?—The first part of the time I made my own investigations. And I think I suffered for it. I was taken ill three weeks after.

Q. You had too much work to do?—Yes, sir.

Q. During the second period did you have an investigator?—Yes, sir.

Q. Do you think it is a satisfactory way for the relieving officers to do the work?—I think the relieving officer is the man who should do the work. But it was impossible for me to do it with the number of applications I had.

Q. Supposing at this juncture you had not given this out-door relief, would it have been advisable to open the stone-yard?—The stone-yard period before was not a success.

Q. So the experiment of opening the stone-yard was not altogether satisfactory?—No, I am going back to February, 1895.

Q. Do you think the stone-yard would have been better than this system of giving relief in kind without an order?—I would not like to give an opinion.

Q. You don't know anything about it. Was your stone-yard a check upon former applicants?—We did not have so many paupers then.

Q. What were men doing when they were getting out-relief. Were they working for other people?—The majority of them we got here were dock labourers. The majority of them are. With a few bricklayers and painters and so on.

Q. The majority of your men were dock labourers, that is, men not in regular work?—Not in regular work.

Q. Do you think that any of these men who got relief in kind were doing a day's work in the docks?—Well, they may have done so.

Q. Would you have had an opportunity of discovering that?—No, these men don't work in one dock. They go to the other side of London.

Q. So that, unless you have stone-yards or something of that sort, you are confronted with the risk of the men competing with the labourers?—That is so.

Q. Do you think that is prevalent to any extent?—I don't think it is.

Q. What do you attribute the decrease in the number of cases to?—At the present time?

Q. Yes?—There is a decrease right through.

Q. It is not fair to ask you about other districts?—No, sir, I should not like to speak about other districts.

Q. Have you received any complaints that people who have been taken off the lists are now in destitution?—No, I have not heard of any such cases.

Q. Whatever you do you at all events relieve people to keep them from starving?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) I think that is all.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Powell, why did you allow Mr. Sumner and Mrs. Cordery to over-ride the directions

of your committee?—Well, Mrs. Cordery never over-ruled the decision of the committee. The case Mr. Sumner spoke about—

Q. But you told us you refused a man who had been before the committee. He had been refused twice and the third time you offered him an order. He then said he would see someone?—That was the case of the man named Symonds.

Q. I don't care which case it was. Why did you allow guardians to over-ride the decisions of your committee?—I had no wish to come into conflict with the guardians. It is a very delicate matter.

Q. Why should you suffer for doing your duty. What were you afraid of?—Well, I thought that perhaps I might be in the same boat that Mr. Pitt was.

Q. What boat was he in?—He was censured once or twice.

Q. He was censured once or twice for doing his duty?—That is so.

Q. And for exercising his discretion?—That is so.

Q. Were you afraid that if you exercised your discretion and judgment you would be censured for it?—I think that might have been.

Q. And that something might be done directly or indirectly to cause you to lose your post?—I did not think that would happen.

Q. Of course it would not. What about salary?—That question is settled, sir.

Q. At all events you were apprehensive of something?—Of the fact of being censured. I have never been censured yet, and I don't want to be.

Q. Was that the feeling entertained by the relieving officers generally?—I cannot say that. I can only speak for myself.

Q. Were they afraid to do their duty on that score. The guardians over-ride you and the committee might censure you for what they themselves approved. Were those guardians persons of big influence?—Of course, I did not know what might happen.

Q. Did not know what might happen. In what way?—With regard to censure. I did not want to be censured.

Q. Do you want us to understand that these relieving officers were in a state of fear that you had to do what you knew to be wrong at the instance of individual guardians?—(No answer).

Q. I am afraid it was so, was it not?—Yes.

Q. You were in a state of fear that you had to do what you knew to be wrong and contrary to your duty, rather than come in conflict with the guardians?—(No answer).

Q. What did Mr. Sumner say when he approached you?—He said it was a shame to make an order for the house in that particular case.

Q. Anything else?—No.

Q. Did he say you were to relieve him?—Yes.

Q. Did he insist on your relieving?—"Give this man immediate relief."

Q. In a peremptory way?—By a telephone message.

Q. "Give this man immediate relief"?—Yes.

Q. So that Mr. Sumner was the court of appeal from the decision of the committee, and decided that the man should have relief?—Yes.

Q. Did Mr. Sumner threaten any penalty or pain if you refused?—No, I have not been threatened at all.

Q. Still, it was pretty well understood what would happen?—Well, of course—

Q. It is not nice to thwart a member of the Poplar Board of Guardians if you are an official?—I am only speaking with regard to a particular guardian, and I can only speak so far as my committee is concerned. They have always approved—

Q. But this individual guardian, is he a person you would not care to thwart?—I don't care to say.

Q. But I want to know. I want to know why you officers have been coerced into such a state that you dare not do your duty. That is what it comes to, is it not?—(No answer).

Q. Is Mr. Sumner a trade union secretary?—I could not say. I don't know what he is by occupation.

Mr. Pincell.

28 June.

Q. It comes to this, that you were afraid of Mr. Alderman Sumner?—Not exactly afraid of him.

Q. You knew he would make it unpleasant for you?—I think he would.

Q. And did you think he would if you did not obey his instructions?—Yes.

Q. Did you ever point out to any guardian that this sort of thing was contrary to the regulations of the Local Government Board?—I don't remember doing so.

Q. Were you ever told that the Board was a dead letter or anything of that kind, or that the Poplar Guardians were going to do as they liked?—No.

Q. Have you ever been coerced in any other cases?—No, these are the only two cases.

Q. Have you ever refused to give relief in any case in opposition to the directions of the committee or individual guardians?—I have refused cases on my own responsibility.

Q. In spite of directions from individual guardians?—There have been no directions. People have made applications, and if I am not satisfied with them I have not given them relief.

Q. Did you ever on investigation find their statements untrue?—Yes.

Q. Can you give us an instance of that?—Yes, I found out one the first week.

Q. When the distress came on?—Yes.

Q. The first week of the demonstration?—Yes.

Q. Just give us that, please?—The case was that of a man living in James Place. He made a statement to me that he had been out of work for ten weeks. I made some enquiries and it came to my knowledge that this man who applied to me on the Monday had been working for a firm named Miller & Knight, on the other side of the water, and the week before had earned 29s., and he told me he had been out of work for seven weeks.

Q. He was one of the people who came in with the rush?—Yes.

Q. And I suppose he obtained temporary relief?—The case came rather late on that particular day. His wife was ill, and I gave just enough relief to tide them over a couple of days, in order to make the necessary enquiries. I had to relieve immediate wants.

Q. Do you know that relief was given in a wholesale and indiscriminate manner?—I have no knowledge of it in my district.

Q. No knowledge of it. This sudden influx was in November, 1904. It was organised?—Yes, it was organised.

Q. Men were led up to the office by agitators?—Well, from what I can remember, they were led by a Mr. Salmon.

Q. And Mr. Salmon and Mr. Crooks made speeches?—I did not hear Mr. Crooks make a speech.

Q. And then followed the rush on the relieving officers?—There was a rush.

Q. Following the speeches made on that occasion?—Yes.

Q. And the strain was such that the officers could not keep up with it?—On the first day I had 21 applicants, and I relieved 19 out of the 21.

Q. May I suggest that the strain thrown on your organisation was such that you could not keep up with it except by abnormal efforts on your part?—It was a strain because I kept at it and broke down after three weeks.

Q. Don't you think that under these circumstances relief must have been given indiscriminately in many cases?—I won't admit that while I was on duty.

Q. Do you say that under these peculiar circumstances you worked night and day?—Yes.

Q. That you personally investigated the cases?—Yes, I personally investigated them during the first two or three weeks.

Q. Until you broke down?—Yes.

Q. And you suggest that in your case relief was not indiscriminate?—Yes, as far as I am concerned, relief was not indiscriminate.

Q. Now did you know anything about this meeting of relieving officers?—I believe there was a meeting of the relieving officers, but I did not attend it.

Q. Were you invited to attend?—Yes.

Q. Who invited you?—I think the suggestion came from Mr. Law.

Q. Was he present?—I could not say. I have no knowledge of what happened or who was there.

Q. You cannot say?—No, sir.

Q. Now to what do you attribute the great reduction that has taken place recently?—Well, do you want the figures? I can give them to you right from the start. I don't show the decrease in my figures.

Q. Just give us your figures for the first week in June, 1905, and June of the present year. We know you have changed districts since then?—Yes, sir.

Q. Can you give the figures for No. 10 District?

(The Inspector.) He cannot give that.

(Mr. Robb.) Except so far as at that time there were eight districts and now there are twelve.

(The Inspector.) I don't think it fair to the witness?—I might say, Mr. Inspector, that I went through the books very minutely sometime ago.

(Mr. Grant.) Finish your answer, please.

(The Inspector.) Do you want to say anything more?—No, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) I agree that the only fair comparison is with the aggregate. You have referred to the Laindon case. Was there any special reason why these men should be sent to Laindon?—These men were out of work at the time and were fairly decent men.

(The Inspector.) Not of the ordinary pauper class?—Very decent cases. Some of the men I have known for years in my district. I have been in the immediate neighbourhood all my life.

(Mr. Robb.) There was rather an anxiety to send men to Laindon?—There were many cases where men asked to go to Laindon and my committee refused them because they did not think them suitable cases.

(Mr. Grant.) I want to reserve my cross-examination.

(The Inspector.) What do you think constituted suitable men?—Respectable mechanics out of work. Several decent fellows came under my notice.

Q. Country-bred men for choice?—I cannot say.

Q. Did you send aged or young men?—Mostly about 30 or 35.

Q. Do you know how many you sent?—60 altogether.

Q. You sent them to Laindon as an alternative to the workhouse or continued relief?—These were men I should not advocate the workhouse at all for. I think they were men who should receive fair treatment.

Q. Did the men prefer going to Laindon to getting continuous out-door relief?—They did. In some cases it was their own application.

Q. They wanted to go to Laindon to get a fresh start?—Yes, sir.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Robb, do you want any more?

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, I do. Mr. Law, Mr. Miles, and Mr. Gard.

Mr. R. GARD, Relieving Officer; sworn and examined.

Mr. Gard.

28 June.

(The Inspector.) What is your name?—Robert Gard.

Q. How long have you been relieving officer?—About four years this June.

Q. What were you before?—Enquiry agent.

Q. Do you remember the events of November, 1904?—Perfectly well.

Q. What committee is yours?—At that time it was No. 1 committee.

Q. Have you changed your district since?—Twice since then.

Q. Did you have instructions from your committee as to the manner you should relieve able-bodied men who applied for relief?—I was to relieve them in kind.

Q. Did you take that to mean to give them out-relief?—Yes.

Q. Did you do that?—Yes.

Q. Who did the investigation for you?—The investigations were done by an assistant appointed by the guardians.

Q. Had you great numbers of applications?—They went up from October in the first eight weeks from 500 to over 1,000.

Q. In your district?—In my district.

Q. And you dealt with them in the same way?—Yes.

Q. Did you give any orders for the workhouse?—Occasionally.

Q. Did you refuse relief in any cases?—Occasionally.

Q. Was any pressure put upon you by individual guardians to give relief to what you thought unsuitable cases?—There has been pressure.

Q. In many instances?—In several.

Q. Do you mean verbal pressure?—Verbal communications, telephone, or by letter.

Q. Of what nature?—To relieve certain cases as much as possible.

Q. Relief has gone down very much in the course of the last few months?—Yes.

Q. To what do you attribute that?—It is rather difficult for me to judge. I have changed my district twice since then.

Q. Your opinion is not worth much then?—Not a great deal, having worked in different districts.

Q. Were the applications for relief in your district from people engaged in dock labour?—Yes, dock and casual labour.

Q. I asked the other relieving officers a question and I ask you the same. Have you any knowledge of recipients of out-door relief in kind working for someone else at the time they were in receipt of relief?—No, sir, this has not come to my knowledge.

Q. It is a thing that might happen?—It might.

Q. Do you know what they are doing during the time they are receiving out-relief?—No, sir, they are supposed to be looking for work.

Q. When cases came before the board of guardians they made no order?—They left it in the hands of the relieving officers.

Q. Were they visited by the investigator before you gave renewed relief?—As far as possible they were visited by the investigator once a week.

Q. Could that be done with so many?—Not while there was a rush.

Q. How long did this rush last?—From October, 1904, to March, the following year.

Q. And now I suppose you have a comparatively easy time?—My district has been changed, and I was allotted a much smaller district.

Q. Things are better now?—Yes, sir.

Q. Did any abuse of out-door relief come to your knowledge?—No, sir.

Q. No selling of it?—I never found it out.

Q. When you gave an order for relief they took it to the relief distributor?—Yes.

Q. They did not complain they did not have enough?—They received what I gave them. What I have been in the habit of giving was four loaves where the family has been four, and 3 lbs. of meat.

Q. What kind of meat?—Beef or mutton.

Q. Was it specified?—No, it was left to the applicants. To the sick, mutton was given.

Q. And what else?—Tea and sugar.

Q. What quantity?—2 ounces of tea, 5 ounces of sugar.

Q. And what else?—Possibly eight to 16 pints of milk.

Q. Would that be given by the distributor?—Yes.

Q. Were people supplied with candles or anything of that kind?—Nothing of that kind.

Q. And they applied for boots?—Oh, yes.

(*Mr. Robb.*) What was the cause of the rise from 500 to 1,000 in your district in 1904?—In my opinion it was caused by the general lack of work, and by organized meetings in which the guardians and others took part and urged the men to apply to the guardians for relief.

Q. Yes, meetings in which the guardians and others took part and urged the men to apply for relief?—Yes.

Q. Do you know whether the increase was a natural one or was it artificial?—There would have been an increase undoubtedly, but the applicants were helped on by the action of various people who organized the meetings.

Q. And your view is that the distress was not so large as was supposed to be at that time?—Not so much as it would appear.

Q. And that certain undeserving people got in under the demonstration?—There were certainly cases and bound to be cases of undeserving people receiving relief with such a mass.

Q. Of course, you could not properly deal with a sudden increase from 500 to 1,000 cases?—I could not in a satisfactory manner.

Q. And hence it is obvious that relief must have been given out in an indiscriminate and wasteful scale?—Relief in my district had to be given without sufficient enquiry.

Q. And therefore it follows as a necessary consequence that in some cases it was both indiscriminate and wasteful?—Yes, sir.

Q. You have instances of that kind in your mind, have you not?—Well, I don't know about actual instances.

Q. Did you have a case of a man named Golding, of 59, Fairfield Road?—I know the case perfectly well.

Q. Can you give any particulars about that?—The man applied for relief several times which I refused. I received a communication from a guardian to send the man to Laindon.

Q. From a guardian?—Yes.

Q. Who was that guardian?—Mr. Lansbury.

Q. What did he tell you to do?—He simply said, "Can you send this man to Laindon?"

Q. Did you send him?—Yes, after speaking to Mr. Lansbury.

Q. What did you say to Mr. Lansbury?—I pointed out that the income the man's family was earning was £2 a week.

Q. What did Mr. Lansbury say to that?—He suggested I should send the man to Laindon and report the case at the next committee, which I did.

Q. In your judgment was it a proper case for Laindon?—I should not have sent him unless I had been requested to do so.

Q. The man had not worked for years?—That I am not in a position to say. The family were earning £2 a week.

Q. And there were no children of school age?—If I remember rightly there was one.

Q. Was the wife promised anything?—Not actually promised. She was told to apply to the relief committee for her case to be considered.

Q. Did Mr. Lansbury suggest that the wife should apply to the relief committee and that she would get 10s. a week?—I won't say that.

Q. That was the usual grant to a woman whose husband was away at Laindon?—Yes, sir.

Q. What was she to go to the committee for?—To have her case considered for relief.

Q. And this was a case of a family with no children of school age, earning £2 a week, that Mr. Lansbury suggested the man should go to Laindon and the wife apply for relief?—Yes.

Q. Where is he now?—He was brought back within two days.

Q. Why?—By the committee's orders.

Q. Who bore the expense of sending him to Laindon and back?—I suppose it came out of the usual fund.

Q. Then an individual guardian sends a man to Laindon at the expense of the ratepayers and two days after he is brought back?—Quite true.

Mr. Gard.

28 June.

Mr. Gard.

28 June.

Q. At the expense of the ratepayers?—Absolutely so.

Q. Is that a typical case?—No, sir, I should not call it a typical case.

Q. Now we are told that at the time of the rush that you were to relieve all cases in kind?—Yes.

Q. Able-bodied men?—Yes.

Q. You did so?—Yes.

Q. And I suppose in many instances you did it continuously?—Yes.

Q. After making your preliminary enquiries, would any further investigation take place?—Yes, in some cases.

Q. Your visitors would make the preliminary enquiry?—That is so. Where possible I should visit myself, but as it was during the rush I found it was not possible.

Q. How would you know whether men were making a true statement or that they had not obtained employment?—The only means of finding that out is by constant enquiry.

Q. Were you ever able to make this constant enquiry?—No, sir.

Q. I think it must have followed that relief was granted to some people who were actually earning money?—There may have been cases of that sort, but they never came under my personal notice.

Q. Because you had nothing to lead you but to follow particular cases. You have never made any special enquiries?—Enquiries were made as far as possible, but we had to take the word of many of the applicants.

Q. You had to take the word of many applicants as to whether they had obtained work or not?—Yes, especially in dock or casual work.

Q. That is not the best evidence?—It is not conclusive evidence.

Q. And again it follows that relief must have been indiscriminately and wastefully given?—According to that, yes.

Q. Now we want to know the guardians who you told the Inspector put pressure upon you?—I had messages from several of them.

Q. Name them please?—Mr. Phillips.

Q. Yes?—Mr. Bacon.

Q. Yes?—Mrs. Cordery.

Q. Does Mrs. Cordery live in the district?—She lives in the district I am taking charge of at the present time, pending the appointment of another officer.

Q. Yes, Mrs. Cordery, who else?—The chairman of the committee, Mr. Watts, has occasionally spoken to me.

Q. What was the nature of these communications?—In many cases to give relief until the committee sat.

Q. Did you do so?—Usually, sir.

Q. Why?—I thought it would be the best way out of possible trouble.

Q. Possible trouble. What kind of trouble?—I prefer to work with as little friction as possible.

Q. With as little friction as possible?—Yes, sir.

Q. But surely no member of the Poplar Board of Guardians would create trouble because you did your duty?—I don't know. They may not always consider it duty. My view of things may not always be their view.

Q. You were placed in a difficult position?—Undoubtedly, yes.

Q. And you had to do what you were told?—I thought it best to do so.

Q. Thought it was expedient?—Yes, sir.

Q. Or things might have been made hot for you?—I don't mind about being hot. They would not have been pleasant perhaps.

Q. It really comes to this, that the relieving officers were frightened of the guardians?—I don't say frightened.

Q. Well, you were apprehensive?—As I said before, I prefer to work with as little friction as possible.

Q. And therefore allowed yourself to be coerced into doing what your judgment rebelled against?—I was persuaded to do what otherwise I should not have done.

Q. Was Mr. Diamond a member of your committee?—He is a member of my committee at present.

Q. Have you ever been present when Mr. Diamond has addressed questions to applicants?—Certainly.

Q. Have you heard other members of the committee telling him to shut up and to mind his own business or words to that effect?—Words to that effect may have passed.

Q. May have passed?—Yes.

Q. Then it comes to this, that if a member of your committee puts questions to applicants for relief with a view to testing the case, that is resented by other members?—No, sir, I won't say that is the general rule. This may have been done in a spirit of joking.

Q. Come, come. You have heard it?—I have heard words to that effect being used, but whether they have been seriously used I cannot say.

Q. Mr. Gard, I have every sympathy with your position, but you have no reason to be frightened. At any rate you have heard these words used in the presence of applicants?—Yes.

Q. You have heard guardians told in the presence of applicants to shut up or mind their own business?—I have.

Q. And called a fathead and things of that kind?—I cannot answer for that, sir.

Q. But you know it occurred?—I cannot answer for the actual expressions.

Q. When Mr. Diamond put a perfectly proper question to applicants which he had a perfect right to put?—Undoubtedly.

Q. Questions you might put as relieving officer?—Yes.

Q. And he is told by other members to shut up?—Yes.

Q. Putting questions to test cases?—Yes.

Q. Did that strike you as a satisfactory state of things?—I don't think I should have put up with that.

Q. What effect did you think it would have on persons who heard it and who were applying for relief?—I don't know that I considered the effect it would have on people.

Q. Were these people in the habit of coming to you and demanding relief in pretty plain terms?—They used strong language.

Q. Threatened you and demanded it?—Yes, sir; I have been subjected to threats.

Q. Don't you think they were encouraged to assume that tone by the incident you have related with regard to Mr. Diamond?—Possibly so.

Q. I should think so too. Were you present at this meeting of relieving officers?—Yes, I was present.

Q. When was it held?—It is impossible to tell you, but it would be some time ago.

Q. Roughly speaking?—It must have been about last February or March.

Q. And where?—It was held here downstairs.

Q. Tell me who were present?—All the relieving officers except three—they were Powell, Pitt, and Miles, I think. I would not be certain about it.

Q. The others were present?—Yes.

Q. What was the meeting called for?—It was only an informal meeting. We happened to be here accidentally, getting relieving cheques, and met just in the ordinary way. It had been suggested for some time that we should have a meeting.

Q. What for?—To discuss our position with regard to giving relief to able-bodied men.

Q. And to discuss this Inquiry?—Yes.

Q. And what did you decide to do?—I don't know that anything definite was decided upon. It was to decide what attitude we should take up.

Q. What attitude did you take up?—We discussed whether we should take the responsibility of giving out-relief to able-bodied men.

Q. Yes, whether you should take the responsibility or place it on the guardians?—Yes.

Q. I believe that you came to a very proper resolution, that you would tell the whole truth to the Inspector at this Inquiry?—I came to the conclusion that I would speak as I am speaking at the present time.

Q. That was settled at the meeting?—As far as I can remember the whole of the business was to lay the facts before the Inspector.

Q. And what was the alternative to that?—What was the alternative? The alternative was that we should take the responsibility.

Q. Did not someone suggest that you should stick to the guardians?—It may have been suggested, I took very little notice.

Q. I put it to you, Mr. Gard, that the object of the meeting was to consider whether you should stick to the guardians or give them away, and you decided on the latter course?—The object of that meeting was whether we should take the responsibility of giving relief to able-bodied men or whether we should ask the Guardians to assume it.

Q. And, you have told us also, your attitude at the Inquiry?—And also as to our attitude.

Q. And you decided that you could not suppress anything at all, but give the full facts?—I decided to answer all questions put to me; I cannot answer for the others.

Mr. P. G. MILES, Relieving Officer; sworn and examined.

(The Inspector.) Your name?—P. G. Miles.

Q. How long have you been a relieving officer?—About seven years.

Q. What were you before?—Temporary relieving officer.

Q. Of this union?—Yes, sir.

Q. How long have you been connected with the relieving department?—Just over 18 months.

Q. And that is all your experience?—Yes, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you ever been directed to relieve any particular case by any of the guardians?—Yes, I have.

Q. Can you give an instance?—I can't remember the names.

Q. Who were the guardians who approached you?—There have been Mrs. Cordery, Mr. Sumner,—

Q. Mr. Sumner and Mrs. Cordery?—Yes.

Q. Any one else?—No, I don't know of anyone else. I have been advised on several occasions to relieve from other guardians.

Q. In the cases you mention was pressure put upon you to relieve?—Not particularly pressure. They probably knew more about the case at the time than I did.

Q. But you know you have fought the board of guardians over some cases yourself?—Sometimes I have not agreed with their decisions, but I have given in eventually.

Q. Why?—As a matter of fact I was so overwhelmed with work that I had not the time to make the investigations that were necessary.

Q. Then you gave relief in an indiscriminate manner?—I don't say that.

Q. But you said that you had not the proper time to make the necessary investigations?—They have been deserving cases and cases I was justified in relieving.

Q. I am afraid I don't follow. How can relief be other than indiscriminate if you had not the time to make the necessary investigations?—Some cases were probably investigated.

Q. And we may agree that some cases relieved were not investigated?—That may have been the case.

Q. Perhaps it would be more correct to say it must have been?—Probably it was given indiscriminately in some cases.

Q. And in some cases wastefully?—Not wastefully.

Q. Does not the one involve the other?—I don't see it in that light. A man applies for relief. You don't have time to see that man. Very likely his application is not taken up before 7 o'clock.

Q. But I suggest to you that that is a wasteful manner of giving relief. This action may be improper and therefore wasteful. Did you receive any special instructions from your committee in November, 1904?—I was not in charge of a district at that time.

Q. Who was it suggested that you had better stick to the guardians?—I cannot say.

Q. You know it was said?—It may have been said. I would not swear.

Q. You have no sort of recollection?—I would not swear.

Q. And you came to the very proper conclusion that you would not stick to anyone but would let the facts be known?—I came to the conclusion to tell the truth.

(The Inspector.) At the time of the meeting the relieving officers knew that one of their number had been surcharged?—Yes.

Q. And that an appeal was still under the consideration of the Local Government Board?—Yes, sir.

Q. And it was in their minds that other cases might be surcharged?—They thought it very probable.

(Mr. Grant.) I make the same application with regard to Mr. Gard as I did with the other officers. This is all fresh to me. I have heard nothing of this before.

Q. No. When did you first undertake your duties?—I followed precedent. It was generally understood that out-of-works where they were apparently genuine should be relieved.

Q. Out-of-works were to be relieved and not sent into the house?—I don't think there was any stipulation not to send them into the house.

Q. What did you give to able-bodied men. Did you give relief in kind or offer them the house?—I gave them relief in kind more often than not.

Q. Invariably?—Yes.

Q. Then I suggest that you were not following out the instructions. Have any cases come under your notice where the statements of the applicants were untrue?—Yes.

Q. Will you give me one or two instances?—I am thinking of a man named Welsh of Brabazon Street. He said he had a wife ill and nothing in the cupboard. On going there I found his wife out and food in the cupboard.

Q. Have you known any instance where food was improperly made use of?—I know of none personally.

Q. Or being unused?—I don't know of any.

Q. Do you know anything of the case of a Mrs. Carey?—Yes.

Q. Where did she live?—Just off Brabazon Street, Barchester Street, I think, 95.

Q. You know that Mrs. Carey went to the demonstration of the unemployed?—I heard so.

Q. To Mr. Balfour?—Yes.

Q. And Mrs. Carey stated that she had five children and a widow mother to keep, and that her husband was out of work. You saw that reported?—Yes.

Q. It was reported in the *Daily Mail*?—Yes.

Q. Was that a true statement?—Her husband, after that procession, applied to me for relief, and said he was out of work at the time. I have every reason to believe that was a true statement at the time she made it to Mr. Balfour. They were not receiving relief at the time of the procession.

Q. At all events it was not until afterwards they applied for relief?—No, sir.

Q. What was this case you told us about when you were fighting the guardians?—One case, I think. I cannot give you the particular instance.

Q. Suppose the guardians came to you and directed you to give relief which you knew to be illegal: would you have done it?—I should not have done it.

Q. Suppose the guardians came to you and directed you to give relief in a case which had already been adversely decided upon by your committee: what would you have done?—Referred it to the committee.

Q. Referred it to the committee?—Yes, sir.

Q. Do you say that you have never relieved a case at the instance of the guardians?—I cannot say I have not. I have done so.

Mr. Gard.

28 June.

Mr. Miles.

28 June.

Mr. Miles.
28 June.

Q. Give us an instance of that?—I have several from Mrs. Cordery.

Q. Mrs. Cordery?—I know what you were going to say—I should not give relief.

Q. I was going to say in which you were compelled to give relief?—I should think it advisable to relieve if the guardians wished it.

Q. Now, why?—Because I suppose they know more about the case than I had time to find out.

Q. And that is the only reason?—Yes, if I had not the time to find out, but I should not be led.

Q. Do you know that Mrs. Cordery was looking after 12 districts. Is that the only reason you have for obeying Mrs. Cordery's directions in the matter?—You see, Mrs. Cordery would take out one case and would find out all about that case.

Q. And these cases were always relieved by you?—I believe so.

Q. Did you ever decline?—No, sir.

Q. Now, come, this is not a laughing matter?—No, sir.

Q. Have you not stated that you lent sums of money to the guardians?—No, I have never said that.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Miles, did you not address this

letter on the 21st March, to Mr. Lough:—

"Sir—On Friday, the 11th instant, a gentleman called at my private address stating that he represented a firm of solicitors who, on behalf of the Local Government Board, were making inquiries in the district with reference to the public Inquiry to be held in this union. I asked him the name of the firm he was representing, and he stated he had not their permission to give it. Consequently I refused to have anything to say to him. He again called on the 14th instant, and as the circumstances were precisely the same, I told him I should mention the matter to you. Since then I have heard no more of him. Yours faithfully, P. G. Miles."

In a letter of the 25th March, Mr. Lough wrote to the Local Government Board stating—"The guardians think it right to bring to your notice the facts referred to in the accompanying copy of a letter from one of their relieving officers." And thereon the Board wrote—"With respect to the statements, a copy of which is enclosed, I can only say that the Local Government Board have not authorised any firm of solicitors to make any enquiries into this matter." Have you heard any more about this matter?

(Mr. Robb.) I need scarcely say that I know nothing of this matter and will deal with it at the proper time. I might have objected to the letter being now produced, but I thought it would waste your time.

(The Inspector.) Now as to to-morrow. Have we any more relieving officers to call?

(Mr. Robb.) I want Mr. Law.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Law is away.

(Mr. Robb.) And Mr. Deason.

(The Inspector.) I don't think we can take them. It is now 4 o'clock. What I mean is this. To-morrow we have the Essex police.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you arranged for them?

(The Inspector.) I thought we had arranged.

(Mr. Robb.) Is that for to-morrow, sir?

(The Inspector.) Friday morning.

(Mr. Robb.) I am quite prepared to go into Laindon to-morrow.

(The Inspector.) Are we sure they will come?

(Mr. Robb.) I have communicated with them and told them to hold themselves in readiness.

(The Inspector.) Will you communicate?

(Mr. Robb.) The position is this: they are to come here unless they hear to the contrary. I wrote on the

subject and have received no reply.

(The Inspector.) So far as I know we have this extra relieving officer, then we have Laindon, then the police, and then Mr. Oxley. He is a very important witness.

(Mr. Robb.) There will be Mr. Clarke and the constables and superintendent. I think we might take Mr. Deason and Mr. Law as well to-morrow. Well, then, Mr. Oxley won't be called to-morrow.

(Mr. Grant.) I am afraid you have hardly provided for enough witnesses to-morrow, because I shall not be able to cross-examine this police evidence.

(The Inspector.) There are one or two relieving officers, policemen and others.

(Mr. Grant.) In this case, I shall have to ask that the cross-examinations shall stand over.

(The Inspector.) There will be some correspondence.

(Mr. Robb.) I don't know in the least. I have a letter from the superintendent in which he says he is not allowed to make a written statement. He will give his evidence here. So I am in the same position as Mr. Grant. I should have thought that the whole thing would have been dealt with.

EIGHTH DAY.

Friday, June 29th, 1906.

(Mr. J. A. Johnston.) I have been asked to tell you, sir, that Mr. Corrie Grant is delayed by the flood on the District Railway, which, as I daresay you are aware, has this morning inconvenienced more than one of us. He is on his way here, and will be here as soon as he can. I do not want to delay the Inquiry and I will take notes for him until he comes. I do not know whether it will be convenient to you to proceed with the rest of the relieving officers. Of course I will submit to whatever you think is the best arrangement. I only suggest the relieving officers because it is a subject on which the cross-examination has been reserved in any case. The other evidence Mr. Grant would want to hear. Would it seriously interfere with the Inquiry if you take one of the relieving officers first?

(The Inspector.) We might do that.

(Mr. Johnston.) I do not think it would be wasting time.

(Mr. Robb.) I understand the superintendent is coming up here to-day, and he tells me it is absolutely impossible for him to come two days.

(Mr. Johnston.) I quite appreciate that.

(The Inspector.) So long as we get the other evidence—

(Mr. Johnston.) It is only the question of a short delay. Mr. Grant is on his way. I do not think it would be interfering with your arrangements about taking the police evidence to-day if you take one of these witnesses first.

(Mr. Robb.) There is one matter I am instructed to refer to. It is as to something said by Mr. Grant, but I will reserve it until he comes.

Mr. A. C. DEASON, Relieving Officer; sworn and examined.

(The Inspector.) How long have you been a relieving officer for the guardians?—About a year and five months.

Q. What were you before?—Printer's overseer.

Q. Were you a relieving officer in November, 1904?—No, sir.

Q. When did you come on?—Christmas.

Q. Are you in the same district now as you were then?—No, I had No. 1 then; I have No. 2 now.

Q. Did you come on when the relieving officers were increased?—No. There were eight when I was appointed, now there are twelve. The increase took place last September.

Q. Did you find a large number of able-bodied men on your list?—A very large number.

Q. How many?—Over 100.

Q. How was the visiting done?—I had to assist in the visiting. I had 1,100 or 1,200 people on my books.

Q. You have had no experience of a relieving officer's duties before?—I have been at Bethnal Green.

Q. As relieving officer?—Temporary relieving officer.

Q. Could you, under these circumstances, carry out your investigations fully and thoroughly?—They were carried out, sir.

Q. By your assistant?—Yes.

Q. What were your duties then?—I was relieving officer.

Q. What did you do?—Took applications.

Q. And decided on what should be done, I suppose?—Yes.

Q. When you took your cases, your sudden and urgent cases, before the guardians, did they make any order?—When the cases were not satisfactory we had orders for the house.

Q. Did you refuse relief in any case?—If I was not satisfied, yes.

Q. Either refused relief or gave an order for the house?—Yes.

Q. Had you any instructions from the guardians as to what to do with these cases?—When I came on there were over 100 on the books, and I understood instructions had been given to the relieving officers to give relief.

Q. That is what you did?—Yes.

Q. Have you, in your opinion, ever been unduly interfered with by any member of the board of guardians?—Yes, once or twice.

Q. Once or twice?—Yes.

Q. I do not mean in the way of giving you assistance or information?—Oh, no, no.

Q. But suggesting that you should give relief to cases?—Quite so; yes.

Q. Has there been a great reduction in relief since lately?—A big reduction.

Q. To what do you attribute that?—The revival in trade, chiefly. Of course, I have a smaller district now than I had then.

Q. Still, you know the figures?—The amount has been greatly decreased since Christmas.

Q. Due, as you say, to the improvement in trade?—Chiefly, and to the Central Unemployed Fund. They employ a great many of my men.

Q. Is that a new organisation?—Which?

Q. The Central Unemployed Fund?—Since, I think, last November. Prior to Christmas.

Q. That has relieved them?—Yes.

Q. Is there any cause you can give of the decrease in relief?—No.

Q. As I understand, the decrease —?—I have been more stringent, certainly.

Q. Why?—I have been more exacting.

Q. Why?—I have gone into the cases more thoroughly, and when I found a man unworthy I stopped his relief.

Q. What reason had you to be more stringent?—No reason at all; I thought it my duty, that is all.

Q. It might have been because you had more time?—Yes, I had more time.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Deason, have you ever been compelled to relieve in any case against your judgment?—In one or two instances, yes.

Q. By whom?—Mr. Watts.

Q. Mr. Watts, one of the guardians. Anyone else?—Mrs. Cordery.

Q. Anyone else?—I cannot call to mind any more.

Q. Was pressure put upon you by these guardians?—Yes.

Q. Can you give us any typical case. I do not want to go through them all. Give a typical case, where you were compelled to relieve after you had exercised your discretion?—You mean the name of the applicant?

Q. Yes, give us one typical case?—I had one case where I was ordered to give relief after the committee had dealt with the case, and subsequently the man was sentenced to two months' hard labour for obtaining relief under false pretences.

Q. What was his name?—Thomas Searle.

Q. This man Searle came to you, and you enquired into his case and refused him relief?—Yes.

Q. And the matter went before the committee, who confirmed your decision?—Yes.

Q. And then an individual guardian came along and over-ruled the decision of the committee, and compelled you to give relief?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Let us have the name of the guardian?—Mrs. Cordery.

(Mr. Robb.) The name of the guardian?—Mrs. Cordery.

Q. Was she on that committee?—No, sir.

Q. Not on that committee?—No, sir.

Q. Was she living in your district?—No, sir.

Q. Had she any peculiar knowledge of this man's circumstances?—That I cannot say; the man went to her.

Q. The man was afterwards convicted?—Yes.

Q. Of what?—Obtaining relief under false pretences.

Q. And sentenced to two months' hard labour?—Yes.

Q. You give us that as a typical sample?—Yes.

Q. Of the kind of pressure put upon you?—Yes.

Q. There were other cases?—Yes.

Q. You give that as a type of them?—Yes.

Q. Was this man Searle any relation to a greengrocer contractor of that name?—I cannot say; I think not.

(Mr. Watts.) What is the address of Searle?—No. 8, Beale Place, Roman Road, Old Ford.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you know a man named Albert Boulton, Roman Road?—No, sir.

Q. He would be in your district?—Roman Road?

Q. Yes?—What number Roman Road?

Q. I am afraid I cannot give you the number?—I only have one side of Roman Road.

Q. Oh, I see, it might be another officer. I will make further enquiries. Was a man named Vincent relieved?—He was not relieved at all.

Q. You don't know anything about the cases of Vincent or Boulton?—No.

Q. Do you know anything about the case of Robert Butcher, 29, Monier Road. What were the peculiar circumstances there?—He was having relief from me as an able-bodied man, and he was working under an assumed name for a man, I believe, in Grove Road, Bow. It came to my knowledge, and I thought he was the man I was relieving. I pursued my clue, and found it was the man. I brought it to the notice of the committee, and the committee ordered the man to be prosecuted.

Q. And then there was a great deal of delay, I think?—Yes.

Mr. Deason.

29 June.

Mr. Deason,

29 June.

Q. If you had had the staff to follow that up in the first instance, when the man first applied, of course a good deal of money would have been saved?—I cannot say that, because he was working under an assumed name. He had an alias.

Q. That is another typical case?—Yes.

Q. And have you heard other instances of assumed names?—No, I don't think I have.

Q. What I mean—not necessarily in your own district—is it a fact this sort of thing has been practised?—I cannot say yes to that.

Q. I mean—have not some of these men who applied for relief several aliases?—I cannot say, not to my knowledge.

Q. Do you know anything about the case of Ketteridge, 71, Locton Street, now at 50, Wendon Street?—Yes, I know the case of Thomas Ketteridge.

Q. Was he relieved by you?—No, sir.

Q. Do you know about the case?—Yes.

Q. Was he sent to Margate by the guardians?—I believe he was.

Q. For what reason?—I cannot say.

Q. Was he given an overcoat?—He said so.

(The Inspector.) You do not know?—No; he was at Margate when I came on.

(Mr. Robb.) Was he brought back?—No, I think he came back on his own account.

Q. Minus his overcoat?—That is so.

Q. Was he brought before the guardians?—Yes.

Q. And nothing was done in the matter?—The man was ordered to be prosecuted in the first place, I believe, but I am not quite sure of this. Subsequently it was adjourned, because the man was epileptic.

Q. He never was prosecuted?—No.

Q. Who introduced him to you for relief?—He was never relieved by me.

Q. Then you don't know by what guardian this man was named?—No, I don't.

Q. Do you know anything about the case of George Offord?—Yes.

Q. Mr. Diamond, one of the guardians, called attention to it, did he not?—I do not remember it.

Q. Did Mr. Diamond write to Mr. Wallace, the superintendent relieving officer, and did not Mr. Wallace refer the matter to you?—What were the circumstances in Offord's case?—I might have had notice of this, to look the case up a bit. I remember now I had a letter from Mr. Wallace in reference to the case.

Q. Offord was a man who was relieved by you?—Yes, sir.

Q. It was ascertained he had a regular allowance from his brother-in-law of 10s. a week?—I think not; not to my knowledge.

Q. Will you kindly look the case up and refresh your knowledge?—Yes.

Q. Listen to this:—"Poplar Union, Upper North Street, 16th August, 1905. Dear Sir,—Re George Offord, "I beg to enclose herewith letter sent by you re the above-named, the truth of which has been inquired into and substantiated by Mr. Deason, relieving officer. The case was laid before the Bow relief committee at their meeting on Monday last, and I have to inform you, in future the only relief he can have will be the house." Don't you remember something about that?"

(Mr. Johnston.) Will you tell us by whom that letter—

(Mr. Robb.) Will you allow me to conduct my case in the ordinary way?

(Mr. Johnston.) May I have that letter? It is read. I am entitled to have it.

(Mr. Robb.) I will conduct my examination in the ordinary way. If this gentleman wishes to put any question later, he can. These interruptions serve no use or purpose. I was interrupted just now for a guardian's name when I was on the point of putting a question. (To witness.) Do you recollect anything about that?—Yes, I do.

Q. What do you recollect about it?—I had to investigate the case on a letter sent by Mr. Wallace, and the committee endorsed my report and the man was refused further relief.

Q. Was he a man who had an opportunity of doing work and did not do it?—I believe that is so.

Q. His old father, old Mr. Offord, has worked for years at Barker's Soda Works, Old Ford Road?—Yes.

Q. And this son has been sponging on the old man?—He was working there, too, but they put him off because he was too lazy.

Q. He would not work?—No.

Q. Then he came along and was relieved?—I do not know.

Q. Was he sponging on his poor old mother for rent?—The mother would not say that when I saw her.

Q. It was the case of a man where a poor old father was working at this soda works and helping to support his son, and the son would not work at all. You satisfied yourself about that?—When I had the case the old man was dead.

Q. You satisfied yourself he, the son, was a lazy, worthless scamp?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Offord's case was referred to you. You reported about it, and the result was the relief was stopped?—Certainly, yes.

(Mr. Robb.) Now this guardian, Mr. Diamond, who drew attention to that case, was he a member of your committee?—Yes, sir.

Q. Have you been present at the committee meetings when applicants came before the committee?—Yes, certainly.

Q. Have you heard Mr. Diamond put questions to these applicants?—Yes, sir.

Q. Have you heard other guardians object to Mr. Diamond questioning the applicants?—They objected to some of the questions he has put.

Q. On what ground?—That I cannot say.

Q. They told him to mind his own business?—I do not know anything about that. There has been serious wrangling at different times.

Q. The other members have objected to Mr. Diamond putting questions to the applicants?—To a question, or to the question. They took exception to the question.

Q. And in the presence of the applicants?—Yes, sir.

Q. Were those questions improper?—I do not think I ought to express any opinion.

Q. I would like to have your opinion. Were they questions a guardian had a right to put to a person seeking relief?—I should say yes.

Q. Yet, in the presence of the applicants, Mr. Diamond was censured by his brother members for putting these questions. He was interfered with?—Yes, quite so.

Q. Can you give me the name of the guardian or guardians who interfered with him principally?—No, I do not know that I can do that, sir.

Q. Did you hear terms of abuse levelled at him by the guardians?—Several times.

Q. You have heard him called "fathead" and other elegant expressions?—No, I cannot say I heard that expression used.

Q. Well, you saw it in public print?—Yes.

Q. What other expressions have you heard?—As I said before, several wranglings were going on.

Q. You heard terms of abuse?—Yes.

Q. Because Mr. Diamond was seeking, as a guardian, to investigate the circumstances of these applicants?—Yes.

Q. Now, you had some investigators employed under you, Mr. Deason?—Yes, for a short time only.

Q. How many?—Only one, of course.

Q. What was his name?—Crowley.

Q. What was he?—He was an investigator.

Q. What was he in his private capacity?—I cannot tell you for the moment.

Q. Was he a member of the unemployed?—That I cannot tell you. He was there when I was appointed.

Q. How did he go about his work? Did he strike you as being experienced?—Yes.

Q. You think he did it satisfactorily?—Yes.

Q. Were you present at this meeting of relieving officers?—I was, sir.

Q. What was the meeting called for?—For general conversation among ourselves.

Q. What was the purport of that general conversation?—I may say to coach one another.

Q. What for—for an examination?—Well, we expected we should be called at the Inquiry, and we thought it only natural to meet together and talk the matter over.

Q. Was it an intelligent anticipation of the questions I am putting to you now?—I think not.

Q. Perhaps there were other matters not within my ken. Perhaps you can tell us about them?—I can scarcely tell you what took place. It was very discursive.

Q. Did anyone say the meeting was called to consider whether you should stick to the guardians or give them away?—Nothing at all like that.

Q. Someone told us he remembered the phrase about sticking to the guardians?—This is the first time I have heard the phrase.

Q. Is that putting it in a popular way: Is that what the meeting was called for?—No, certainly not.

Q. What was all this discursive conversation—this coaching—about?—As I said, we anticipated that we might be called at this Inquiry, and we thought we would like to educate ourselves up to it.

Q. But the Inquiry had not then been decided upon?—I think it had—the preliminary Inquiry.

Q. Yes, but that would not involve you going into the box and giving evidence on oath?—We did not know what it might mean.

Q. Why did you suppose it might lead to anything?—I believe the guardians asked for a public Inquiry.

Q. At that time what did you consider you had to consider—to be coached upon?—Things in general.

Q. Yes; I mean you wanted to agree on a common line of action. You did not want one to tell one tale and one another?—No. It is a common thing for relieving officers to meet together.

Q. No doubt, but not in this way?—At Bethnal Green they meet monthly.

Q. Yes, but here you met to decide upon a common line of action?—Yes.

Q. One gentleman told us that he realised the time had come when he ought to do his duty. Was that your point of view?—I cannot say this, because these things were not in vogue when I was appointed.

Q. What things?—Giving the able-bodied men relief.

Q. The indiscriminate granting of relief?—That is so.

Q. And, of course, you were not responsible for the policy of granting relief in this indiscriminate manner?—No.

Q. May I take it that those officers who resisted their instructions had rather an unpleasant time?—Exactly.

Q. I mean if you had dared to say "I am not a mere doll; I have discretion, and I am going to use it," the thing would have been made rather warm for you?—Say lukewarm.

Q. Well, I accept the qualification. So you were saved the trouble of thinking for yourself?—Well, you see, I was a junior member.

Q. And you were saved that trouble?—I was prepared to take the advice of my senior officers.

Q. And the guardians?—And the guardians.

Q. So really you were saved all trouble of thinking, and you became mere clerks to carry out the directions and policy of the guardians?—You must not say that. It was only in one or two instances we were specially called upon to relieve.

Q. It was only when you made an attempt to break away from the set policy of the guardians this pressure was brought to bear on you, and the relieving officers were censured for daring to exercise discretion?—I saw it in the paper this morning. It is the first I have heard of it.

Q. Of course, you did not want to be placed in that position?—No, I did not.

Q. So I suggest to you, Mr. Deason, that for your own peace and quietness you followed out the set policy of the guardians?—Yes.

Q. And it was only when you endeavoured in one or two isolated instances to break away from that and exercise your own discretion this pressure was put upon you?—Yes.

(Mr. Johnston.) I ask you to take the same course with this witness as the others.

(The Inspector.) I am going to ask him one or two questions. At the time of this meeting of the relieving officers, is it a fact that one of them was under a surcharge?—Mr. Evins.

Q. And the surcharge was not remitted?—No.

Q. I suppose you had on your books a considerable number of cases of relief given in the same circumstances as those which led to the surcharge on Mr. Evins?—Yes.

Q. And that may have been the subject of discussion among you?—It may have been.

Mr. Deason.

29 June.

Mr. R. W. E. COMFORT, Out-relief Distributor; sworn and examined.

(The Inspector.) What office do you hold under the Poplar Guardians?—Out-relief distributor.

Q. How long have you held that?—Since October last year.

Q. Whom did you succeed?—Mr. Phillips.

Q. Phillips was made assistant?—Yes.

Q. What are your duties?—To receive and issue stores.

Q. Do the contractors send stores to you, and you then distribute them among the recipients on the relieving officers' orders?—Yes.

Q. What articles do you give?—Bread, meat, pea soup, rice, arrowroot—

Q. Do you give much arrowroot?—A very little; only about a pound a week.

Q. Port wine?—Yes.

Q. Have you lately had any additional assistance?—I had temporary assistance. I had the same assistance that has been given to Mr. Genery, who is taking the relief temporarily.

Q. Genery is doing the work temporarily?—He has the same assistance as I had.

Q. He is in temporarily between Phillips and yourself?—Quite right, sir.

Q. Can you tell me the greatest amount of bread you have given in a week?—I don't know that I can from memory.

Q. Have you ever given up to an amount of five tons of bread in a week?—Yes.

Q. Have you ever given up to the amount of 1½ tons of meat in a week?—Yes.

Q. And milk—what would be about the quantity?—About thirty gallons a week.

Q. Sugar?—About a ton.

Q. Tea would be about a hundredweight?—More than that. From two chests to two chests and a half.

Q. You give butter?—We did, but we give margarine now.

Q. And syrup, about 100 pounds?—About that, sir.

Q. So your operations were pretty extensive?—Very extensive.

Q. Do you, of your own knowledge, know any case in which this out-door relief in kind was abused?—No, sir.

Q. Or sold?—No such case came under my notice.

Q. Or exchanged for drink?—No case came to my knowledge.

Mr. Comfort.

29 June.

Mr. Comfort.

29 June.

Q. Are you in communication with relieving officers on this matter: have they come to see you about the matter?—I am not.

Q. The applicant, or recipient, has no choice as to what article he should get?—No, sir; it is enumerated on a ticket.

Q. You are simply the agent to hand it out?—Yes.

Q. And you handed it out on this occasion?—Yes.

Q. How many assistants have you?—Two.

Q. The things kept in the store are delivered by the contractors?—Yes.

Q. Is it your duty to see the right quantity of goods is delivered?—Yes.

Q. And then you sign a delivery note?—Yes.

Q. What books do you keep?—Stores' issue account, out-relief stores' account, invoices—

Q. What time do people come for relief?—Any time on my advice.

Q. And take the things away?—Yes.

Q. Have you any case where you have to send goods to the paupers' own homes?—No, sir.

Q. In these meat orders, do you specify beef or mutton or simply meat?—In cases of sickness "Mutton" is put across the ticket. We give out very little—about a stone.

Q. Mutton only in case of sickness?—Yes, sir.

Q. Certainly in the matter of meat your distributions show a great decrease, do they not?—Yes.

Q. What are you giving now?—Last week, 1,097 pounds.

Q. As against your maximum of about a ton and a half?—Yes.

Q. And what bread are you giving now?—A ton and three-quarters last week.

Q. Against the maximum of over five tons?—Yes.

Q. Do all the other articles show a corresponding decrease?—Yes, sir.

Q. What is the value of the articles which you gave last week. Can you summarise that?—£65 19s. 7d.

Q. And do you happen to know if the maximum was over £200?—£285, I think, sir.

Q. So practically the relief in kind is ceasing?—Well, it is materially reduced.

Q. Does it show a progressive reduction?—Yes, starting from the beginning of this quarter.

Q. Who, as a rule, come to fetch this relief. Would it be the head of the family or the wife?—The head of the family.

Q. The men would actually come themselves?—Of course, in the case of a cripple it was a substitute.

Q. In case the men came themselves in the ordinary way for the relief in kind, did you give it for the whole week or daily?—They were allowed to take one, two, or three of these portions.

Q. Do you mean to say they came once a week?—They could come three times a week.

Q. They would never have their relief for the whole week?—Oh, yes, the relief was cleared up in one week.

Q. I mean a man would not take the whole of the relief due to him for one week at one time?—In cases of a large family.

Q. He had his option?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) You were appointed in place of Mr. Phillips?—Yes.

Q. He was disgraced and reduced to the position of assistant?—Yes.

Q. Can you tell us why that was done?—No, sir, I cannot. The matter was gone into by the guardians.

Q. Do you know there was serious shortage of the stores?—I have heard something about it.

Q. Apparently it could not be satisfactorily explained?—I don't think it could, sir.

Q. Was that the reason why Mr. Phillips was reduced to the position of assistant?—That, I believe, was so.

Q. Have you ever discussed the matter with Mr. Phillips?—Yes, sir, I have.

Q. Then you know why he did?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) That is all on the official record?

(Mr. Robb.) I am not sure, sir.

(The Inspector.) It is.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you know there was a shortage in various items in the stores?—Yes.

Q. Various kinds of provisions, also such things as brandy, and so on?—Yes.

Q. Do you know if the matter has been cleared up since, or whether the deficit was written off?—The deficit, I believe, has been written off.

Q. Has there been any deficit, or any portion of the stores unaccounted for since?—No, sir.

Q. Why did you write off so much waste every month—or, rather, every week?—Well, there is a weekly waste in meat.

Q. I see you write off, taking the Christmas quarter, 1905—just correct me if these figures are wrong—in the fourth week the waste was £5 15s. 9d., fifth week £5 1s. 10d., sixth week £4 1s. 10d., seventh week £5 2s. 7d., eighth week £4 16s. 10d., ninth week £5 4s. 6d. So there is over £30 for waste in six weeks?—Yes, that is quite right.

Q. What does that represent?—That represents meat, sir.

Q. £30 waste on meat alone?—Yes.

Q. How does that come about?—I think the heaviest charges do not exceed 5 per cent.

Q. But this is for meat alone, you know. It would be considerably more for meat alone if you say it is all attributable to that?—I have not got the book here. I cannot go into all the items. I have only got a summary. I can give them to you, and will let you have them.

Q. Why should there be any waste at all if the articles are properly booked in and out?—What do you particularly refer to? If you mention items—

Q. I mean meat. You told me all this waste is attributable to meat, and I take that statement. You lost £5 15s. 9d., for instance, in the fourth week of the Christmas quarter on your meat?—Well, I think that is waste on something like 250 stone.

Q. But, Mr. Comfort, don't you know the guardians had the best meat, free from bone, and so on?—I am quite aware of that.

Q. Did not they buy the prime quality meat so as to obviate waste?—The waste is inevitable. You understand, the meat has to be cut up into small joints of one, two, two-and-a-half, and three pounds, and you incur a loss of 1½ per cent. on scaling, which only leaves 3½ per cent. to cover everything else.

Q. Do you do that with prime English loins?—I do sir.

Q. I could understand it if it was frozen meat with water oozing out?—I say it is done with the best meat.

Q. Has any frozen meat come under your notice?—None whatever.

Q. Would you know it if you saw it?—Yes, I should.

Q. What experience have you had?—Twelve years.

Q. What as?—Out-relief distributor, assistant out-relief distributor, and relieving officer.

Q. Have you any further explanation to give as to the waste?—No, sir. You will find it is principally on the meat.

Q. Well, now—?—I think to a practical man you will find 5 per cent. is moderate. I find I have already reduced the waste of meat for Lady Day quarter by 419 lbs.

Q. In a quarter?—In a quarter.

Q. Weight or waste?—Weight, sir.

Q. You say as a practical man, dealing with prime English joints, free from bone, that £5 a week is a reasonable amount of waste to incur?—On the quantities with which we are dealing.

Q. Who cuts the joints up?—There are three of us. We each of us take a share. I have been paying special attention to the cutting up of the meat myself.

Q. But there was no bone?—I am aware of that, sir.

Q. How were these joints delivered—in what sizes?—I have said. In one, one-and-a-half, and two pounds.

Q. You scale them off when they come in?—The weight is checked, yes.

Q. Of course, you see you get your full weight in waste then?—There is no waste then.

Q. Yet in cutting up joints of this size you lose this £5 or £6 worth. Do you mean every week?—No, sir; not every week.

Q. Look at your figures. Take the Christmas quarter, 1905, and tell me if those six weeks I have mentioned do not average £5. Take from the fourth week to the ninth week of the Christmas quarter?—Yes.

Q. The fourth week, £5 15s. 9d.?—£5 4s. 6d. I make it.

Q. Will you look at the guardians' minutes?—£5 15s. 9d. is correct.

Q. How do you get the other figure. Let me have a look at your book, will you. I see in that fourth week there was 11s. 3d. waste on something else. What is that column with no heading to it?—There were two pounds of rolled oats, three pounds of rice, and a pound of sugar.

Q. Why are not these things delivered in packages?—I was not responsible for the stock. As a matter of fact, in the fourth week I took charge of the stores.

Q. I do not care who is responsible. I want to know how the waste on rolled oats, and things of that kind occurred?—They are not delivered in packages. They have to be weighed out, when you incur the waste.

Q. How much rolled oats did you use that week?—The fourth week?

Q. Yes?—314 pounds.

Q. They all came in packages?—No, sir, they came in bags, and had to be weighed out in separate pounds.

Q. In the bags?—We gave a pound without the bag. We were supposed to give weight without the bag.

Q. How did you weigh sugar—in bags?—Yes.

Q. Did you weigh the paper as well as the sugar?—We have to give weight without the paper.

Q. Did you do it?—Yes.

Q. What did you allow?—Two pounds in a bag.

Q. When you issued these goods to paupers did you give them a ticket?—Yes, sir.

Q. Did you state against the articles the price or value on that ticket?—No, sir.

Q. Did you book it up?—We booked it up. We recognised the ticket by a number.

Q. Did you make an entry showing each item of food distributed and the value of it?—No, sir.

Q. What did you do?—You are, I take it, mentioning cases which leave part of their goods?

Q. I am not mentioning any particular class of people. When you issue any sort of food to the paupers do you book it in any way—the value of the individual items issued?—Yes, sir, they are all booked up.

Q. Suppose, for instance, a woman has 3s. worth of goods. Do you not give her a ticket?—Yes.

Q. Do you show on the ticket the value of the separate items?—No, sir.

Q. Make it 3s.—That is done by the relieving officer. The ticket is made up to the full amount, and if she leaves half of that quantity—

Q. It is shown by the relieving officers. They enter it on the ticket?—No, sir, that is a matter for us.

Q. You have just said that it was the relieving officers who did it?—The relieving officers make out the ticket on which each item is specified—

Q. Each item is specified?—Yes, and the value carried out for each item.

Q. Now we have got it. What was the value carried out for a quarter of a pound of butter, when it was butter, when you were paying 1s. 2½d. a pound for butter. What was the value carried out?—Usually the charge is 4d.

Q. That would be sixteenpence a pound?—Yes.

Q. When you were only paying 1s. 2½d.?—Quite right.

Q. What is the meaning of that?—The object of that was—you see, you cannot charge fractions. You must have a fictitious price for the convenience of the books,

and that price is simply given to the relieving officers for the convenience of ourselves.

Q. Yes. So when you allege a woman gets 3s. worth of goods in relief, she does not get it. You are putting a fictitious price on your butter?—To some small extent. I have been able now to do away with these complicated prices, and introduce a uniform price, which works out at 10s. overcharge on every thousand pounds.

Q. That would work out at a penny-farthing on each pound of butter?—That is counteracted by another charge on some other item.

Q. Will you show me a specimen ticket?—I have not one here.

Q. Will you have one sent for?—Yes.

Q. It is the same thing with margarine, is it not?—Yes.

Q. Margarine which costs you 7d. per pound, you book out at 2d. per quarter pound?—That is right, sir.

Q. That is another instance of fictitious prices?—Of course, we charge 8d. for the sake of the uniform prices.

Q. And does that apply throughout?—Yes, all the articles issued.

Q. They were dealt with in that way?—Yes, that is the general practice, I think.

Q. It is apparently something you have to play with on top of the waste?—Well, it is, but I do not think it is hardly fair to put it in that way. It is done for convenience, and for simplifying the books and the prices, for the relieving officer cannot charge a farthing in the relief list or fractions.

Q. I suggest to you it makes the waste look like the waste of beer—10 per cent., at least?—No, sir.

Q. Did you have a stock-taker?—Yes.

Q. A Mr. Maddams, I think?—I believe that is his name.

Q. Was he the stock-taker at the time these shortages occurred?—I cannot say.

Q. You know he was, don't you?—I do not, sir. I have not referred to it.

Q. You have read the report of the special committee, have you not?—No, sir, I have not.

Q. Well, you may take it from me that he was the stock-taker then?—Very well, sir.

Q. Does he go through the stock frequently?—Once a quarter.

Q. How does he take it?—He takes each item separately.

Q. Does he weigh everything?—Yes.

Q. Every separate item?—Yes.

Q. Is he an experienced man?—He seems very able, sir. I should not like to try to deceive him.

Q. What is his private business or profession?—I have no knowledge whatever, sir.

Q. Do you know whether he is an insurance agent?—No, sir, I don't know and I don't care.

Q. You do not care about very much, do you?—It is no business of mine.

Q. If you do not give proper answers I shall deal with you in a manner?—All right.

Q. Who checks the stock you have over?—Mr. Genery, sir.

Q. Anyone else?—The stock-taker himself and my first assistant.

Q. Was not Mr. Sowerby called in?—No, sir.

Q. Come, now. Was not Mr. Sowerby, the organist, called in?—Mr. Sowerby was not when I took over the stock.

Q. When there was this jumble with Mr. Maddams about the stock, was not Mr. Sowerby called in to assist?—I do not know; it was before my time, and I think it is unreasonable to expect me to know anything about it. I did not make a special study of it.

Q. Was some gentlemen paid a guinea to check the stores in addition to the stock-taker?—I do not know anything about that.

Q. Was Mr. Sowerby, the organist at the Forest Gate schools, called in to check them?—I am sure I do not know.

Mr. Comfort.

29 June.

Q. Do you want to offer any further explanation of these fictitious prices when you book out these goods to paupers?—It does not seem to me any explanation requires to be offered, sir.

(The Inspector.) With reference to this question of waste, I suppose your accounts were audited by the Local Government Board?—Yes, and the question of waste has never been raised.

Q. And passed?—They have always been passed, and the waste has been materially reduced.

Q. The question of waste is to a great extent a matter of care?—Yes.

Q. It would be affected by not having a sharp knife?—It would be so. An inexperienced man might get double the waste as compared with an experienced.

Q. You say you have reduced the quantity of waste which made the shortage?—Yes, I have.

Q. As soon as you took over?—As soon as I took over.

Q. Your system of charging is well known to the Guardians?—Yes.

Q. If you do not account for the money, you account for the goods?—Yes.

Q. So the attribution of a certain sum of money as the price of the goods is not certain?—I have to get as near as I can to avoid overcharge. It works out at an

overcharge of 10s. in £1,000, and I don't think the prices have been so near as that before.

Q. It would be impossible to get the prices exact owing to the fractions you have to introduce?—That overcharge is as near as you can possibly get it.

(The Inspector.) I have in my hand here a report of the general purposes committee on the out-relief distributors' accounts, from which I gather they were in arrear and very imperfectly kept. The sub-committee found evidence of much carelessness in the entries in the accounts and in the methods of receiving goods into the store. There was considerable uncertainty as to the accuracy of various invoices passed by the out-relief distributor for bread, meat, sugar, and syrup. They did not impute dishonesty, but came to the conclusion that he was not competent to fulfil the duties of his appointment, in consequence of which he was relieved from his duties and another out-door relief distributor appointed at a salary of £150 per annum. There are various other remarks, including that the stock of 64 ounces of gin, which appears to have been in the store for about 40 years, and is not likely to be called for, be destroyed. Have you any question to ask?

(Mr. Johnston.) No. There is some understanding with regard to these witnesses, as they are relieving officers. I need not repeat the application.

(Mr. Robb.) I do not know how long this sort of thing is going on. We are now on the eighth day of this inquiry. Mr. Corrie Grant has been instructed, I think, for eight or nine days, and I should have thought he might have taken the ordinary course of cross-examining, at all events, some of these witnesses. It is very inconvenient, and I suggest not altogether fair, to postpone the cross examination until the whole of these witnesses have given evidence; added to which there is a strong objection to the cross-examination of officials of the board of guardians being withheld, because there is every opportunity in the meantime for them to be approached and urged to qualify their statements.

(The Inspector.) The whole matter is unfortunate, but I do not see how it can be helped.

(Mr. Johnston.) The whole difficulty has been that this evidence has been produced without any warning at all. We had no notice of the sort of charges going to be made in the witness-box, and, of course, we are unprepared to meet it until we know what it is.

(Mr. Robb.) I am really not aware these witnesses made any charge. They seem to me to be giving evidence as to the system.

(The Inspector.) The question is what are we going to do. We have the superintendent here and we have the Chief Constable here. He has to go, and cannot stay too long, and Mr. Corrie Grant is not here.

(Mr. Johnston.) I do not know whether you have got my note, but he will be here at the latest within three-quarters of an hour. I do not want to delay the inquiry until he comes, but I do not see any sort of difficulty in taking the evidence of these witnesses now.

Mr. A. LAW, Relieving Officer; sworn and examined.

Mr. Law.

29 June.

(The Inspector.) What is your name?—Arthur Law.

Q. Are you a relieving officer?—Yes.

Q. How long?—Since 1897—22nd September.

Q. What is your district?—No. 3.

Q. Has that district been changed?—Yes, it was changed at the end of last September.

Q. You are not now in the same district as last year?—No.

Q. Do you remember the events of 1904?—Yes, sir.

Q. Did you receive any instructions from your committee as to how you were to deal with cases of able-bodied men?—Yes, a verbal message on the telephone that we were to give relief in kind to men out of work.

Q. From whom did you get the verbal message?—I believe it was Mr. Wallace, our superintendent, on behalf of the guardians.

Q. And you carried out those directions?—Yes, sir.

Q. Did you carry out those directions in every case?—In nearly every case.

(The Inspector.) Have we got any more witnesses of this sort?

(Mr. Robb.) We might take Mr. Phillips.

(Mr. Johnston.) If it were not for the fact that I have not had an opportunity of reading the papers relating to Laidon I should have made no application at all as to the delay, but when we have finished the class of evidence on which we are at present engaged I do not see why we should not proceed with the police evidence. I will take notes if Mr. Grant is not here.

(The Inspector.) We will do the best we can. I will give him a little more time.

(Mr. Robb.) I have been placed in a far greater difficulty than Mr. Corrie Grant. I have had to take the examination at once.

(Mr. Palmer.) Might I ask if I may say a few words in reference to Mr. Lansbury's remarks to me yesterday. As you know, the word infamous means to be thoroughly grounded in infamy. Mr. Lansbury's remark is damaging to me and my firm in their business, and my co-directors desire me to take action. In the interest of my co-directors and myself I publicly serve him with a writ.

(The Inspector.) That is what you might just as well have done outside.

(Mr. Palmer.) He called me an infamous liar in public, and I think I am perfectly entitled to serve him with a writ in public.

(The Inspector.) You will take your own course, but now go outside.

(Mr. Palmer served the writ and retired.)

Q. Did you have any cases where you thought you must give an order for the workhouse?—I had one or two cases.

Q. And what happened then?—I gave them relief.

Q. Do you mean you ultimately had to give out-door relief?—Yes.

Q. Why did you give out-door relief?—At the wish of the guardians.

Q. Were you interfered with in reference to any particular case?—To a very small extent. The guardians came to the office occasionally, but I cannot say I was forced by any of them.

Q. Not coerced?—Not coerced. Of course, I knew it was the wish of my committee that I should relieve these people in a body—that is to say, the Bromley committee were unanimous.

Q. Were you aware at the time the whole proceeding might be illegal and questioned?—I was quite aware of that, sir.

Q. But you had to do it?—We were in a very awkward position, you see—between the devil and the deep sea.

Mr. Law,
29 June.

We had to clutch at something, and, of course, we thought that would be the wisest position.

Q. I put it to you that what you had to clutch at was something pretty substantial. You had your permanent tenure of office. Would not that be enough?—That is so, sir; but then we were under the immediate direction of the guardians, and to a certain extent a relieving officer has to look to the guardians.

Q. If you did not relieve them in that way, do you think the circumstances of the time would have compelled the guardians to have a stone-yard?—No, I don't think so.

Q. You don't think there were enough really destitute persons to justify it?—No.

Q. But times were very bad, were they not?—Times were bad, but, of course, it gave a chance for the unemployables to come in; and when anything is to be given away that section of the crowd are bound to come in.

Q. Do you mean that that section swamped you?—You see, we were acting under the directions of the committee to deal with these men outside.

Q. Did you have any instance brought to your knowledge where the relief given was abused?—I cannot say I did.

Q. Or where men in receipt of relief were working for somebody else?—No, sir.

Q. Do you know any cases of that sort?—I cannot say I recollect any.

Q. How often did you see the men themselves?—At their homes?

Q. Yes?—Well, very seldom.

Q. You had an assistant who did the visiting?—Yes, we had a temporary assistant.

Q. Did they make application to you each week in your district?—Yes.

Q. When a man got his relief, and the end of the week came, his case was off?—Oh, he came up again each week.

Q. Yes, but did he make another application to you?—Yes.

Q. Always another application each week?—Yes.

Q. And each case was mentioned to the committee?—Yes, it was reported each week to the committee.

Q. Was it written out fresh each week?—Copied out each week.

Q. How many books did you fill?—Each quarter?

Q. In any quarter?—When the rush was on we were issuing five or six application books. Of course, it gradually dwindled down.

Q. When was the relief at the highest in your district?—Roughly speaking, it was in 1904.

Q. Of course, your district has been changed since?—Yes.

Q. Have you ever had any experience in another part of London outside Poplar?—Yes, West Ham prior to 1893.

Q. Were you relieving officer at West Ham?—No, sir; I did temporary work.

Q. What district in West Ham?—At Leyton. I have been at Poplar since 1899.

Q. Have you ever seen such bad times in the East End as in 1904?—Oh, yes, in 1894; we required assistance at that time.

Q. As assistant?—Assistant general relieving officer in Poplar Union.

Q. That was the time you had a stone-yard?—That is so.

Q. And when the stone-yard was closed there was a great reduction of pauperism?—I believe so.

Q. Well, there has been a great reduction of pauperism now?—That is so.

Q. To what do you attribute that reduction?—At the present time the summer is here, and, of course, there is always a slight reduction. Speaking personally, I have also taken the initiative and told them they cannot get it any more.

Q. That is to say you are now stricter with these men?—Yes.

Q. What has enabled you to become stricter?—Well, this Inquiry.

Q. Do you mean to say that this Inquiry has revived your sense of duty?—To a certain extent, sir.

Q. Do you think it is now possible to keep within the law?—I think so, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) Before this Inquiry you were knowingly breaking the law?—That is so.

(The Inspector.) I don't think you can quite say that. It is a very tricky point.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, I agree. I understand it to be the witness's own statement, and for that reason I take it. (To witness.) At all events, you have altered your proceeding latterly—the last few weeks. I mean apart from the question of illegality you have exercised greater discretion?—That is so.

Q. There is no doubt this first rush was an artificial, engineered movement?—Well, I was informed so, but I am not in a position to prove it.

Q. Have you any doubt in your own mind it was so. I mean, that pressure was not maintained, was it?—For some considerable time there were several meetings held, I believe. I should say roughly for six months.

Q. I think you will agree that it has dropped in a manner that cannot be explained by any normal or ordinary cause?—Yes.

Q. You told me it was organised?—I was informed so.

Q. Did you see people bringing men up to the relieving officer?—(Witness signified assent).

Q. And you were told to relieve them in a body?—That is so.

Q. In the light of these facts, have you any doubt that that movement in November, 1904, was artificial and engineered?—Well, I believe it was.

Q. Under cover of which the unemployables came in in large numbers?—Yes.

Q. So that the relief granted then was both wasteful and indiscriminate?—To a certain extent.

Q. Yes, but you relieving officers, as the Inspector said, had your sense of duty revived by this Inquiry and other matters, and you have conducted your investigations so strictly that we find this enormous reduction in the out-relief?—That is so.

Q. And don't you think that this reduction is mainly attributable to the circumstances which led to this Inquiry?—Yes, I do.

Q. I understand you always carried out the instructions of the guardians—practically you had no alternative?—I believe so.

Q. And as you were a faithful and obedient servant you were not coerced?—I have never been frightened by any guardian into giving relief.

Q. You carried out their instructions so implicitly that there was no necessity for coercion?—I thought it policy to carry out their instructions.

Q. You thought it policy to waive your own judgment?—That is so.

Q. And become a mere automaton—doing what the guardians told you?—If you like to put it so.

Q. I don't want to put it at all unkindly. I sympathise with you in your position; but I mean these were the hard facts of the case?—Yes.

Q. The relieving officers, instead of being people exercising their own discretion, became mere tools to carry out the purpose and policy of the guardians?—I am a servant of the guardians, and we all endeavoured to carry out their wishes.

Q. Many of these able-bodied men were relieved for a very long time?—Quite so.

Q. Any of them as long as twelve months?—I should not like to say—on and off.

Q. You attended this meeting of the relieving officers?—No. We had no meeting, sir. I am at the relief station at Bow Mill, and it was the intention of half a dozen to have a meeting, but the officers were not united in the matter.

Q. Then you wanted to have a meeting at Bow, but the officers were not united. You heard there was a kind of meeting among some of them?—No, I did not.

Mr. Law.
29 June.

Q. Did you go to any guardian for advice and ask what you should do?—No.
Q. Not on any occasion?—No.
Q. Then you never had the slightest doubt as to the

policy you pursued?—I took the instructions of Mr. Wallace, the superintendent.

Q. To relieve in a body?—Yes.

Q. And you carried out these instructions implicitly?—

(The Inspector.) I see no reason why I should not call the superintendent at once.

(Mr. Johnston.) I don't object in the least, only if you would reserve his cross-examination—

(The Inspector.) He wishes to be called. He is a very busy man.

(Mr. Johnston.) I understand the main evidence as to details will be given by the superintendent.

(The Inspector.) I should think it would. You have, I think, the report of the superintendent and the answer of the guardians.

(Mr. Johnston.) I quite agree, but I have not seen it

before this morning, and I have been reading it just now.

(The Inspector.) When is Mr. Corrie Grant expected here?

(Mr. Johnston.) He will be here in another twenty minutes.

(The Inspector.) If we do not have the superintendent we have no witnesses.

(Mr. Johnston.) Would it be convenient if we take his evidence now and then adjourn for lunch. It is twenty-five minutes to one now. Mr. Corrie Grant will have an opportunity during the luncheon interval of reading the notes of the evidence.

Mr. A. MARDEN, Superintendent of Police; sworn and examined.

Mr. Mardex.
29 June.

(The Inspector.) What is your name?—Alfred Marden.

Q. What are you?—I am superintendent of the police, Essex County Constabulary.

Q. On the 8th May, 1905, you had occasion to make a report with reference to the Laindon farm colony?—Yes, sir.

Q. To the chief constable, and that report was forwarded to the Local Government Board and to members of the board of guardians?—I believe that is so, sir.

Q. The board of guardians answered that report, and I believe their answer was communicated to you?—Yes.

Q. You then, on the 26th June, 1905, wrote a further letter to the deputy chief constable?—Yes.

Q. Have you any further knowledge of that. Are you still in the district?—Yes, I am still in the same division.

Q. And you still?—Have charge of Laindon and the spot where this farm colony is.

Q. What do you say with reference to the character of the men brought down from Poplar?—Those that I have had to deal with in my profession as a police officer, a number of them I found had a criminal record, and from complaints I have received in the district, and from my men stationed in the locality, and my own observations, I think generally the majority are undesirable people.

Q. How many of them have you been brought into contact with?—Nineteen or twenty.

Q. Are those all the cases you have had where you have charge?—Yes, that is all I have had in custody and dealt with myself.

Q. Have all these got a criminal record?—Well, all that I have had the opportunity of inquiring into. There are some dealt with where I have not had an opportunity of making inquiry.

Q. How many have you had an opportunity of inquiring into?—Seven or eight—about eight.

Q. Have all those got criminal records?—Yes.

Q. The number of inmates is from 100 to 150?—That is so. I think I have stated in my report about 200, but probably I was a little in excess of the number.

Q. The total number of inmates that have been to the farm colony is 821; total number admitted, not including re-admissions, 560?—I cannot say that.

Q. Well, that we get from the books. And out of these, twenty have been in the custody of the police?—Yes, that is so.

Q. Out of that twenty you have examined the records of eight?—About eight or nine of them.

Q. Do you think that justifies you in saying the majority have criminal records?—I think so, dealing with what I have seen of their conduct, and complaints I have received from my men stationed there, specially told off to look after them. It does not follow that because I have only dealt with these few there have not been more detected. For instance, my man detected one of the board's own servants and two of the pauper inmates stealing coal. They were not dealt with.

Q. Have all these cases with which you have dealt been dealt with by yourself summarily, or have any of them been prosecuted in the ordinary way?—They were dealt with by the justices of the Court.

Q. Did you yourself deal with them summarily, or were they prosecuted?—Some were dealt with by summons and some by warrants issued by the superintendent of the colony.

Q. Can you tell me how many were dealt with by summons, and also who by?—In each instance myself.

Q. Included in that number were there any summoned by the guardians for offences committed in the colony?—Oh, yes. They were not dealt with by summons. A warrant was issued, and the men were arrested. In some instances they were arrested without a warrant.

Q. What portion of these prosecutions were originated by the guardians, and what portion by the police or private individuals?—I should say the majority are by the guardians, for refractory conduct, drunk and refractory conduct. I have dealt with several for drunkenness, and I have dealt with one for assaulting the police. I have dealt with one or two for larceny—stealing—and I hold warrants for two or three at the present time.

Q. Were these the gravest offences with which the men were charged?—The most serious offence was assaulting the police in the execution of their duty.

Q. You say men were in the habit of going to public-houses?—Yes, that is a fact. They still do that.

Q. Which public-house?—As late as March this year I prosecuted two for drunkenness on the highway—two of these inmates.

Q. Last March?—Yes.

Q. What did they get?—In default of paying a fine they were sent to prison for seven days.

Q. Do you know what became of them?—I don't know, sir. In April I prosecuted a man for drunkenness and his fine was paid. I think he went back.

Q. What was his name and the amount of his fine?—2s. 6d. and 4s. It was in December, 1905. Richard Mouse. I don't suggest the guardians were—

Q. Oh, no. Do you say this frequenting of public-houses is habitual?—Yes.

Q. Shall we get better evidence of that from your resident constable?—I think for the first year, 1905, it was habitual, but this year, although I have cases of drunkenness against two or three of the inmates, I think the frequenting of the public-houses has improved.

Q. So there is not so much frequenting of the public-houses now as formerly?—I don't think so, sir.

Q. What do you say is the annoyance caused to residents by the behaviour of the Laindon men?—I have received complaints personally from inhabitants of the district, I have received reports from my men stationed in the locality, and I have received a petition from the inhabitants of the district seeking for more police protection and asking for a man to be located in the immediate neighbourhood of this colony. In consequence of that petition an officer has been stationed in the immediate neighbourhood, and I attribute the better behaviour to his presence there.

Q. So long as the men were merely drunk in public-houses the police had nothing to do with it, had they?—They would go home at a very late hour—midnight—shouting and brawling, and that was the nature of the complaint.

Q. You don't know that of your own knowledge?—Yes, I have gone out there at night myself on purpose and found men lying by the side of the road at one o'clock in the morning and sent them home to the colony.

Q. How many men have you found in that condition?—I found three one night and two on another occasion.

Q. Are you suggesting these men had had too much drink or were simply sleeping out?—They had had too much to drink. I think I ought to say here that I have complained personally to the superintendent, Mr. Clarke, as to these complaints, once at my office and once I attended the farm on purpose to complain, and I sent my man. Mr. Clarke's reply to me was that he did his best and could not do any more. His house is situated some distance away, and he left the dormitories where the inmates slept at ten o'clock and he could not be answerable for them when he was out. As a matter of fact the man had not got sufficient staff to put a man there at night. Since my report to the Local Government Board a night watchman has been put there.

Q. You make an allegation that you don't think it safe for females at any time?—I don't think it is safe. I do not think you would feel safe with 150 of these men there. I made that statement that the complaint was from a lady of the district.

Q. Did she give you any reason for making that complaint?—Her reason was that these men were prowling about there all hours in numbers, and that she was afraid and did not think it was safe.

Q. Are you suggesting any considerable quantity of the men are outside Laindon, say, after ten or eleven o'clock?—At the time I made my report, yes.

Q. It has to some extent ceased?—Very much ceased after ten o'clock.

Q. Entirely ceased?—Well, I will not say entirely ceased because I have had one man arrested at ten o'clock at night in Brentwood, seven miles away, and several others were there with him.

Q. What was that?—The case of assault on the police I referred to, April, 1906.

Q. Then you say the men are feasted. Have you any reason for saying that?—Yes, I have been told repeatedly by Mr. Clarke himself that they are fed on prime joints and the best of everything, and that they ought to be satisfied. And men I have had in custody I have heard say the same thing.

Q. Then you go on to say they are paid a small sum of money?—I used their own servant's word that they received in addition to their keep two suits of clothes, two ounces of tobacco per week, and sixpence pocket money. That has been repeatedly confirmed to me by the men who had been sent there.

Q. Do you suggest anything less than two suits of clothes?—No, I don't say that.

Q. You make a statement with reference to the gangers?—Yes, those are men of the neighbourhood, probably men of the labouring class. One man I remember who has a very long record.

Q. Do you mind writing the name on paper?—I cannot give it to you without referring to my books.

Q. You will perhaps give it to Mr. Robb?—I am afraid I shall have to come again, I have not got it with me. The very last personally I dealt with, although he is a pauper inmate, had 1s. 4½d. in his pocket. It is proof they have money from somewhere.

Q. What was that case?—Of refractory conduct, drawing a knife at the superintendent and his subordinate and threatening to stab them. That was as late as Tuesday.

Q. Last Tuesday?—As late as the 27th, the day before yesterday.

Q. That man had 1s. 4d. upon him?—Yes.

Q. Have you anything to add to this report?—No, sir.

(The Inspector.) Has anything been heard of Mr. Grant?

(Mr. Johnston.) I understand he has telephoned. I do not want to delay the proceedings on account of his absence.

Mr. Marden.
29 June.

(Mr. Robb.) I gather that in your judgment this colony consists of a number of undesirable persons?—That is the opinion I have formed from my own observation.

Q. And are a nuisance to this part of Essex?—Yes, in my opinion.

Q. And a menace to the inhabitants?—Yes.

Q. The colony was started, I think, in 1904?—Yes.

Q. What first attracted your attention to it?—Complaints I received and reports from my own men.

Q. What was the purport of those complaints?—That these men were roaming about the district late at night, shouting and brawling, after the closing hours of public-houses.

Q. With regard to the safety of women, you have told us of one lady who came to you?—Yes.

Q. In addition to that have there been cases of indecent exposure by colonists?—Not to my knowledge.

Q. Your constable is here. Has he made any report?—Yes, he has made a report, but I cannot speak from my own knowledge.

Q. There have been assaults upon the police by the colonists?—Yes.

Q. Do you know anything of the case of a publican who refused to serve several of these men with drink one Sunday in February?—That was the proprietor of a beer-house in Little Burstead, some four miles from there. He refused to serve them with drink because they were under the influence of drink. One smashed his window. I have a summons in that case to serve on the man when he can be found.

Q. What was the name of that man?—I could not give it.

Q. Was it Macqueen?—I think it was. He was identified on the colony by the owner of the property.

Q. When you had got the summons for him he had mysteriously disappeared?—He had disappeared; I don't know how.

Q. Have there been cases of begging by these men?—I have received complaints of that from my men.

Q. You have?—I have specially told a constable to get into plain clothes to try and detect it.

Q. Of course, they know him?—Most of them.

Q. It was put to the Inspector that there were only twenty actual prosecutions?—True.

Q. But does that represent the number of offences and the number of complaints?—No.

Q. I suppose they would be much greater?—Yes.

Q. It is true, is it not, that many private residents, although they have complained, have refused to prosecute?—Declined to take any action.

Q. Have you had any previous experience of work-houses or pauper settlements?—Yes. I have never had any experience of such a settlement as this. I have never been in a division where there was not a workhouse.

Q. According to your view, were these men treated as paupers?—No. An ordinary pauper would be an inmate of that place, and only allowed out by a permit. That is not so in this case. When the men had done their work at 5 or 5.30 in the evening, and at 1 on Saturdays, they appeared to be allowed to go where they liked.

Q. Of course, if they were hard-working, industrious, decent people, it would not matter?—No, it would perhaps be to their interest if they were respectable people.

Q. You know the farm?—Yes.

Q. What is the size?—About a hundred acres.

(The Inspector.) We are going to call the superintendent of the farm.

(Mr. Robb.) There have been about 800 sent there altogether since 1904?—Yes.

Q. Do you think the farm could conceivably offer useful employment for that number of men?—No.

Q. Do you know the usual number on farms of that size in the district?—I should not think farms of that

Mr. J. Marden,
62 —
29 June.

size would occupy more than about eight or ten men. That would be putting it very fair.

Q. Have you seen these men at work?—Yes, attempting to work.

Q. What have you seen them do?—I have seen these men in gangs in the field almost weekly since their occupation. They have been principally turning over the soil with a spade, forking, or hoeing, or something of the kind. They would turn over a spit, which would not take a second, and then have a five minutes' rest on top of their tools, and smoke their pipes.

Q. Is that a fair sample of the labour that goes on?—Yes, what I have seen.

Q. You have made it your business to watch these men, and formed an opinion of the class of men who are sent there?—I have been compelled to visit that district frequently from a police point of view in the interests of the public.

Q. Are these men persons who can usefully be employed in agricultural pursuits?—I think the majority are men quite out of their sphere of life. Unfitted for that occupation altogether. I should think a proper agricultural labourer in one day would do the work of six of these without exaggeration.

Q. I suppose with these hundreds of men we have had some large crops produced on the farm?—I have never seen them.

Q. Do you know anything about what crops have been produced?—There was some kind of crop there last year—a few cabbages and a small quantity of potatoes. That is all I have seen.

Q. Is there anything this year—wheat or oats?—Yes, there is a field of oats, if you may call it a field of oats. It is a very bad crop. I should think it will produce hardly as much as it has taken to plant it. The other land is more or less planted with potatoes. A large portion of it, anyway.

Q. Have you seen any such crops as would represent a fair output of the labour of all these hundreds of men?—No.

Q. Judging by the labour you have seen and the crops you know have been produced, is it possible these men could have been kept consistently employed?—Not if they had done the ordinary work of a labourer; certainly not.

Q. You do not think they have done?—Certainly not.

Q. Do you attribute that to distaste for work or incapacity?—I could not say. I should think some of it is distaste.

Q. When they went from one public-house to another would they go singly or in gangs?—Generally several together.

Q. Does that still go on?—Yes, but not so bad as it did last year.

Q. Why?—I think the night watchman being there and a constable in the district has had some desired effect.

Q. Do you know if the pocket money of 6d. a week has been stopped?—The superintendent told me it was to be stopped.

Q. When you arrest these men you sometimes find money on them?—I could only say definitely as to the last one. I could not say without I referred to my books.

Q. Do you know how many gangers there are?—I could not say.

Q. Is there one called Trip Tyler?—That is one I referred to.

Q. Is he a desirable character?—In my opinion, no.

Q. Is he a poacher?—There is a record of that.

Q. That is the sort of person employed as ganger to maintain discipline with the colonists?—I think the object of these men is to show them their work.

Q. Have you a record of convictions of colonists?—I have a copy.

Q. Would you mind putting that in to the Inspector?—I don't mind a bit.

Q. There is a man Alfred Henry Angel?—Yes, he is there.

Q. There are two previous convictions in his case, two convictions at Brentwood?—Yes.

Q. William Williams is convicted of a workhouse case and Alfred Shaw the same, two convictions. William Welton, before he goes there, there are six convictions at the Thames Police Court and one at Brentwood?—Yes.

Q. He has been convicted of assault, drunkenness, refractory behaviour, assault on the police, and refusing to work?—Yes.

Q. These convictions commence on the 20th of June, 1903?—

(The Inspector.) Yes, that is right.

(Mr. Robb.) So that in one year, between June, 1903, and August, 1904, this William Welton was convicted here in London no less than six times; he was then sent down to Landon as a suitable subject for this colony?—Yes.

Q. George Frederick Martin, there are two convictions. Then there is George Brailley, he was convicted at the Thames Police Court on 5th June, 1905, larceny, a pair of boots, and sentenced to seven days. He is afterwards sent to the colony?—Yes.

Q. Then when he gets there he is convicted of absconding from the workhouse with a suit of clothes?—Yes.

Q. Alfred Bell was convicted at Brentwood in 1905 of drunkenness, is fined 1s. and costs 4s., which he paid?—At that time he was employed at the Hutton farm, and not with Mr. Clarke. He afterwards went there and appears again.

Q. Having qualified by obtaining this conviction is sent as a proper inmate of the colony?—I assume that is so.

Q. Where he steals a table knife on 24th May, 1906?—That is a fact.

Q. William Detenon, on 25th October, 1904, convicted of drunkenness at Brentwood?—Yes, he was then an inmate.

Q. When they are fined in this way do they pay the fines or serve the term?—In one instance the fine was paid.

Q. When they come out of prison do they return to the colony?—I could not say.

Q. George Mitchell, convicted at Brentwood, 1905, larceny of bicycle lamp?—Yes.

Q. John Sheehan, 1906, at Brentwood. He is a recent one. Absconded with a pair of boots from the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. You seem to have been rather busy at Brentwood?—It has made us somewhat busy.

Q. Then there is John Fardall at Brentwood, 29th March, 1906, drunkenness?—Yes.

Q. All these men it is obvious could not get the drink in sufficient quantity to be intoxicated unless they had money?—Yes. They had 6d. a week quite recently, I don't know who from.

Q. John Randall, April, 1906, drunkenness?—Yes.

Q. James Bell, May, 1906, absconding with two suits of clothes. Are there any more recent convictions within the last week or so?—We have had two this week.

Q. What are they for?—One was for drunkenness, being refractory at this branch workhouse—

Q. I notice you use the expression workhouse with reluctance?—In these charges it must be so. This one is termed a branch workhouse of Poplar.

Q. What is this other conviction?—The other was for refusing to work, drawing a knife on the superintendent and his assistants, and threatening to stab them with it.

Q. Do you think any useful public or private interest is being served by the colony?—My own opinion is that I do not think it is doing any good. It is encouraging these men in a state of laziness.

Q. I suppose you have seen the motor waggon. Has that been a success?—I should think it has not.

Q. Is it working very often?—I have not seen it lately. I heard it was worn out and was sent to Forest Gate.

Q. Is there any sufficient crop produced at the place to warrant the employment of a large motor waggon?—No. Eight months in the year it could not get on to the land in that district.

Q. Did Mr. Clarke make any statement about that motor waggon?—Yes. I had to complain to Mr. Clarke about the careless way in which the driver was driving

it, and he then told me it was not wanted there. It was a nuisance. It was always breaking down. In fact, he said it was a mare's nest.

Q. When all these little cases are brought before your bench, who conducts them?—A local solicitor.

Q. Is it the most economical way of going to work?—It could be done without more easily.

Q. Have you ever seen the guardians visit this colony?—Yes.

Q. How do they go there?—I have not seen them for some time. In the first part they used to come in vehicles, sometimes from Brentwood.

Q. How far is that away?—Seven miles.

Q. There is a station at Laindon?—Yes.

Q. How far is that from the colony?—You can walk there in a mile.

Q. What kind of vehicles did the guardians take from Brentwood?—Landaus.

Q. And pair-horse?—Yes.

Q. I suppose the country is pleasant round there?—Yes, at present it is very nice there.

Q. Do you think there has been sufficient supervision of the men?—No, I am quite sure there has not been.

Q. Sufficient restraint placed upon them?—The men when they left off work have been allowed to go just where they liked.

Q. Had you any complaints of trespassing?—Only through my men. I have seen them in threes and fours tramping about over land there.

Q. Do you know if any of these colonists were sent up to take part in the unemployed demonstration?—Only by hearsay.

Q. Not of your own personal knowledge?—No, but I think it was a fact.

Q. Is this Shenfield School in the same locality?—It is seven or eight miles away. It is in my district.

Q. It is rather a fine building?—Very.

Q. Has your attention been called to anything going on there?—They are making a cricket pitch.

(*The Inspector.*) Personally, I hope they are having a cricket pitch. I think it would be the best instrument of civilization I know of.

(*Mr. Robb.*) It may be; but I am afraid that a good many labouring men who pay rates have not got cricket pitches and things of that kind?—A good cricket pitch could have been made on any ground there without going to the expense of this.

Q. A number of men were engaged?—Have been.

Q. How did the stealing of coal come under notice?—My officer in the village detected them in the act.

Q. Representations were made to the guardians?—Yes.

Q. Did they prosecute?—No.

Q. Do you know anything about the question of potatoes which were stolen recently?—I would rather not touch upon that, as it is a subject of enquiry at the present time.

(*Mr. Johnston.*) How many visits have you paid to the colony?—I have only been once on the building. It is quite visible from the road.

Q. Did you know its condition at the time they took it?—It was in rather a bad state.

Q. Had it been used as a dairy farm?—I think so.

Q. It was practically derelict?—I will not say that. It had been neglected.

Q. We are told it is 110 acres?—Yes.

Q. At the time the guardians took it there was no water at all?—I could not say.

Q. Do you know that since the guardians have taken it a large reservoir has been built?—I believe it is true.

Q. You will agree with me your inspection of the farm upon driving past cannot have been very exact?—I have never said that I have inspected the farm.

Q. What you have seen in driving by has not given a great idea of what goes on?—It gave an idea as to the industry of the inmates.

Q. Reservoir and filter beds are important works?—It is the sort of work you would not expect agricultural labourers to do.

Q. Do you know that 75 acres of the 110 have been dug and dug again?—I know they have been dug.

Q. Dug twice and trenched?—I could not say that.

Q. Do you know that buildings have been put up there?—They had to have buildings to shelter the men.

Q. You spoke about encouraging laziness?—And I adhere to my statement.

Q. I want to make sure I have a list of all the cases referred to?—Angel, May, 1903; June, 1903.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I object. If the learned counsel wants this list put in he must have all the convictions?—Angel, 4th August, 1904, refusing to work, pauper inmate of Dunton branch workhouse, 21 days' hard labour; 4th August, 1904, absconding from the workhouse with a pair of boots, one month hard labour, to run consecutively. Two previously.

(*The Inspector.*) Do you want the previous convictions?

(*Mr. Robb.*) The undertaking was that we should have the previous convictions.

(*Mr. Johnston.*) I am not going to waste time in going through everything in detail.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I say no evidence can be of value as to the character of these men unless we deal with the whole of the convictions. If the learned counsel had had experience in criminal work he would know it was the duty of the police officer to investigate.

(*Mr. Johnston.*) If a man had been condemned to ten years' penal servitude, it would be a different thing.

(*The Inspector.*) Read it out, superintendent?—Angel, previous convictions, stealing a shovel, wilful damage, two months' hard labour; William Williams, refusing to work, 21 days' hard labour. I made no inquiry about him. Alfred Shaw, refractory pauper and assaulting the cook, two charges, 14 days or a month, in October, 1904; William Welton, refusing to work, refractory pauper, one month hard labour, February, 1905, six previous convictions, four in 1904, one refusing to work in Poplar Workhouse. George Frederick Martin, absconding with workhouse clothing, two months' hard labour, previous conviction, for deserting his wife and family, three months. George Brailley, August, 1905, absconding with workhouse clothes, one month, previous conviction for larceny of boots. Alfred George Bell, drunkenness, fined 1s. and costs, 4s. That is the case I referred to at Hutton Park. The same man at Brentwood on 24th May, 1906, larceny of table knife, seven days' hard labour. William Detenon, drunkenness at Brentwood, seven days. George Mitchell, May, 1905, larceny, bicycle lamp, 21 days' hard labour.

(*Mr. Johnston.*) Was he an inmate at the time?—Yes. He stole this at the Laindon Hotel whilst out drinking.

Q. Go on with the list?—John Sheehan, absconding with workhouse clothing, one month in March, 1906. John Fardall, 29th March, 1906, drunkenness on the highway, proceeded by summons, seven days' hard labour. Fred Nunn, same offence, and same date. Both went to prison for seven days. John Randall, April, 1906, fined 5s. and costs, 4s. James H. Bell, May, 1906, absconding with workhouse clothing, 21 days. Richard Mouse, December, 1905, drunkenness, 2s. and costs, paid. That was paid by someone who accompanied him to the Court from the colony. John Ingles, April, 1906, assault on the police, one month, seven or eight previous convictions. Albert Christmas, absconding and carrying away the workhouse clothing, 14 days. Steele, June, 1906, drunk and refractory, 14 days. Francis Harrop, refractory conduct and refusing to work, seven days.

Q. Out of that list four cases of prosecutions instituted by the police and the others by the guardians. Can you tell me the number altogether?—Nineteen.

Q. Does that represent all the convictions of inmates of the colony to date?—Yes—convictions.

Q. You said something of a ganger having a bad record. Is his name Trip Tyler?—Yes. I believe one of these convictions is one of the gangers.

Q. In how many cases were previous convictions proved against any of those offenders?—Six. Of course, it does not follow there were no convictions against the others.

Mr. Marden.

29 June.

Mr. Marden.

29 June.

Q. Will you be kind enough to answer the questions. You have given evidence before now, and know it is not your business to volunteer evidence unless it is asked?—I have been sworn to tell the truth.

(Mr. Robb.) This is an alarming proposition.

(Mr. Johnston.) I am not going to be drawn into a vulgar altercation with Mr. Robb.

(Mr. Robb.) How dare you say that! How dare you, sir. I appeal to the Inspector.

(The Inspector.) These interpolations are very unfortunate.

(Mr. Johnston.) I agree. I do not mean to reflect upon Mr. Robb. I said I will not be drawn into a vulgar altercation. (To witness): Do you feel justified by that record in describing these inmates as a menace to the inhabitants of that part of Essex?—I feel justified in everything I said.

Q. Who made complaints?—Mr. and Mrs. Squier.

Q. Did not they make specific complaint against certain inmates?—No. They complained of the inmates disturbing them at night.

Q. Will you tell me if any of those complaints were made against individuals who were identified in any way?—Only the one I have referred to as breaking a window.

Q. All these complaints were verbal, I suppose?—I had one in writing.

Q. Have you got it here?—No; I submitted it to the Chief Constable.

Q. Were there other complaints in writing?—I think I had two letters.

Q. How long ago were they written?—Last year, and the petition. That is from all the ratepayers of the district, two or three parishes round.

Q. What was the date of the petition?—It would probably be about April last year.

Q. Was the purport of the petition for the appointment of an extra constable for the district?—Yes.

Q. Had not the same suggestion been made before the colony was there?—Not to my knowledge.

Q. What sort of a district is it?—Rural. There are villages round.

Q. How many constables have you for that district?—I have three now. I have put an additional man there.

Q. Will you give me the area of the district?—I cannot. The men live about three miles apart. There are three or four parishes in the hands of these three men. My division is nearly 20 miles from end to end.

Q. I suppose if you brought an additional population of 150 people into a district it would make a difference to the district in proportion?—It would increase it to that extent. That is common sense.

Q. Don't try to be smart. Would the addition of 150 people double the population of that part?—It would double the population of Dunton.

Q. So the addition of such a number would require additional police, however respectable the people might be?—No, it would not. I have had to deprive another place of one.

Q. It would make a large difference?—Not if it is well-behaved.

Q. As to the petition, do you know who drew it up?—I could not give you any idea. Mr. Squier sent it to me.

(The Inspector.) Do you want the petition? It is in the papers. Mr. Butler stated it.

(Mr. Johnston.) It refers to the nuisance of motor cars and gipsies.

(Mr. Robb.) It is not fair to say motor cars and gipsies were chiefly named?—The population did not warrant a man going there, and I had to deprive Brentwood town of one.

(The Inspector.) The extra constable was sent there?—And he is still there.

(Mr. Johnston.) With regard to your statement of complaints received that these inmates were out late at night. Is it not a fact that the night watchman was appointed by the Guardians last year?—I could not tell you that. There is one there—the outcome of the petition and my report, I should think.

Q. You do not suggest there is anything serious to complain about now?—Not nearly so much as when I made my report.

Q. You don't suggest where the 6d. a week came from?—I do not.

Q. You do not suggest it came out of the rates?—I do not suggest anything.

Q. With regard to the Shenfield school, do you know that a large part of the cost of the cricket pitch is being raised by subscription?—I do not know.

Q. Do you know £280 has been subscribed?—This is the first I have heard of it.

Q. You told Mr. Robb that the colony was not doing any good and was encouraging a state of laziness. Will you tell me on what grounds you base that wholesale condemnation?—On my own observations.

Q. Do you drive along there once a day?—Not once a day. Not less than once a week. Sometimes three times a week. I go through the parts of the district about every other day.

Q. How far is the reservoir from the farm?—Judging from the apparatus they use on it, I should say about 200 or 300 yards.

Q. Does this drive along the road enable you to see what is going on over an area of 110 acres?—Not the whole of it. I do not always drive.

Q. You consider yourself in a position on that observation to say practically no work has been done?—I don't say that. I don't say no work has been done.

Q. What do you mean by saying it encourages a state of laziness?—If an ordinary agricultural labourer was employed he would do as much as six men here.

Q. Will you swear that from the road, walking or driving, you can see the reservoir?—It depends on which way you are going. I can see the pumping apparatus on top of it.

(The Inspector.) In every division you have had there has been a workhouse?—Yes.

Q. Any offence committed in a workhouse would come within your notice as an officer?—Yes.

Q. It is not an uncommon thing in a workhouse to have such offences as refusing to work, refractory, and so on?—They do occur, but not so frequently as they are going on here.

Q. A workhouse to have 50 able-bodied men in would be a large workhouse now. Have you remembered the fact that all these men are able-bodied, at that period of life when they would commit these offences?—All I have had are able-bodied men and some very young.

Q. Have you considered this. Take Welton. He has had six convictions. They do not seem to have done him any good?—No.

Q. Have you considered it might be well to try another system?—Of course, that is not a matter for me to consider, is it?

Q. To some extent it might modify your judgment?—I could not say that. I should be guided by circumstances.

Q. Have you also considered that, although a man might not be absolutely reformed, he might be improved in health and strength?—If he could not improve under the conditions he has at Dunton, then he could not improve by any. Good shelter, good clothes, good food, and very little to do.

Q. That might improve his health, but what effect would it have on their morals?—I should not like to give an opinion on their morals.

Q. Have you considered the difficulty of management arising from the fact that there is no wall round the place?—That is a great difficulty. And it is an awkward position Mr. Clarke is placed in.

Q. Nor would it be possible to put a wall round so large an area?—It was quite possible to enclose it. If it is possible to build a school at Hutton it is possible to do this.

Q. How much can a man get drunk upon. I don't know?—Some will drink a painful and another cannot drink a quart.

Q. Can a man get drunk on sixpence?—He can get three pints of beer and beg another one or two in the house and easily get drunk.

Q. How many pints of beer would do it?—It depends upon the individual. Some will get drunk on a little.

Q. I daresay there is always the personal equation to remember. Would sixpence a week be enough to make a man drunk?—I could not say so.

Q. It would induce him to go into the public-house?—It would give him the material to go in with.

Q. So it would be a bad thing for him in demoralising him indirectly?—It would be a great inducement to go.

Q. If a man does not spend his sixpence on drink, how would he spend it?—I could not say.

Q. On acid drops?—He could spend it on many things.

Q. His natural impulse would be to go where there are others?—He could spend it on mineral waters.

Q. He would not get the company with mineral waters?—I think so.

Q. Do you think a great deal of the mischief has arisen from the sixpence a week?—I think so. It has given them the inducement to leave the Colony.

Q. Are there any cabs at Laindon Station?—I think they can get a cab at Laindon.

Q. Are there many trains to Laindon?—Yes, a fair service.

Q. Was the land in hand when the Guardians took it?—I do not think there was a tenant.

Q. So it was in poor condition?—I think it was.

Q. Breaking up old pasture land is not a thing to be recommended?—No; the pasture land is needed.

Q. In the petition they refer to Poplar colony, motor-cars, and gipsies?—Motor-cars are out of the question. It is a part not frequently used. Gipsies do go that way, but there is nowhere for them to encamp.

Mr. Marden.

29 June.

Mr. G. REEVE, Police Constable; sworn and examined.

(The Inspector.) What is your station?—Laindon.

Q. How long have you been there?—Two years last April.

Q. Have you received instructions with regard to watching the colony?—Yes, sir.

Q. Can you say what they were?—From the superintendent. To try and stop men from begging.

Q. Did you see any men begging?—No, I did not catch one. They know me, all of them.

Q. So they do not beg of you?—They do not beg of me.

Q. Have you had complaints of any other offence?—Yes; they exposed themselves to a young lady this time last year.

Q. Was there any prosecution?—Her father refused to allow her to go to the colony to identify them.

Q. Have you had any other complaints?—From the begging, principally. And a lot of drunkenness and noise.

Q. Where?—At the Laindon Hotel, and they go home through the fields and start shouting.

Q. Is that going on now?—No.

Q. Things are better?—Since the 6d. a week has been stopped.

Q. They are not pleased at that?—They are disappointed.

(Mr. Robb.) What class of men are they generally?—Lately they have been a very decent class. Up to about six months ago they were a rowdy lot. They went about in gangs from one public-house to another.

Q. Do you agree with the superintendent that they were a menace to the neighbourhood?—They were a pest to the neighbourhood.

Q. Beyond the 6d. a week, had they other supplies of money?—Yes; I have seen them go to the Post Office with postal orders. They have changed postal orders for 1s. or 1s. 6d., and have said they came from their wives. I have seen the Bow postmark. One public-house at Laindon, where they changed something over £1 a week.

Q. You mentioned a case of indecency, and a case of stealing came under your notice?—I arrested George Mitchell.

Q. Was he an inmate of the colony?—I arrested him at the hotel. He came from the colony that afternoon.

Q. Any games or amusements provided for the men?—They say they can play draughts, dominoes, and cards. They play football sometimes on Sunday.

Q. Is nothing done in the way of religious services?—Not that I am aware of.

Q. Are they people who could be advantageously employed in agricultural labour?—No. They do not know how to use a spade.

(The Inspector.) Very few people do.

(Mr. Robb.) I cannot admit that?—I have seen them use it wrong side before. They are willing to work and won't, some of them.

Q. Who are willing to work, the gangers?—Some decent men there.

Q. What about the others?—They are not worth the carriage down there.

Q. We are told there are 150 men and a number of officials there. Can they on a farm of this size find employment for that number?—They do find employment.

Q. Could they find sufficient?—No, not if they do a proper day's work each.

Q. What is the style they work in?—Very slack.

Q. When they turn over a spit, have five minutes' rest?—When they see anyone coming along the road they all stop and stare until he is out of sight.

Q. What kind of food is provided?—Very good. It is English killed meat.

Q. Do you get that sort of meat?—Not very often.

Q. You cannot afford it?—I cannot afford to buy joints and legs of mutton.

Q. Do they have joints of Mr. Wright?—Yes, of Herongate.

Q. Do the men go away at the week-end for a change of air?—Sometimes. I have known 30 or 40 take train from Laindon on Saturday afternoon, some returning Sunday night, some Monday morning, some mid-day.

Q. Do you know who pays their fares?—I have been told they have a note from Mr. Clarke to get a ticket.

Q. Their fares are paid by the guardians?—That is what they have told me.

Q. Do you remember a number of them going to march through London with the unemployed procession?—They came up.

Q. They went to see Mr. Balfour did they not. Mr. Crooks took them?—I don't know that.

Q. Were they carrying anything?—When they went up they had a flag.

Q. Was it a banner with a strange device?—I could not say.

Q. What colour?—A red one, or some part red. It was rolled up.

Q. Practically the whole colony turned out with a red flag to join the unemployed procession?—A greater part did.

Q. Was there any reference to Poplar on the flag?—Yes, I saw a "P."

(The Inspector.) It might have been "Peace."

(Mr. Robb.) How came it that these hard working men who were building reservoirs joined the unemployed?—I cannot tell.

Q. It was rather curious, was it not?—I thought so.

Q. Have you had complaints from the railway companies about them?—No. The stationmaster told me.

Q. Have you had complaints about their trespassing?—No.

Q. Was the trouble they caused the necessity for another constable in the district?—Yes.

(Mr. Johnston.) How far away from the colony do you live?—About 2½ miles.

Q. What is your beat?—Adjoining the colony ground.

Mr. Reeve.

29 June.

Mr. Reece,
—
29 June.

Q. Where do you go?—I have Laindon parish, some part of Little Burstead, some part of Great Burstead, Chapple, and some of Basildon.

Q. Then you have not a great deal of spare time to inspect the inhabitants of this colony?—I have to do the best I can.

Q. I understand there was a good deal of complaint at first about these people, and very little now?—They are very orderly now.

(The Inspector.) What wages do you get?—29s. a week. I have a wife and four children.

Q. You have been some years in the Constabulary?—Twelve years.

Mr. J. CLARKE, Superintendent of the Laindon Branch Workhouse; sworn and examined.

Mr. Clarke,
—
29 June.

(The Inspector.) Have you been at Laindon since the opening?—I have.

Q. What were you before?—Assistant labour master at Poplar, and I had held other offices.

Q. For how long ago?—Twelve years.

Q. What were you before that?—On a farm.

Q. What is the size of the farm?—110 acres.

Q. You have accommodation for how many men?—150.

Q. Have you always had 150 there?—No; some 100 until January, 1905, and then we made accommodation for 50 more.

Q. Can you tell me how many of these inmates were paupers from Poplar Workhouse?—At first 100 paupers and 50 unemployed. The pauper class decreased and the unemployed increased.

Q. Did you treat the paupers in any way differently from the unemployed?—None whatever.

Q. How many of the men are married?—Half a dozen at the outside.

Q. When you had the unemployed you had more?—Fifty or sixty had wives.

Q. It is suggested that your inmates get a good deal of money afforded them by their wives?—They get some.

Q. And that they had an allowance of 6d. a week?—That was so, for a period.

Q. Paid by a charitable person?—It was paid privately.

Q. It has been suggested that one difficulty was that your men had money. If they had had no money whatever the management would have been easier?—They would not have got the drink.

Q. What are the hours at Laindon?—48 hours a week all the year round.

Q. What work do they do?—When first they came down we started in July, 1904, to make the reservoir, which holds 300,000 gallons.

Q. How long did it take?—Two or three months. Then we made a filter.

Q. When was that finished?—About October, 1905.

Q. Since October, 1905, have you had any work other than the work on the land?—All on the land, except the buildings, the washing, and so on.

Q. What staff have you?—Six officers and the gangers.

Q. The gangers are what they call in Canada "pace-setters." What salaries do they get?—17s. a week.

Q. How much work has been done with the spade?—75 acres have been dug over three or four times.

Q. Without cropping it. Then what did you do?—Sowed it with potatoes.

Q. You had sometimes to find occupation, and dug the land when it was not necessary to dig it?—No, I could not say that.

Q. How many men could be profitably occupied by a farmer on that land?—If you were farming on a farm in the ordinary way you would employ about four.

Q. And you had to find room for 150?—It was spade-dug. It would mean implements and horses if it was farmed in the ordinary way.

Q. You have a motor waggon. Has it been useful?—For drawing manure, &c. We have had a lot of trouble with it. It won't do for those roads.

Q. And you have to pass in reading and writing, a sound man, and of good character?—Yes.

Q. Do you know the sort of meat that goes to the colony?—English-killed meat.

Q. And you cannot afford to buy the same class of meat. Do the colony men walk to the station?—They can walk there in a mile by the side of the line.

(Mr. Johnston.) What does the witness mean by saying he cannot afford the same meat?—I have to have small joints, but they have good joints and get the goodness.

Q. You are not the only persons who have trouble with your motor cars. Do the men improve when they come to you?—They improve wonderfully, physically and morally. Some of them are as good men as ever had tools placed in their hands.

Q. You are not sanguine of curing the drunkard, are you?—I am afraid not.

Q. Some of them are there simply through drink?—Yes. Others are there through mental incapacity.

Q. Is there another class of inmate?—There are some too indolent.

Q. Have you some elderly men with good characters?—Yes. Some men at about fifty are the best men.

Q. Have you heard complaints of gross moral evils at Laindon?—Never.

Q. Your dietary is not quite in accordance with the order of the Local Government Board. Has it been changed?—Yes. It has been changed at times.

Q. What do you estimate the cost of the dietary?—5s. 9d. per week. There is 8 oz. bread, 1 oz. butter, and 1 pint of coffee for breakfast. For dinner there is 4½ oz. cooked meat, beef one day and mutton the next; 8 oz. potatoes, 4 oz. pudding five times a week, plain suet or currant.

Q. You have meat every day of the week. Do you have roast meat?—Roast beef and roast mutton.

Q. You are aware the waste is greater with roast meat?—Yes. We have not the convenience for boiling it.

Q. Do you think the men on 17s. a week can provide such a dietary?—It would not provide as for that dietary, but there would be the possibility of changes. A man might have a herring or something.

Q. A labourer at 17s. a week does not have meat every day. How often in the week?—I should think he would have a joint on Sundays and keep to it until it was gone.

Q. Do you allow any beer?—No, sir.

Q. What leave did you formerly grant?—Forty-eight hours a month.

Q. And they used to go to London. Who paid the fares?—The guardians.

Q. You do not allow them now?—No, sir.

Q. How do you keep the men in at night?—A watchman goes round and takes every man's number.

Q. Why was he appointed?—Because of the complaints.

Q. Do you suppose there was much sleeping out before?—No. I had three cases I knew of.

Q. To the ordinary colonist you would find very little attraction in sleeping out?—I do not find many men in London would sleep out.

Q. Do you allow tobacco to the inmates?—Yes.

Q. How much?—An ounce and a half a week.

Q. To able-bodied or not?—Yes.

Q. Do you know what authority you have for that?—The guardians' direction.

Q. The Auditor would know and might surcharge you?—I don't know, I am sure.

Q. The Order only applies to inmates who are not able-bodied or are doing work of a specially disagreeable character. Do you have religious services?—Yes, sir.

Q. It has been said your inmates went to London to join a procession of the unemployed?—The unemployed went up, not the workhouse men.

Q. I see 24 of your inmates have emigrated to Canada. Had you anything to do with the choosing of these men?—I had.

Q. Through what agency did you send them?—The Salvation Army.

Q. Have any of the 25 returned?—Yes, one. He wanted to come back to the colony and I turned him out.

Q. Have you heard from anyone in Canada?—Yes, three.

Q. Of the nine who left the colony to get employment?—They got work locally from farmers. They will come back again.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Oxley has apparently been very industrious to-day and has finished these papers. They are analyses extracted from the clerk's books. I have copies and will hand them to Mr. Robb and will adjourn until Monday.

Mr. Clarke.
29 June.

NINTH DAY.

Monday, July 2nd, 1906.

(Mr. Grant.) May I just mention one matter. On Friday you directed us to supply the Poplar Alliance with two of the heads of returns they asked for—2 and 4. Our clerks have been at work all Saturday, and the return is not yet completed. I am afraid I was a little previous when we hoped to have it ready by Monday.

(The Inspector.) What?

(Mr. Grant.) No. 2 of Mr. Robb's letter of 25th June, return of travelling, and others.

(Mr. Robb.) I understood—

(Mr. Grant.) We shall get it out as soon as we can.

(Mr. Robb.) I understood 2 and 4 were promised and the others were left in abeyance. I gathered we shall have the whole of the returns.

(The Inspector.) I am afraid it will take some little time.

(Mr. Robb.) As to the electricity—

(The Inspector.) Yes, as to the other four they stand over.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes.

Mr. J. CLARKE: recalled, and further examined.

(The Inspector.) I just want to ask Mr. Clarke a few more questions to complete my examination. Will you tell me, Mr. Clarke, what crops were actually grown at Laindon?—Ten acres of potatoes last year; and peas. One acre of peas.

(Mr. Grant.) I cannot hear a thing.

(The Inspector.) He says ten acres of potatoes and one acre of peas?—Not all peas; radishes, tomatoes, split up in allotments, and cabbages, savoys—five acres of cabbages and savoys—fifteen acres altogether.

Q. Fifteen acres cultivated; the rest fallow?—Fifty oads of hay in one stack. Twenty-five tons it would be.

Q. What do you mean by a load of hay in Essex?—19 cwt.

Q. About a ton. The product of the year's labour was ten acres of potatoes, five acres of garden stuff, and 20 tons of hay?—Yes, sir, 20 to 25.

Q. What did the men do when they weren't working on the land?—Made bags and worked in the ditches in the winter time.

Q. Was that enough work?—In the wet weather.

Q. Suppose you had to repeat the experiment; would it be necessary to have some subsidiary occupations?—Yes, sir, we cannot find it.

Q. I suppose such trouble as did arise arose from the fact you hadn't enough land?—That is so, sir; in the winter time it is impossible to work on Essex land.

Q. You are aware the guardians are suggesting a much larger farm?—I understand so.

Q. Would any quantity of land be enough to keep the men employed, with some subsidiary occupation?—In the summer months.

Q. In the winter months?—You could not work on the land in the winter months. You might make other kind of work.

Q. If I remember, your soil is heavy—clay?—Very heavy.

Q. Greasy?—Yes.

Q. It does not dry quickly?—It does not dry at all. The water lies in basins. There are surface soils, and then the water does not run away.

Q. So to a certain extent the land was not very suitable and the area was not large enough?—A lot of manuring in the work.

(Mr. Robb.) We cannot hear a word here. Neither Mr Crooks nor anyone else can hear.

(The Inspector.) Would it be more convenient if you brought the witness here. (To witness.) Don't talk so fast, and then they can hear you. Do you think in those circumstances the colony was a deterrent to the men who applied: Do they like going there?—They don't like going down, sir. Altogether different men, 637. The admissions altogether up to the present day are 1,030. The figures prove that they didn't like the colony. As soon as there are 150 they try and get back to the workhouse.

Q. They prefer the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. Although you have told us the men improved physically at the work?—Yes, they most improve physically.

Q. I want to ask a question or two with regard to the men's money. In every institution of that sort it must be very difficult for the men to have money, even a few pence?—With a certain class of men. Perhaps a dozen. If we get a dozen of men in 100 or 150 that have money, they will have drink if they walk 20 miles for it.

Q. Apart from the 6d. a week, you are aware the men got money from other sources?—The married men get it from their wives. I cannot speak of the habitual paupers.

Q. Have you any instance?—I have.

Q. How?—From letters. I had occasion to open one or two letters to men who were out there. I saw the postal orders.

Q. Why did the women send the letters?—It is like this. Several letters I have seen. If the wife didn't send money at the week end, they simply, on several occasions, the men threatened the wife.

Q. Threatened her?—Yes.

Q. That would be the case of a bad man who had come into the colony?—Yes.

Q. And if the wife's source was out-door relief, it would point to something that should be put right?—Yes.

Q. Where a man threatened his wife, did he threaten to beat her?—On one occasion I saw this letter on this man.

Q. You saw this letter?—I saw three letters with postal orders, but there were threatening letters.

Q. How many threatening letters?—I only knew of one.

Q. The letter would be from the wife?—No, sir, it was to the wife from the husband.

Mr. Clarke.
2 July.

Mr. Clarke,

2 July.

Q. Oh, I see. He said he would beat her or something of that kind?—He demanded so much money.

Q. Of course, that is an unfortunate thing when it happens. Can you suggest any means of stopping that abuse?—We endeavoured to do our utmost. I referred to the guardians and they made enquiries and checked it.

Q. Just one more question about the processions. How many times did the men go to processions?—Twice.

Q. About when?—On the 20th November—30 or 40 men. They paid their own fares on that occasion.

Q. How did they pay their own fares?—Either they paid their own fares, or someone else paid. We didn't pay.

Q. How many men went?—40 or 50 men on that occasion.

(Mr. Grant.) (Reading.) "16th November, 1905.—Dear Sir,—I am directed by the board of guardians to inform you that upon consideration of application from W. Judge for the colonists at Laindon to be allowed leave to attend the labour demonstration in Hyde Park on Monday, the 20th instant, the board decided to authorise you to grant leave to those inmates of the unemployed 'class'—?—Not the paupers.

Q. "at the colony on Monday next who desire it to attend the demonstration, but not to pay their fares. Yours faithfully, G. Herbert Lough, Clerk." There is a note to the letter: "Please inform Judge of the 'guardians' decision." Then there is this letter of 11th December, 1905, from Mr. Lough: "Dear Sir,—I am directed to inform you that at the meeting of the farm's committee held on Thursday last, it was decided to authorise you to grant one day's leave to seven colonists on the 13th instant, and to pay their return fares to 'Bromley.' A note by Mr. Lough, 'cost of fares, 11s. 8d.'" So there were only seven men?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) I should like those letters on the short-hand notes.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you keep any books at Laindon, or are they kept at the guardians' offices?—Books are kept at Laindon.

Q. Books are kept at Laindon?—Yes.

Q. Have you them with you?—Yes.

Q. Are you able to tell us the cost of working the colony in the last working year. When do you make your accounts up—to the 31st March?—That is a matter for the clerk. That is not my jurisdiction.

Q. That is a matter for the clerk?—Yes.

Q. What are the books you keep?—Provisions book, necessities, farm account, receipt and payments book, admission and discharge book.

Q. I see, and the general figures are kept by the clerk to the guardians?—Yes.

Q. I suppose you pay the wages of the staff weekly?—I do.

Q. How much do you pay for wages per week including the wages of yourself and wife?—I shall answer that question in a moment.

Q. You have only a ganger and stockman?—A stockman, horseman—

Q. And your additional gangers?—Yes.

Q. Horsekeeper?—A horsekeeper and four additional officers.

Q. A motor driver?—No, not a motor driver.

Q. What has become of him?—Discharged.

Q. And the motor attendant?—Discharged.

Q. Then there is the matron's assistant and cook?—The matron's assistant only comes two or three days a week.

Q. Then your wife and yourself?—That is so, sir, and additional officers.

Q. Who?—Additional officers besides myself and wife.

Q. I see, then there is the medical officer?—Oh yes, sir, but not resident.

Q. Not resident?—Oh no, sir.

Q. Have I named the whole of the institution?—No, sir.

Q. Well, tell us the others?—Overseer, assistant superintendent, the clerk, the cook, and night watchman.

Q. All these posts are held by salaried officials?—Yes, paid officials.

Q. Have any of these positions been filled from the ranks of the unemployed sent down there?—One, sir, a ganger.

Q. One ganger?—Yes.

Q. With the exception of that have you out of the 1,030 admissions been able to select any one suitable for these positions?—No, sir, I haven't.

Q. Have you tried to do so?—I have.

Q. You found no one suitable for any of these positions?—As a matter of fact London men won't take these positions unless he has a big family and cannot live on 17s. He would have two houses to keep.

Q. Who?—A London man. There are no houses down there to live in. There are only a few houses and they have to pay 8s. 6d.

Q. Rather a curious position. What do you mean; you only pay your colonists 17s. a week?—That is so.

Q. That is the average wage of the Essex labourer upon which he supports his wife and family?—Yes.

Q. And you mean the colonists, with their wives and families, cost considerably more?—Yes, certainly, if he keeps one home in London and another at Laindon.

Q. Even as it stands it costs considerably more?—I beg pardon.

Q. As the positions are to-day, a wife being supported by out-door relief, the cost is considerably more than 17s. 4d. That depends upon the situation—whether the wife has one room or three or four rooms.

Q. We are told some women are in receipt of as much as 15s. 4d. a week?—I cannot answer that.

Q. We have been told so.—That is not my business.

Q. I think you said the cost of provisions per head at Laindon was 5s. 9d.?—Yes.

Q. Then there is clothing?—Yes.

Q. And necessities. And the proportion of the general charge of the whole establishment?—That is so.

Q. Are you able to estimate these?—Not the estimate of the whole establishment. That involves the building and everything, that is a matter for the clerk.

(The Inspector.) We shall get a return of that.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes. At a low estimate the man whose wife and children are in receipt of 15s. a week and a colonist at Laindon costs the guardians 25s. a week for wife and family?—I daresay it would.

Q. To do no productive work?—They do productive work.

Q. Well, not profitable work?—It is work that must be done.

Q. You don't suggest the farm is worked at a profit?—This work was to find these men employment.

Q. I am not complaining. I mean it is not profitable work. We arrive at the position that 25s. a week is being spent for man and wife and family for doing work which leads to no profit?—

(The Inspector.) I cannot accept that 25s. as an average. It is only an exceptional case.

(Mr. Robb.) No, sir.

(The Inspector.) Perhaps we had better leave that.

(Mr. Robb.) Ten shillings a week—

(Mr. Grant.) There are several questions here. There is the policy of the guardians—the question of whether their policy was right in taking the unemployed from the streets and trying to raise their character at Laindon.

(The Inspector.) We can discuss that matter afterwards.

(Mr. Grant.) Take the evidence now and have the discussion afterwards. It would be better.

(Mr. Robb.) It strikes me as curious. Mr. Clarke said the colonists get 17s. a week to support their wives and families. I was proceeding to show a paradoxical situation, that these men and their families cost 25s. for work which, however useful, is not profitable.

(The Inspector.) I see your point.

(Mr. Robb.) So apparently it would be cheaper to allow them 17s. a week to do nothing at all. Of course, there may be an explanation. That is my point. The real explanation, Mr. Clarke, is these men are from the town. They are all Londoners?—Yes.

Q. They are used to town life?—That is so.

Q. And they are not really suited for agricultural pursuits?—They have never been used to it.

Q. And after a time the quietness of the country rather palls upon them. They don't like it?—Not as a rule.

Q. Your experience is as long as the workhouse gates are open they would rather go there?—That is the case everywhere with the average pauper. All over England, everywhere. That is the case everywhere with the habitual pauper.

Q. You distinguish for this purpose between the paupers and the unemployed?—I do, sir.

Q. You do?—I do, sir.

Q. What do you find in regard to the genuine unemployed?—He is usually a good man, and when contaminated with the pauper he sinks to the same degree as the pauper.

(*The Inspector.*) Sinks to the same degree?

(*Mr. Grant.*) The same level, Mr. Clarke?—The same level, yes, sir.

(*Mr. Robb.*) So the association does him harm. It does him harm to be associated with the workhouse, whether pauper or man?—The association does harm to one class and probably no good to the other.

Q. Your view is the compounding of the two classes—the mixing does harm to the unemployed?—Not if they are well supervised. The pauper has to go at the same pace as the unemployed.

Q. I don't know. Do they. As a matter of general policy your view is it was inadvisable to mix the two classes together?—That is so.

Q. Because it destroyed to a certain extent the character of the genuine unemployed—reduced him to the level of the pauper?—It would at the workhouse. I don't think it could have the same effect in the farm colony.

Q. Then I misunderstood you. Now, these men have been very well fed and treated at Laindon?—Yes, well fed and treated.

Q. Exceptionally well fed. I think you admitted you have some experience of farming?—I have.

Q. You admitted, I think, in reply to the Inspector, it would be better to have the ordinary farm labourer?—Yes.

Q. You don't suggest he could get provisions of the same kind and quality?—I don't.

Q. And the diet has been higher than it is now?—It has.

Q. Do you say the cost is 5s. 9d. now?—5s. 9d.

Q. What was the highest it touched?—I haven't got that out.

Q. When was the reduction made?—Mr. Lough will answer that question. Twelve months ago.

Q. What was there that was suspended or reduced?—One egg a week, cold meat for breakfast, German sausage, 2 ozs. cold meat, 2 ozs. German sausage or corned beef, cold bacon. That was what was dispensed with.

Q. Does that mean per week or each morning?—One egg per week.

Q. The other items?—That was changed.

Q. Alternative?—Yes.

Q. They were getting meat twice a day?—On some occasions.

Q. Sometimes three times?—Not three times, no. If you call German sausage or corned beef as meat.

Q. It is meat?—I don't call German sausage meat.

Q. Counting German sausage as meat, it was meat three times a day?—If you count German sausage.

Q. They were getting meat three times a day. That was a little extravagant, was it not?—It was very good.

Q. I have been glancing through the tender forms for Laindon, Mr. Clarke, and I see that best wheaten bread is specified?—Yes.

Q. That is for the colonists?—Yes.

Q. Colonists and officers?—We all have the same.

Q. You all have the same bread. And best household flour?—Yes; for making pastry and so on.

Q. Good English ox beef, fresh killed, consisting of thick flanks, &c., the whole being entirely free from bone—that is for the colonists?—That is so.

Q. And young wether mutton, small legs of pork, and best beef suet. What do you want all that suet for?—To make puddings and dumplings.

Q. Didn't you get a lot of dripping?—Yes, we used that to put on the men's bread.

Q. Then you have butter as well?—Oh, yes, margarine, not butter.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Has Mr. Robb also the prices opposite to them?

(*Mr. Robb.*) I have no prices. (*To witness.*) Margarine was substituted recently?—That is so.

Q. The same time as Poplar Workhouse?—That is so.

Q. The butter, when it was used, was three churned Taunton?—Yes.

Q. What price was that?—1s. 0½d.

(*Mr. Grant.*) May I say. It will save cross-examination. The best wheaten bread, per cwt., was 10s. 6d.; best household flour, per sack of 280 lbs., £1 6s.; ox beef, a stone of 14 lbs., 7s.; beef suet, per stone of 14 lbs., 3s. 6d. You will see what the prices work out at.

(*Mr. Robb.*) And the butter, perhaps Mr. Corrie Grant will give us that?

(*Mr. Grant.*) Best butter, per cwt., £5 16s. Dealing with the same tender.

(*Mr. Robb.*) That is this year's tender, is it not?

(*Mr. Marsh.*) £5 19s. last year.

(*Mr. Grant.*) The tenders I have read are this year's. If the clerk has last year's I will give them.

(*The Inspector.*) We are going into that.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Do you mind giving me the butter last year and this?

(*Mr. Grant.*) I will give you all of them last year: best wheaten bread, per cwt., 11s.; best household flour, per sack, 280 lbs., £1 7s.; ox beef, fresh killed, &c., 14 lbs., 9s. 4d.; best beef suet, per stone of 14 lbs., 3s. 6d.; butter, last year, per cwt., £5 19s.

(*Mr. Robb.*) And this year?

(*Mr. Grant.*) This year, £5 16s.

(*Mr. Robb.*) The butter last year was about 1s. 2d. per lb.?—Oh no, sir, one shilling and a fraction, nearly 1s. 1d.

(*The Inspector.*) How was the butter delivered?—In boxes.

Q. How many lbs.?—About a cwt.

Q. Are you using butter this year?—No, margarine.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I see grocer and cheesemonger. Was that a local contractor?—What are you referring to?

Q. Last year?—That was a local contractor.

Q. Who?—Mr. Lee, of Laindon.

Q. Did he execute it himself?—I cannot tell you. I know nothing of that at all. He delivered it.

Q. Did you know Mr. Lewsey sent down?—I don't know anything of that. I don't I assure you.

Q. I see there was 2,000 lbs. of cake. Who for?—The colonists, sir.

Q. When were they served with cake?—

(*Mr. Grant.*) I think we ought to have the document. Mr. Clarke is wrong. The man who supplied those things was Jones, not Lee?—That is so.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Whoever it was, you don't know the circumstance whether it was supplied or not?—I don't know.

Q. When was this cake served to the colonists?—Now, every Sunday evening at tea time.

Q. Candied peel, what was that for?—That was for pastry.

Q. Do you serve them with fruit tarts?—That was only for the house—the officers.

Q. The officers?—Yes.

(*Mr. Grant.*) 5d. a lb.

(*Mr. Robb.*) 1,000 lbs. best ground coffee. Is that for the colonists?—Yes, for the colonists.

(*Mr. Grant.*) 10d. a lb.

Mr. Clarke.

2 July.

Mr. Clarke.

2 July.

(Mr. Robb.) 70 lbs. of Cadbury's best cocoa. For officers?—Yes, for officers.

(Mr. Grant.) 1s. 9d. a lb.

(Mr. Robb.) 36 bottles of Lazenby's pickles. For the officers?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) I don't find it 36 bottles. Mine is 6, last year's contract.

(The Inspector.) The estimated quantity?—The estimate would be 36 bottles.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you read through this year's form?—

(Mr. Grant.) One moment, we had last year.

(Mr. Robb.) We had last year's for one question. 896 lbs. of best tapioca?—That is for the colonists.

Q. 250 lbs. best Valencia raisins. For the colonists?—That is so, sir.

(Mr. Grant.) 3d. a lb., Mr. Robb.

(Mr. Robb.) And the sultanas too?—Yes, sir. They go in with the raisins.

Q. Best English Cheddar, 200 lbs.?—That is for the officers.

Q. And the best American cheese, 30 cwt.?—For the colonists.

(Mr. Grant.) Let me give you the price for that.

(Mr. Robb.) Certainly.

(Mr. Grant.) I haven't got the price. Yes, I have, £3 4s. a cwt.

(The Inspector.) We shall have all this question on the total return of cost.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, sir. Unfortunately the tenders don't discriminate between provisions for officers and provisions for colonists or inmates. I rather want to clear—

(The Inspector.) On the return is the cost of the officers put down separate from the cost of the inmates at Laidon?

(Mr. Lough.) The total cost would be shown.

(The Inspector.) Of officers.

(Mr. Robb.) I cannot follow you. It is impossible. It is drawn from one common store.

(Mr. Lough.) It is kept separate.

(Mr. Robb.) That is a very excellent dietary, indeed, Mr. Clarke?—Which one do you mean, sir?

Q. I mean it is a kind of dietary that very few labouring men can afford to have?—Oh, yes.

Q. You gave us some figures this morning which are new to me. You said the admissions had been 1,030?—Up to the present, sir. Up to last week.

Q. How many individuals does that represent. You have had some men more than once?—Oh, yes. That represents 650 different men.

Q. 1,030?—Oh, no, 200 have been more than once. Some three or four times.

Q. 200 let us understand. How does that come about that they are admitted as many as three or four times?—They take their discharge to look for work and apply for an order when they are destitute, and have been sent down again.

Q. So when they want some fresh air in the country they go down again?—I don't know about that, sir.

Q. Seriously that is the position?—The man must take his discharge to look for work.

(The Inspector.) The witness says in his view the colonists don't go to the colony more than they can help?—That is so.

(Mr. Robb.) And yet some of them go 3 or 4 times?—Yes. Some of these 200. Are you aware these men have been practically in the workhouse for 20 years, and some 15 or 20 years. From my personal experience it has been over 10 years. They have been in the workhouse 10 or 15 or 20 years.

Q. Then it is rather late in the day to try and redeem them?—Nothing is ever too late.

Q. Don't you think it is rather too late?—

(The Inspector.) He says it is never too late.

(Mr. Robb.) Well, sir, I should have thought?—With this class of inmates I should deal differently. I believe in classification.

(Mr. Grant.) You want the unemployable class. Do you know what an unemployable is?—I don't want the unemployable. I want those who will be employed.

(Mr. Robb.) Do they get a fresh suit of clothes on each admission?—Oh yes, sir, a clean suit.

Q. So that each time a man comes down, if he goes 2, 3, 4 or 5 times, he gets a new suit?—Not a new suit, but a fresh one. He must have a fresh suit according to the orders.

Q. With regard to the labour done. What record do you keep of that?—Only my personal record in my brains. I don't keep a record of the work.

Q. Only a mental record?—That is so.

Q. No time sheets?—No.

Q. Or any book in which you record them?—No, sir.

Q. Now this reservoir that you suggest occupied so much time. How many yards of earth does that reservoir represent the taking of?—553 feet long and 52 feet wide. Depth 6 feet odd inches. The filter bed is 48 feet long and 21 feet wide and 14 feet deep.

Q. How many men were employed on that?—At that time, I dare say, it would be 40 or 50.

Q. I think you agree that there has not been all the year through sufficient work for the men?—Not in the winter time.

Q. Now, Mr. Clarke, were you responsible for this motor wagon?—I have nothing at all to do with it.

Q. Nothing to do with it?—Nothing whatever.

Q. It was not sent down to you?—I had nothing to do with the responsibility.

Q. Did you ask for it?—No, sir.

Q. But you were the responsible head of the farm. Do you mean to say this was foisted upon you?—I don't mean to say it was foisted upon me. I did not ask for it.

Q. Who did?—I don't know. The guardians as a body thought it would be beneficial to the farm colony.

Q. Did they ever consult you?—No, they never consulted me.

Q. As a practical man on the spot you were not consulted. If you had been, you would have told them?—They thought I knew nothing about it.

Q. If you had been consulted you might have pointed out one or two difficulties?—I don't know what I would have done.

Q. You might have done?—I don't know.

Q. With your present experience you would?—Certainly.

Q. Wasn't it rather curious this motor wagon being sent down without your advice or opinion being asked?—Curious? All public boards do queer things sometimes. There are more brains than one. They consider they know best.

Q. Consider they know best?—Yes.

Q. Are they in the habit of consulting you about the farm?—Yes.

Q. When they come down they go through details?—They go all over the farm and go into everything.

Q. And take your advice as a practical man?—Not always. Perhaps it would have been better in some cases had they done so.

Q. This motor wagon was a "white elephant" as the superintendent said?—I don't know.

Q. Apart from the superintendent, it hasn't been a success?—It hasn't.

Q. And it cost a great deal to keep up?—The cost would not come out a great deal, not the actual cost. Apart from the rough roads the motor would have been all right. On London roads it would have done.

Q. The driver was paid 40s. a week. And there was an attendant. It would cost £3 or £4 a week?—It was not £2 all the way through for the driver.

Q. Then there was petrol, &c.?—All the necessary things, of course.

Q. You don't suggest the motor was costing more than £5 or £6 a week all told?—Oh, it didn't cost that.

Q. What is the weight of it?—I don't know.

Q. What is the horse-power of it?—I don't know the horse-power.

Mr. Clarke,
2 July.

Q. What was it, a steam or petrol motor?—Petrol! no; steam, steam, steam.

(Mr. Grant.) You used coal?—Yes, sir.

Q. When Mr. Robb put petrol to you, you never contradicted it?—

(Mr. Robb.) I put petrol on the assumption it was a petrol motor. Do you suggest the cost of upkeep was £5 or £6 a week?—

(Mr. Grant.) This was all submitted to the Local Government Board.

(Mr. Robb.) I don't mind if it was. This motor which was sent down without any application by you has cost £5 or £6. Who executed the repairs?—The motor driver, the engineer.

Q. Now, Mr. Clarke, what amount have you spent on seeds at the farm?—We shall get that out.

Q. What crops have you produced and sold?—Sold £771 18s. 11d. worth, consumed and sold.

Q. Consumed. Will you distinguish between consumed and sold?—The accounts are kept together. I cannot.

Q. I don't think so. What class of potatoes are yours?—Very good, Up-to-dates.

Q. What are they?—Scotch potatoes.

Q. Scotch?—Yes.

Q. Are they worth £4 10s. a ton?—That depends upon the market.

Q. That is what the guardians credited for?—I have nothing to do with what the guardians credit.

Q. That is a fair price?—It depends upon the market.

Q. That is the price of best Scotch potatoes?—Yes. If they were £4 10s. to contractors, it is worth £4 10s. to me.

Q. I only want to know?—That is a fact.

Q. I want to know whether £4 10s. is a fair amount to credit you with?—It depends upon the market price.

Q. What would be the market price. What are they worth at the time they are turned out?—£3 a ton.

Q. Then you have been credited with too much if you are credited with £4 10s.?—Not all the year through. You have to take the year through.

Q. But contractors for a year, independent contractors?—Yes.

Q. At all events you suggest £3 would be the market price?—At the time when we got out. A contractor doesn't contract for the price when they are got out.

Q. You have been invariably credited with £4 10s. a ton?—Yes.

Q. Then you have been credited with too much. Another question. Out of these 1,030 admissions—650 different men—you can only trace the success of three. You told us that 25 had emigrated?—Yes.

Q. And you have heard from two of them?—Three of them, sir.

Q. And 9 had gone to private work?—Yes.

Q. Have you heard from any of these?—None of these.

Q. Really the only record you have of the success of any persons are these three—three emigrants who have written to you?—That is so. In Canada. I may say some are at work on this road down here. I saw some this morning working on the tramway. If he was not a good man he would not be working there.

Q. These colonists who succeed are individually known to you. Angel and the others?—They were.

Q. Angel one of them?—Yes. He wrote for a servant.

Q. He was an exceptionally good man?—No, he was not. I gave him seven weeks.

Q. What for?—For getting drunk and stealing a pair of boots.

Q. Apart from that was there anything against him?—No.

Q. What about the other two men?—There is nothing against them at all, not to my knowledge. I may say the man Angel is doing very well in Canada. He wrote for a servant.

Q. Who pays the fares of the men when they come home for the week-end to visit their wives?—Who used to pay them?

Q. Yes?—The guardians. Not a week-end. Only 48 hours once a month. That was for the men to look for work. I don't want to be misunderstood. But there happened to be a week-end.

Q. The superintendent told us they came up by the 3 o'clock train on Saturdays?—What superintendent?

Q. The constable?—The constable said the demonstrators. They didn't.

Q. You told us they did on the second occasion?—On the second occasion.

Q. What is the good of sending them by the 3 o'clock train on the Saturdays when they only get 48 hours to look for work?—They didn't always go on Saturday afternoon, sir.

Q. I put it to you the men went up 30 or 40 at a time, by the 3.30 train on Saturday afternoons?—I say they often went up on their own accord. We stopped that. They mostly went on Monday and had 48 hours. When they went on Saturday afternoon they went of their own accord. I discussed this with the committee and the board.

Q. Do you deny the men have gone up on Saturday afternoons at the expense of the guardians?—I don't know.

Q. You know they have. That was not to look for work. It could not have been?—They certainly went to look for work. That was the guardians' object in letting them go.

Q. When these men went up, do you seriously suggest, and allowed 48 hours, that they went to look for work?—That was the object of the guardians.

Q. What did the fares cost?—1s. 8d.

Q. Each?—Return.

Q. That would be paid for 30 or 40 men in a week sometimes?—It would not reach to 30 or 40 men. There are practically only 70 down, and each one went once a month.

Q. It was 1s. 8d. return?—Yes.

Q. Why do you give return tickets if they went to look for work?—Why did I?

Q. Yes. You were not hopeful of the success of the men. Why did you issue return tickets if they went to look for work?—Because they didn't take their discharge, and we looked for them coming back.

Q. Any further information?—I haven't.

Q. I suggest you issued these tickets mainly for the purpose of them visiting their wives and families at week-ends?—I understand nothing of the sort, sir, myself.

Q. I don't say you do. You were carrying out the instructions of the guardians?—Yes. The guardians' intention was to let them go to seek work.

Q. That is what it worked out in effect?—Oh!

Q. In effect it was a series of week-end visits instead of searching for work?—48 hours a month.

Q. For the families?—I don't know what it was for the families.

Q. How many men obtained work?—How many men? Why 50 or 60 got employed and didn't return back again. I think there is a return here.

Q. Return fares paid for them?—Yes.

Q. Which were wasted?—If they didn't return, in some cases they sent the return ticket back again.

Q. How many out of 50 or 60?—Not a great many.

Q. In some cases they were wasted?—Better to have them wasted and not have the man back again.

Q. Better to get single tickets. How many have you issued?—About £60 worth of tickets.

Q. Since the colony began in 1904 you have paid about £60 in railway fares?—That is so.

Q. That would only pay their fares from Laidon. Their fares down would be defrayed from this end?—It only refers to return tickets from Laidon.

Q. It only represents this end?—That is so.

Q. Now, when they went to this second unemployed demonstration, was it 11s. 8d. you paid for tickets?—Yes, 11s. 8d.

Mr. Clarke.

2 July.

Q. For seven men?—Yes.

Q. Did you give any allowance on either occasion beyond their fares?—What do you mean by allowance?

Q. Any refreshments?

(The Inspector.) Any food?—Not to my knowledge.

(Mr. Robb.) Beyond their fares were they given any allowance?—No.

Q. Who paid this pocket money of sixpence per week?—I don't know.

Q. Where did you get this pocket money from?—Is that a question for me to answer?

(The Inspector.) It is well understood.

(Mr. Grant.) It is, as you say, well understood. I can tell you all about it. Mr. Lansbury here got the money from certain friends as an experiment, and after a certain time it was given up. There was no charge on the rates.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I don't mind saying I paid the money.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Lansbury gave you the money to pay the men pocket money of sixpence per week?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) Just one or two questions, Mr. Clarke. This Landon colony was an experiment of the guardians in dealing with a certain class of men, was it not?—That is so.

Q. And as it has not been tried before by anyone, I believe, the guardians had to learn by experience?—Yes.

Q. And this sixpence per week did not come out of the rates. It was privately subscribed, and, when found to be a mistake, it was dropped?—Yes. Some of them were worth more than sixpence a week.

Q. Tell me now, as to where the men came from?—The men were sent to me by the guardians.

Q. Where from?—The first men came from the workhouse.

Q. Just a minute. Were they the men you would have chosen had you to carry out a job for a private person?—No, sir; no, sir.

Q. I understand they did a good deal of work at Landon?—They did.

Q. I want to take the heads. I will deal with the details some other time. They built this reservoir?—Yes.

Q. Filter beds?—Yes.

Q. They erected some buildings?—Yes.

Q. Can you tell me what the buildings were?—A barn was roofed, sheds run round the house, and they did work to other buildings.

Q. And did they do a good deal of digging and trench work besides, which was not included in ordinary farm work?—They did a lot of ditching but no trenching.

Q. Was there not a great deal of digging over grass land?—Yes, sir.

Q. It was not arable land?—No, sir.

Q. How much was there?—About 75 acres.

Q. Full of weeds and twitch?—Yes.

Q. What did they do with that?—The greater part of it was dug over 3 times, 4 times, 5 times, and some 6 times. The average work works out at 2 rods per man. I have gone round with a tape. Some men did three or four rods and some only one.

Q. Of course, London men brought down to dig solid ground could not work as well as trained men?—No. I have seen men with their hands all blisters.

Q. Altogether how many months were they occupied in making the reservoir?—I looked up the particulars last night and found that the reservoir was finished at the latter end of November.

Q. When did they begin it?—At the latter end of June.

Q. Roughly about four months?—Yes, that is so.

Q. Begun at the latter end of July and finished in December?—Yes, sir.

Q. I find, Mr. Clarke, in the minutes of the guardians a resolution of the guardians that the sides of the reservoir be concreted?—Yes.

Q. How long would the concreting take?—That would take some weeks. There were only a few men engaged upon that work.

Q. Would you call the reservoir completed before the concreting was done?—When the reservoir was cleared out and everything ready for the concreting.

Q. And the men also did their own boot-making?—Not boot-making but boot-repairing.

Q. And their washing?—All their washing.

Q. Was there a good deal of work done on their clothes—repairing their clothes?—Yes.

Q. It was put to you about these men who came down more than once. It was put to you that they got a new suit of clothes each time, but you corrected that and said fresh suits. Was that necessary?—Certainly.

Q. What was the state of the men?—When they came from—

Q. When they came to you?—I should not like to tell you.

Q. We can put it then in this way, that it was necessary for their health that they should have a fresh suit of clothes, and when they left they gave up that suit?—Yes.

Q. They would not take it away?—Oh, no, we took it from them.

Q. A man did not come and go and come again and get a fresh suit each time?—Oh no, sir.

Q. Now we have had the policemen down complaining of Landon. I suppose a farm colony of paupers down from London would not be popular in any country district?—I am afraid not.

Q. Did you have your attention drawn to complaints of what happened at Landon?—I cannot find any complaints of Landon, except very few. I don't say they are all angels. The first time these complaints were made was when an individual complained to Superintendent Marsden. I had arranged to go over to him and have supper that night to catch the man, but a man committed suicide and stopped me from going. I found out the man who said he would shoot them. I cleared the man away and he has not been to the colony since.

Q. Do I understand that you have had other complaints?—I have had three since I have been there.

Q. And these you dealt with?—I dealt with all complaints made to me and when proved I punished according to the Poor Law Regulations.

Q. Now is this true as reported—"The men have a criminal record, and in most cases are idle and dissolute persons, and have no desire to work for their livelihood." Do you know that the majority of the men have a criminal record?—I know nothing about it.

Q. Did you find them disorderly?—At the first start some of them were. I took them to Brentwood myself.

Q. I am speaking now of the whole farm colonists. Were they in most cases idle and dissolute persons?—Not all of them.

Q. Were they men who had no desire to work for their livelihood?—Some of them were.

Q. "After their labour hours they were allowed to roam about and frequent public houses"?—They were allowed to go where they liked after their hours. I know they went to public houses when they had money.

Q. But did they frequent public houses?—That happened at the week-end. A section of them did.

Q. Now it is said again that there was no supervision of the men, and that they were allowed to go where they liked. Is that true?—They were allowed to go where they liked.

Q. During the whole day?—Oh, no.

(Mr. Robb.) I don't think that was suggested?—It was suggested that they went during the day.

(Mr. Grant.) This is what the superintendent says?—I think it only refers to the week-ends and the evenings.

(Mr. Robb.) I think it only refers to the week-ends.

(Mr. Grant.) Here it is said again, Mr. Clarke has prosecuted five of the inmates, and they left and returned to London, and in each instance he has employed a local solicitor. Is there any harm in that?—No harm, as far as I am concerned.

Q. When you thought it necessary?—We always do employ a solicitor.

Mr. Clarke.

2 July.

Q. Now again—"These paupers are turning over ground under the supervision of a man from their own class. The ganger fraternises with the men." You have told us that out of the whole of the men who were sent down you only employed one as a ganger?—Two previously. One got drunk and I sacked him. There is only one now.

Q. Out of the total number of the unemployed men who were inmates of the colony you promoted three?—One out of the unemployed and one man who came out of the workhouse after the war. I promoted him as he was a good man. As a matter of fact, later he got drunk and I sacked him. One came from the unemployed, and I have him there at the present time.

Q. Does that represent all?—All I have promoted out of the unemployed.

Q. Then is it true to say these paupers were turning over the ground under the supervision of men practically from their own station?—The ganger and the leading man are local agriculturists who I had to get out of the district.

Q. "Respectable people are afraid to be about after dark, and it is not safe for females any time." Did you hear of any complaints of women being interfered with?—I have not heard one single complaint about females being interfered with.

Q. "I have complained to Mr. Clarke personally"?—Well, it is so.

Q. What was the nature of the complaint?—About a man being allowed out at night.

Q. What did you do?—I said I would send the man away from the colony.

Q. Have you had any complaints since?—No.

Q. Then so far from it being true to say that no improvement has taken place you acted on every complaint sent you?—I did.

Q. Now I want to put this to you, Mr. Clarke. In every case when anything was brought home to anyone of the inmates were they either punished or sent away?—I always punished, and, independent of that, I always helped everyone I met. The man who complained took one of my men to work for him last summer.

Q. And was the farmer who made the complaint the same individual who made a complaint?—The same individual. I had three men go locally to farmers only last week.

Q. When the inspector came to you did he complain about the men having beer?—He never came to me. I saw the superintendent in Brentwood at his station.

Q. Did you see the constable?—The constable came up.

Q. Now as to whether the colony was a success or not, it is quite another matter, but as a matter of fact out of the people who have been to the colony, have 31 stated to you on taking their discharge that they have got work?—It is so.

Q. And you found work for 9?—Yes.

Q. That makes 40. And then 25 men have gone to Canada?—Yes, and 6 more are going to Canada. The Church Army is going to send them away.

Q. So that the Landon colony has done something to take people off the rates?—The figures prove it. The figures prove it.

Q. Now this threatening letter. It was a letter from a husband and you happened to see it?—I had access to it.

Q. I only want to know what was in it. You told us he threatened her. I wish to know more closely what he said?—It simply said, I cannot quite exactly quote it, but practically he asked his wife for 4s., and that if it was not sent by Saturday something would happen.

Q. Was that what he said exactly?—I cannot tell you the words.

Q. I don't want the exact language, I want to know what sort of a threat it was?—That was the purport.

Q. That if he did not get the 4s. he would come up and something would happen?—That is right.

Q. When the men went up on the 21st November, they paid their own fares?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Did you get what the witness said?—He said he would not repeat the words. He would not like to.

(Mr. Lansbury.) There was nothing indecent in it.

(The Inspector.) Witness remembers what was said but he does not want to repeat it. He does not care to.

(Mr. Grant.) I only want to get out the fact. Do you mean he put some adjective in the letter. An adjective which you would not like to repeat?—Yes.

Q. That does not matter. I want to get to the nature of the threat?—He said he would bash his wife, and the man who would bash a woman I do not think much of.

Q. You need not be shy about it. We all know what these things mean. He said he would bash her if he did not get the money?—Yes, sir.

Q. Just look at this letter and refresh your memory. Where were the men going to on the 13th December for whom you paid 11s. 8d. to Bromley?—Up to the demonstration.

Q. Demonstration, where?—At Hyde Park, I suppose. I believe it was.

Q. And Bromley is the local station here?—Yes.

Q. I see. I have some figures here. I won't trouble you with them.

(The Inspector.) Seven colonists had return tickets to Bromley. How much would that be?—1s. 8d. each.

Q. That would come to 11s. 8d.?—Yes.

Q. Now there are one or two things I have made notes of. You sold the hay that you made?—No, sir, we used it.

Q. Now, it has been suggested that the original Landon dietary was taken from the dietary which is given to ordinary steerage passengers on the Atlantic liners?—I don't know that.

Q. Have you had many cases of absconding?—I have had a lot.

Q. Is it troublesome?—I don't trouble if they wear their own clothes, but I do when they wear the guardians' clothes. I have 14 or 15 cases which I have prosecuted, and then there are some who have not been prosecuted.

Q. What I want to get at is that you have so many cases that it is troublesome?—Not a serious trouble.

Q. Do you remember Mr. Butler writing a report on Landon farm colony. He says the guardians would find it advantageous to have a number board with metal checks placed in the lobby of each dormitory and to require that every man leaving the farm after working hours should take his check with him and replace it on his return, so that the watchman would be able to report to the superintendent the next morning any night absentees. What has been done?—The watchman reports the numbers out.

Q. Does he make any reports?—On Saturday night there were four numbers missing.

Q. Would they be out all night?—Not all night. They were all in just after 10.

Q. They were late?—Yes.

Q. Altogether you are more satisfied with your position now than you were?—I don't think there is any house in England with such good discipline.

Q. It is better now?—It was rough—rough for me.

Q. Can you tell me the total number of whole time officers that you have?—Whole time officers?

Q. Yes.—The first twelve months there were only two of us excepting the cook.

Q. You have always had whole time gangers?—Yes.

Q. I want to know the total number?—Seventeen altogether.

Q. Have you a cook now?—Yes.

Q. Did you have any trouble with one of your cooks?—I sent one away and have had many since I have been there.

Q. What did you send the cook away for?—His conduct was not compatible with discipline. He fell out in the road and got a cut head. I heard a row one night about one o'clock, and went down to see what it was about. When I got there I saw the cook with his face covered with blood. He had been accosting a young lady and her father gave him a good hiding. That's all about it.

Q. It was something illustrating the difficulties of that class of men?—Oh no.

(Mr. Robb.) Would you mind asking him that it was suggested he should be given a month's wages in lieu of notice?—He could claim it by law.

(*The Inspector.*) Now, have we done with Mr. Clarke?

(*Mr. Grant.*) Yes, I think so.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I will just call Mr. Broodbank who has made enquiries at Landon. He has been there three or four days. He will just give you in three or four words the result of his enquiries.

(*The Inspector.*) I think we should take Mr. Oxley. I am anxious that we should hear his evidence.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I won't cross-examine Mr. Oxley. I don't know what Mr. Broodbank is going to say. I shall call

evidence presently. It would do no harm if Mr. Broodbank's evidence is postponed.

(*The Inspector.*) That is so. And then if we have time after Mr. Oxley we can call him.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Of course, after having read the summary which has been handed to the other side and myself it seems possible that an immense amount of evidence can be dispensed with after hearing Mr. Oxley.

(*Mr. Grant.*) If Mr. Broodbank is going to be examined perhaps you will direct me to have a copy of what he is going to say.

Mr. J. S. OXLEY, Assistant Inspector of the Local Government Board; sworn and examined.

Mr. Oxley.

2 July.

(*The Inspector.*) Now, Mr. Oxley, you are a barrister-at-law?—I am.

Q. And lately appointed Assistant Inspector to the Local Government Board?—Yes, sir.

Q. And as a member of various committees of the East Sussex County Council you have had considerable experience in the matter of contracts and tenders?—A certain amount, nine years.

Q. Would you describe the form of tender that prevails in Poplar?—The form of tender contains four columns. The first gives the description of the articles required. Some of the tenders have considerably over 100 items. The next column contains the estimated quantity required. The third column is left blank and filled in by the contractor with the price per lb., per cwt., or per yard, for the article. The fourth column is also left blank and is filled in by the contractor with the total amount that would have to be paid if the estimated quantity were purchased at the price named. In the fourth column just mentioned the total of that column is carried out and may be taken as representing the total value of the tender, if the estimated quantities are purchased.

Q. And affording a means of comparison with other tenders?—Yes, for the same class of goods.

Q. In the tender form there is a clause giving power to accept one or more items?—The guardians reserve the right to accept the tender for one or more articles without contracting for all the articles included in the tender.

Q. Have they exercised that right?—I don't think so. Perhaps there is one, a very minor, exception.

Q. I suppose in the tender form there is a provision that the guardians are not bound to accept the lowest or any tender?—The guardians do not bind themselves to accept the lowest or any tender.

Q. Have the guardians availed themselves of that provision?—Yes, to a considerable extent.

Q. How are the tenders dealt with. Are they accepted as a whole?—I think in every case. I think there is one instance at Landon, but with that exception tenders have been accepted as a whole.

Q. If the tenders are accepted as a whole the accuracy of the estimated quantities becomes important?—Most important. Because the total bears on the estimated quantity entirely.

Q. Now, this form of tender and dealing with the tenders is not peculiar to Poplar?—Oh no, a large number of London unions adopt that principle.

Q. Now, do some unions split their contracts?—Yes. They take either the two lowest or the three lowest of the tenders for the article, and accept them for the low items. I can give you an example, Bethnal Green, then at Lambeth, Southwark, Kensington, Fulham, and I believe St. Pancras, but I am not sure.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Have you the illustrations you are quoting because it would be very convenient to give them instead of me having to get them by cross-examination?—I had for another purpose to visit the clerks of these unions and obtained that information.

Q. All that you know is that the clerks have told you?—Oh no, I have seen the minutes accepting tenders from various contractors.

Q. Then you can add that to their information?—I can give you one or two cases.

Q. The most useful one for you is Lambeth?—I can give you the Lambeth form and the Bethnal Green form.

Q. Don't misunderstand. What I want is that the examination-in-chief should cover all points so that it should not be necessary for me to cross-examine, to supplement the examination-in-chief. If you can give all the facts?—Most of the cases are simply gained by going to the workhouse and asking questions.

Q. Did you have notes?—I have rough notes in my pocket and they will do.

(*The Inspector.*) But you can give facts?—I ascertained the facts and figures for myself.

Q. Have you the Lambeth form with you?—The only note I have is that the tenders are split.

(*The Inspector.*) Do you suggest that they are not split?

(*Mr. Grant.*) Oh no. What I want to know is what is the evidence on which Mr. Oxley bases his statement. I suppose that he has a series of contracts from which he can prove by demonstration that the tenders are split?—Here is Lambeth. You will see that the grocery is split between Newton—oh no, entirely Newton.

(*The Inspector.*) Have you the list of tenders accepted by Poplar in 1905?—Yes, that is table A. I think you have it, Mr. Grant.

Q. Are there many instances in which the lowest tender was not accepted?—Oh yes, there were a good many instances in 1905.

Q. What is the total amount which, it appears from the figures, would have been saved if the lowest tenders had been accepted?—About £2,100.

Q. And if the contracts had been split and the lowest tender accepted there would have been an additional saving?—Of about £436. But I was not able to go through all the tenders on that point because I had not the whole of the tenders where the lowest was accepted. It would be more than that.

Q. Now with regard to the acceptance of the lowest tenders. It would be difficult to provide that the guardians should in every case accept the lowest tender?—There may be very good reasons for not accepting the lowest tenders. You may have a man who tenders so low that it would be foolish to accept his tender.

Q. But where the lowest tender is not accepted some reason must be sought, as for instance, a desire to give the tender to a local man?—That may be the reason.

Q. Well now, take these tenders in turn. Grocery?—The grocery was given to Mr. Jones, of Poplar. His tender was accepted on the estimated quantity at £3,700, and if the lowest tender had been accepted there would have been a saving of £256.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Whose was the lowest tender, Mr. Oxley?—The lowest tender was from Cox & Sons.

(*The Inspector.*) The poulterer—that is a small item?—That is only a matter of £20.

Q. Were they both Poplar men?

(*Mr. Grant.*) We shall want the names all through?—I have not the names of the rejected tenderers before me but I have the rejected tenders.

(*The Inspector.*) Who was the accepted man for poultry?—Mr. Wickes, of Poplar, for £438. The tender of the rejected one was £20 lower.

Q. Was the rejected poulterer a Poplar man?—I am sorry I did not put the names of the rejected tenders; I did not think it would be required.

(*Mr. Grant.*) May I suggest that we shall want them too?—Here it is, Nathan, of Cambridge Heath, Middlesex.

(*The Inspector.*) The milk?—The milkman's tender was for £2,770, and the rejected tender £291 less. Whitlock, of Poplar, was the accepted tender. The Museum Dairy Company was the rejected one.

Q. Is the Museum Dairy Company a Poplar firm?—No, of Cambridge Road, E. For the meal-man, the accepted tender was Bax & Son, of Hackney. The amount was £397, and the rejected tender was 16 guineas less. For beer, the tender accepted was for £313, the rejected tender was £106 less.

Q. Being about 33 per cent. on the total amount. Who was it?—The Red Lion Brewery, of East Smithfield.

Q. Whitbread's is not a Poplar firm?—No.

Q. And then the next we have is soap?—Friars Soap Company, £568, was accepted, and the rejected tender was Wilkie and Soames, £35 less.

Q. Is the Friars Soap Company a local firm?—No, sir.

Q. Now the oilman's goods?—Eaton, of Poplar, was accepted, for £1,246, the rejected tender was £129 less, and was Middleton Brothers.

Q. Is Middleton Brothers a Poplar firm?—No, St. George's-in-the-East.

Q. Ironmongery?—Pyle, of Poplar, was accepted for £887, Pryke & Palmer, whose tender was rejected, were £187 less. I am not giving shillings.

Q. And then comes clothing?—Cartwright, £785, and Hollington Brothers, of Aldgate, was £84 less.

Q. Officers' uniforms?—Cartwright's, for £111, was accepted; the rejected tender was £25 less, and was from Samuel Brothers, of Ludgate Hill. For drapery, Cartwright's was accepted for £4,300, the rejected tender being Watts, of Manchester Avenue, London, £624 less.

(*Mr. Robb.*) May we know whether Cartwright's was a Poplar firm?

(*The Inspector.*) Is Cartwright's a Poplar firm?—No.

Q. A city firm?—

(*Mr. Robb.*) My information is that it is not so. I understand that they have two addresses, one in Poplar and one outside?—Haberdashery, Cartwright's, £395, was accepted, the rejected tender was from Watts, of Manchester Avenue, and was £59 less. Tailors, the accepted tender again was Cartwright's, £255, the rejected tender was £4 9s. less. That is the whole of Cartwright's. Now the shoemaker. Pococks, for £1,360, was accepted, the rejected tender being £59 less, from Wilkins. The leather sellers was also Pococks, £716, and the rejected firm, Pangbourne, £51 less. Pangbourne, of Liverpool Road. Lead and glass, Pyle, of Poplar, was accepted, £145, the rejected tender was £28 less—Middleton Brothers. For printing, Bean was accepted, a city firm, for £409, and the rejected tender was £120 less—Furby & Co., of Forest Gate. Tobacco and snuff—Sayward, of Poplar, was accepted, £665, the rejected tender was £11 13s. 4d. less. Then coming to the Landon tenders, the baker was £128, and the rejected tender was £5 less, and the accepted butcher's tender was £928, and the rejected one £23 less. And then in addition to that I think they were both local men—rejected although local men. I might say that the largest saving would have been effected in regard to Cartwright's tenders. Five tenders were accepted, and the saving on these five had the lowest been accepted would have been £800.

(*Mr. Grant.*) And they were all in competition with Watts?—Not all, I think. In addition to that there was a saving, if the lowest tender had been accepted, of drugs, 33½ per cent. as against 35 per cent.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Is it 35 or 42?—33½ was accepted.

(*The Inspector.*) Well now, we come to the tenders for the next year, March of this year to March, 1907. You have a list there.

(*Mr. Grant.*) May I ask one question. Can Mr. Oxley get out the total amount of the tenders for this year. I have totalled this up, and I think I am right in saying there are 20 tenders here. You have not given the totals of the whole?—Not the whole of the tenders, but only those where the lowest was not accepted.

Q. Can you tell me now the total amount of the tenders for the year?—

(*The Inspector.*) Do you know the total amount?—I don't know the total amount.

Q. Well, now, the saving on this year if the lowest tender had been accepted is about half of what it would have been in 1905?—Yes.

Q. What is the amount?—The amount would have been £1,001.

Q. As against last year?—Over £2000.

Q. Yes?—Last year was £2,143.

Q. And what would have been the additional saving if the contracts had been split between the highest and the lowest?—I have not been able to take out all the figures, but it would have been £717, and that does not include cheesemongery, brushmaker, earthenware, draper, haberdashery, shoemaker, and brewer, which probably might have been supplied lower.

Q. Now as to the butcher's tender?—The accepted butcher's tender was Blott, of Kensington, £13,065, and the rejected tender was £48 less, the British New Zealand Company, of Central Market, and there would have been an additional saving in that tender if it had been split. There would have been an additional saving if beef and mutton had been separated. The poultryer's tender accepted was Wickes, of Poplar, the rejected tender was £5 less, and came from Charles John Geary, of Poplar.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Also of Poplar?—Yes. The accepted tender for greengrocery was John Halls, and the rejected tender was £9 less—William Whiteley, of Westbourne Grove. The milkman's tender of £2,625, from Whitlock, of Poplar, was accepted, and the rejected tender was £218 less, from the Museum Dairy Company, of Bethnal Green. In grocery, the accepted tender was Lewsey, of Bow, for £2,574, and the rejected tender was £177 less—William Whiteley, of Westbourne Grove. The meal-man's accepted tender was Percival, of Blackfriars, for £349, and the rejected tender was £4 18s. less—Cox & Sons.

(*The Inspector.*) I think it would be convenient to omit the shillings?—Brewer, Whitbread again accepted, £311, the lowest rejected tender was from Thorne Brothers, £118 less.

Q. Is Thorne's a local firm?—No. Of Nine Elms. Whitbread's was the highest of seven tenders. For soap-maker, Wilkie & Soames, East Greenwich, was accepted, and the rejected tender was McCallum, of Paisley, Renfrew, and Nightingale House. It was £5 less if I allow the contract price for one article that they don't quote for. They did not quote for one of the articles, and therefore there must be an allowance. Oilman's goods, the accepted tender was Eaton, of Poplar, £1,373, and the rejected tender £122 less, was Pryke & Palmer, Upper Thames Street, E.C. Ironmongery, the accepted tender was from Pyle & Co., High Street, Poplar, £748, the rejected tender was £18 less—Pryke & Palmer, Upper Thames Street. In that case had the tenders been split there would have been an additional saving of £170. Clothier, the accepted tender was that of Cartwright's, £759, the rejected tender was £93 less—Edward Groves, of Lower Marsh, Lambeth. Officers' uniforms, Beaumont, High Street, Poplar, was accepted, and the rejected tender was £5 less, from Rowley, of Kingsland Road. Children's underclothing, Cartwright's was accepted, £26, and the rejected tender was £6 less—Edward Groves, of Lambeth. Leathersellers, the accepted tender was Pocock, £759, and the rejected tender was £25 less—Pangbourne. Commission yard, the accepted tender was Passmore, Limehouse, £121, and the rejected tender was from Byford, of Poplar, £7 less. Lead and glass, Pyle, of Poplar, accepted, £98, the rejected tender was £1 less—Gover, of St. George's-in-the-East.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Was there not another tender, Higgles & Clark, for £96?—That was the only one sent me.

Q. Apparently, there was another tender for £96?—I should say, before I come to the printing tender, the tender was marked by Mr. Crooks "Subject to T. U."

(*Mr. Crooks.*) It was subject to Trade Union conditions?—If the lowest had been accepted the saving would have been £132; Bean's was accepted. The rejected tender was £132 less. That is the one with the note. Furby, of Forest Gate. I am afraid I did not tabulate the Landon ones.

(*The Inspector.*) They would amount to the same thing, I believe?—They never sent me the rejected ones.

Q. And then as to conveyances?—Of course, it is impossible to give the figures, because they only quote at per journey. But as far as I can estimate it is about 7½ per cent. Jacobs' was the rejected tender, about 7½ per cent. less than the accepted tender, but that is a very rough estimate, and you cannot approximate it. Then 5 per cent. could have been saved on funerals, and 6 per cent. on drugs. I think I ought to add to the subject

Mr. Oxley.

2 July.

Mr. Oxley.

2 July.

of the discount for drugs, that these discounts are off the maker's own lists, not off the general prices, so it is not a useful comparison, because the maker's price lists vary. I do not think the difference ought to be considered much.

Q. You have made a detailed examination of the contracts?—Yes.

Q. And you now propose to take them in order to see whether they show any point for consideration or not?—Yes.

Q. In some of the contracts the tendering is extremely irregular, is it not?—Yes.

Q. So much so as to lead to the suggestion that the tenderers were in the possession of information as to the stocks in hand and the probable requirements, which gave them an unfair advantage?—Of course, that might be the case.

Q. Can you make any suggestion which would help the guardians?—From what I have heard I believe it would be a very great check if the current prices of articles were either shown on the tenders, or the list of current prices were handed to the firms tendering, because if that is not done the holder of the accepted contract has a decided advantage. There is also the temptation if you have a dishonest contractor that wants information, and an officer that is willing to sell information; there is perhaps a market. If that information is given the market is done away with—everyone is put on the same footing. The Bethnal Green Guardians give it. They have a printed schedule of all the current prices. That list is given to every applicant for tender forms. My own suggestion is—it is entirely my own suggestion—that the figures should be printed on the contract itself. The guardians would then at once see any material variation in the prices.

Q. Now to come to one more question on the general subject. Have you observed a distinct tendency to give the tenders to local tradesmen?—Yes. A large number of the contracts are given to local tradesmen. A very large proportion.

Q. There may be good reasons for that, but it probably is not economy?—It is not economy where a good man is passed over who has made a lower tender.

Q. Now—

(Mr. Grant.) You have said it is not economy where a good man is passed over. Are you prepared to say that on any contract a good man has been passed over?—I do not know. I do not know anything about these people, but, for instance, I have always heard that Whiteley, Westbourne Grove, is a good man.

(Mr. Robb.) And Pryke and Palmer.

(The Inspector.) I think we should get to the details?—I will take the miller. The flour is about 2s. a sack lower in 1906 than in 1905. That is about 1s. a sack lower than the current prices in Bethnal Green.

Q. I believe flour has fallen in price last year?—I believe it has, but I am not an expert. I do not think it has fallen as much as a shilling. An expert would tell you exactly. I imagine the price is more like 9d.

Q. Probably the guardians are getting a better bargain now than last year?—Yes.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Is it the same contractor?—Yes, French.

(The Inspector.) With regard to the butcher, we have the same contractor?—Yes. The prices for the supply of beef and mutton are respectively 1s. 1d. and 9d. for a 14lb. stone lower in 1906 than 1905. That is to say, beef is 7s. 6d. a stone in 1905 and 6s. 5d. a stone in 1906. Mutton is 8s. 11d. a stone in 1905, and 8s. 2d. a stone in 1906; or if you reduce it to an 8lb. stone, which I think is more usual, beef is 4s. 3½d. in 1905 and 3s. 8d. in 1906. Mutton is 5s. 1d. in 1905 and 4s. 6d. in 1906.

Q. That shows a considerable reduction?—Yes, and there is a curious point I think I ought to have mentioned, as suet was mentioned. I see the suet is 3s. 6d. for Laindon and 6s. 5d. for the workhouse.

(Mr. Grant.) What is the weight?—Both 14 lbs. of suet, for three institutions.

(Mr. Robb.) Might I have the figures again?—Yes. Best beef suet, 14 lb. stone, in 1905, 7s., and in 1906, 6s. 5d., and when you turn to the Laindon contract—

Q. That is for the workhouse?—For the workhouse, schools and receiving house.

(Mr. Grant.) 3s. 6d. you say it was?—Yes, both years.

Q. You see that is 3d. a pound?—Yes, I did not notice it until this morning.

Q. I only want to call your attention to the price. Obviously beef suet at 3d. must be something very cheap indeed?—Yes, my only point was that if it was 3s. 6d. for Laindon, it was curious it should be 6s. for the workhouse, or perhaps it was more curious it should be 3s. 6d. for Laindon.

Q. The other is just as true?—Quite.

(The Inspector.) The ratepayers may hope for a reduction in their meat?—Yes, and I might say the current price for suet now at the Workhouse is 1s. per 8 lb. stone more than at Bethnal Green.

Q. Has any reasonable ground been brought to your notice to account for this heavy fall?—No. Some of the prices show a slight rise, and some show a fall, others show no great variation.

Q. As to the poulterer and greengrocer, I understand there is no change in the prices?—No, the prices are practically the same as last year, but, as I pointed out, there would be a small saving if the lowest had been accepted.

Q. Now we come to the milkman?—The milkman, Whitlock's tender was accepted at 9½d. in 1905, and 9d. in 1906. Each year the Museum Dairy Company's tender at 8½d. and 8½d. was rejected. There seems to be no great object in that. The percentage of cream is specified on the tender, and I understand from the evidence given here that Whitlock's contract had been terminated for not being up to standard a few years ago. There is a considerable difference in the quality of the milk asked for in different unions. For example, Poplar stipulates not less than 10 per cent. of cream, West Ham not less than 9 per cent., Lambeth and Bethnal Green 11½ per cent., in solids of which 3 per cent. is milk fat. That, I believe, is what is called the Somerset House standard.

Q.—Is the 10 per cent. of cream in Poplar better than the Somerset House standard?—I am told it is better milk and should be a little more expensive.

Q. Poplar is paying more?—Poplar is paying 9d., West Ham 9½d., Bethnal Green, which is a summer contract only and therefore naturally lower, 6½d., Lambeth 8½d.

Q. The Poplar milk should be better?—It should be better.

Q. The only question is—?—But I am not expert enough to say whether the difference in standard is sufficient to account for the difference in price. It may or it may not.

Q. What have you got to say as to the grocer's tender?—Well, there is no great difference in price for the accepted tenders this year and last year except sugar where there has been a difference in duty to account for it. The lowest rejected tender for the current year is that of Messrs. Whiteley, Westbourne Grove, and in that tender, in every case of goods known as proprietary goods, their tender is less than the accepted tender.

Q. In the case of proprietary goods you can only get one quality?—That is so. For Lea & Perrin's sauce the accepted tender is 10d. per bottle, it specifies per pint bottle, and the rejected tender was 1s. 5d.

Q. Is it possible to purchase Lea & Perrin's sauce at 10d. per pint bottle?—I understand that the wholesale price for Lea & Perrin's sauce is 16s. 10d. a dozen for pint size, and 9s. 3d. a dozen for the half-pint size, with the discount off, and these two figures exactly correspond with the two tenders, so I imagine one contractor has tendered for half-pint bottle size instead of pint bottle.

Q. Has he also tendered at half-pint bottle price?—Half-pint bottle price and half-pint bottle size.

Q. It is a small item, but as far as it goes it will tend to lower the total amount of the tender?—It would lower the gross value of the tender, that is to say, the total of the estimated quantity. Of course, it makes the estimated price less.

Q. It is a great factor in the judgment of the guardians as to which is the lower tender?—Yes, of course. It is only a small item.

Q. There is another small item I wish to call your attention to—?—I ought to mention there are two or three proprietary articles in which the lowest is accepted. Jamaica arrowroot is accepted at 6d. a pound, and Messrs.

Whiteley's tender at 2s. 4d. a pound. The tenders for the previous year were 5d. and 2½d. I have asked one or two and I cannot find that Jamaica arrowroot is known as a trade term, but the accepted price is all right for ordinary arrowroot. The 2s. 4d. would be Bermuda arrowroot. It is a special arrowroot ordered by medical men in certain cases, and that probably accounts for the difference.

Q. That would be probably due to carelessness?—Carelessness, or to putting a term in the tender not a trade term.

Q. The next item is Mazawattee tea?—They ask for Mazawattee tea 2s. 6d. quality. The estimated quantity was 234 lbs., the accepted price being 2s. 4d. a pound, and the rejected price was 2s. 1d. a pound. I understand that is a very high price for tea. I am told that even in the House of Commons the price is very considerably less. I think it is about 1s. 6d. a pound.

(Mr. Grant.) There is a very great deal more consumed, Mr. Oxley.

(The Inspector.) Now with regard to the brewer.—There were seven firms tendering for beer, and the accepted tender, that of Messrs. Whitbread & Company, was the highest.

Q. I am going to ask who were the other firms?—Yes.

Q. The accepted tender was over £100 higher than the lowest?—That is so, yes.

Q. And it was absolutely the highest of the whole seven firms?—The highest of the seven firms tendering.

Q. And they included, I think, Messrs. Meux, Adey, Stansfeld, and some other well-known firms?—There were several well-known firms—Adey & White, Stansfeld & Co., the City of London Brewery, Lovibond & Sons, Meux Brewery and Thorne Bros. The highest of the rejected ones was £277 and the lowest £193. Whitbread's was £311.

Q. Now will you read the specification for the beer?—"Good ale in barrels, 36 gallons, clear of grounds," the specific gravity is left to be filled in by the contractor, "at per barrel 25 barrels."

Q. That, I think, was the Christmas beer?—That was the Christmas beer.

Q. The bulk of it?—Yes. There is also 150 stout SS for the use of the sick.

Q. Now we come to the meal-man.—For the meal-man, taking it generally, the prices ranged some 5 to 10 per cent. higher than last year.

Q. And now the cheesemonger?—That is a March contract. I believe in anything to do with milk or butter March is a very speculative time to tender, because he cannot tell whether he is going to have a good hay season or a bad hay season. But butter is about 3s. a cwt. lower than last year. American cheese is about 4s. higher. Bacon is about the same. It seems unnecessary to have butter in 24 lbs. boxes of 2 lb. rolls, but I think the acting-master has told us it is not in use. The same contractor for butter has the Bethnal Green contract, and his price is 115s. per cwt., the description being butter white, three churn brand. The description in Poplar is best butter, "Three Churns," Taunton brand, S. J. Wright & Co., in 24 lb. boxes of 2 lb. rolls, and the price is 126s. per cwt. So apparently the extra 11s. per cwt. is for being put into these 2 lb. rolls, and then nearly £2,300 worth is for the out-relief stores in quarter-pound pats. That is tendered for at 135s., so that is a further amount for doing it up into quarter-pound pats. The same contractor—

Q. What about the cheese?—Well, Percival supplies the best English cheddar in Poplar at 8½d. a pound. The same contractor supplies best English cheddar at Bethnal Green at 7½d. a pound, and at Lambeth at 7½d. a pound.

Q. With reference to bacon. That 11½d. Denny's bacon is the best on the market?—I am told that Denny's full branded is the best on the market and 11½d. is not an unreasonable price for it.

Q. Now the price of the soap-maker was the same as last year?—(In reply to Mr. Robb.) Margarine was an alternative tender, and I understand the alternative tender was not accepted. Oh, yes, it is my mistake, the margarine is Van den Berg's, double crown, 24 lb. boxes, 2½lb. rolls, £3 12s., that is 72s.

(The Inspector.) Do you know the price at West Ham? —61s. Mr. Oxley.

(Mr. Robb.) For the same article?—The same brand, yes. 2 July.

(The Inspector.) Do you know the price at Bethnal Green. Is it not 57s.?—57s. or 58s.

Q. Then the explanation of the difference in price of 12s. per cwt. might be that it is given to the Poplar Guardians in a different form?—Yes. It is in 24 lb. boxes, of 2 lb. rolls, and that difference is about the same as the difference on the butter.

Q. That 12s. per cwt. amounts to a considerable sum on the amount bought?—The estimated quantity is 420 cwt. in the two-pound rolls and a further 340 cwt. in quarter-pound pats.

Q. That would be an extra expenditure of over £400?—It is an estimated price for the quarter-pounds. The price is 78s. or 6s. more.

Q. With regard to the soap-maker. The price is the same, but you have some information as to the best Primrose soap, I believe?—Yes. I do not want to give expert evidence because I am not an expert, but I am told if an expert were asked he would say the best Primrose soap cannot be got at 18s. 6d. You cannot get the best Primrose soap under 23s., and I also see from the list the price last week was 23s. 6d.

(Mr. Grant.) So there is a case where the Poplar Guardians are getting the best Primrose soap under cost price?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Then there is the disinfectant merchant?—I have not noticed any change there.

Q. Then the oilman's goods, I believe?—For the oilman's goods I have prepared a table showing some of the most curious variations in the tender—table C.

Q. What is the name of the contractor?—Eaton, of Poplar. The rejected one this year was Pryke & Palmer, of Thames Street. There is a small item I have discovered which should really have been in the list. Bees-wax is tendered for at 6d. per lb., the rejected tender was 1s. I am told—of course, an expert ought to say—that bees-wax cannot be sold at 6d. A shilling is the market wholesale price shown in the trade lists. Borax—of course, some of these are very small items, but I have taken them whether small or large where there has been a material difference—the accepted tender is 25s. per cwt. in 1906 and 15s. in 1905. The rejected tenders for these years were 17s. and 14s. 6d. The wholesale price from the trade list is 16s. 6d. Blacklead, in the current tender, the accepted price was 8d. per lb., the rejected 3d. There is another one I propose to add. That is Reckitt's Blue, which is accepted at 1s. per lb., and rejected at 9d. The highest wholesale price for any kind of Reckitt's Blue—there are a good many of them—is 9½d. Best colza oil, accepted at 1s. 6d. per gallon, in 1906, and 3s. in 1905. Best white cottonwaste 35s. per cwt., accepted in 1906, 20s. accepted in 1905, and the rejected tenders both years were 26s. Emery cloth 1s. 3d. per quire accepted and 9d. rejected. Flower of sulphur, 15s. per cwt. accepted in 1905 and 1906, 7s. and 6s. rejected. Hudson's extract of soap, No. 3, 22s. accepted in 1906 and 20s. in 1905. The rejected prices were 18s. and 18s. 6d. I would point out there, sir, that I can only find Hudson's extract of soap, Nos. 1 and 2, in any wholesale list. I cannot find No. 3 quoted. In the next one I think there must be some mistake somewhere because the difference is so great. Water softening compound, 25s. per cwt. accepted, and 9s. per cwt. rejected. They want 100 cwt., and it is rather a large item. It makes a difference of £70. Oxide of zinc, 21s. per cwt. in 1906, and 32s. in 1905, the rejected tenders being 8s. and 21s. Soap solution, 20s. per gallon accepted, and 3s. rejected. Fine silver sand, 1s. 6d. a bushel accepted and 8d. rejected. Last year the prices were 1s. 6d. and 11d. Olive oil, 5s. a gallon accepted, and 1s. 8d. rejected. Last year the prices were 2s. accepted, and 2s. 7d. rejected. Genuine English white lead, 15s. per cwt. accepted each year. The rejected prices were 18s. 3d. and 19s. 11d.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you any delivery amounts?—No, I am afraid I have not looked into the deliveries at all.

(The Inspector.) We come to that later?—There are 16 books for each item or rather four quarters in each of four books. For Calvert's toilet carbolic soap, 13s. 6d. a box was accepted, and 4s. rejected, but I think the

Mr. Oxley,
2 July.

rejected tender must be for a small box. It specifies a box of 36 tablets and 4d. per tablet appears to be the wholesale price.

Q. These mistakes confuse the total amount?—Yes; they do. There is a considerable difference in all the paints. I have only taken one because there are a number of small items. Blue-black paint at 6d. per lb. was accepted in 1905, and 1½d. per lb. rejected. 3d. was accepted and 1d. rejected in 1905. Nearly all the paints are the same right the way through. The accepted tender is very much higher than the rejected tender. Duresco, 18s. 6d. per cwt., was accepted and 28s. rejected, and last year 28s. 6d. was accepted and 32s. rejected. Of course there were others, but I took out the largest items.

Q. The oilman's tender accepted last year was the lowest?—Yes.

Q. And for the year 1905-6 there was a tender lower than his?—No, he was not the lowest either year. Last year if the lowest tender had been accepted for oilman's goods the saving would have been £123. This year it would have been £122. If the tender had been split the saving this year would have been just under £200.

Q. Yes, it was £76 more. Now with regard to the brush maker?—The prices accepted in 1905 were, as a rule, much lower than those accepted in 1906 for Poplar. Excepting two items in this case the lowest tender was accepted each year. Clothes brushes were 30s. a dozen last year, and 16s. per dozen this. Copper brushes were 12s. per dozen last year and 8s. per dozen this. Banister and bathbrushes, 20s. last year, 18s. this; hair-brushes, 9s. last year and 7s. 6d. this; stove brushes, 15s. last year and 12s. this; black-lead brushes, 3s. last year and 1s. 6d. this; W.C. brushes, 12s. last year and 9s. this. Birch brooms were 6s. last year and 3s. 6d. this. Special size brooms, 45s. a dozen last year and 90s. a dozen this. Carpet brooms, 15s. a dozen last year and 12s. a dozen this. Dressing combs, 5s. a dozen last year and 3s. a dozen this. Small tooth combs, 28s. per gross last year, 18s. per gross this year. Cocoa-nut fibre (best for beds), 2s. per cwt. last year and 4s. per cwt. this. Coir fibre (best for mats), 60s. per ton last year and 200s. per ton this year. Flock (best whites), 100s. per ton last year and 200s. per ton this year. So there are only three items—the special size brooms, the coir fibre and the flock—that are considerably higher this year than last year.

Q. Now with regard to earthenware. The lowest tender was accepted last year?—Yes. The lowest tender was accepted in each year and there were not very many notable differences in prices between the two years. Table E I have prepared showing the chief ones. Slipper bed pans were 18s. last year, 10s. 6d. this year.

(Mr. Grant.) The same size?—The same description on the tenders.

Q. That is only a description?—Meat dishes (various sizes) were 7s. 6d. per dozen last year, 9s. this. Ditto, three sizes, white and gold, 20s. last year, and 18s. this year. Vegetable dishes, white and gold, 30s. last year, 24s. this. Hot water bottles, 9s. last year, 6s. this. White cream jugs, 9s. and 6s. Spittoons, 9s. and 6s. Tea-pots, earthenware, (all sizes and patterns), 6s. last year, and 10s. this. They are all one dozen.

(The Inspector.) Now we come to the ironmongery. That tender shows some considerable variations?—Yes. This shows some striking variations. In some cases the prices were very high, in some very low.

(Mr. Robb.) May we have the name of the contractor?—I can give it to you in a moment. In this tender, the accepted, both this year and last year, was the same, Pyle & Co., and the lowest tender was the same, Pryke & Palmer, of Thames Street. The differences were so great that I have had the whole tender copied out showing last year's and this year's prices adjoining one another, and I have also put in the prices of rejected tenders.

(The Inspector.) You have, I understand, not been able to compare the actual periods between these two years?—No, I have not. It would take a very long time to go through them, and perhaps it would be sufficient if it were gone into with certain selected cases. It would take an enormous time to pick it out.

Q. Take first the very long list?—I think it is only fair to say that I understand iron has gone up about 10 per cent.

Q. All metals have gone up?—All metals have gone up about 10 per cent. from last year.

Q. You are not taking every item, only the most conspicuous ones?—Yes, I will take a few of the most conspicuous ones. Take asbestos (United) and engine packing, 2s. 6d. per lb. last year, 1s. per lb. this year. The rejected tender each time was 1s. 3d. Large enamelled basins were 12s. a dozen last year and 5s. a dozen this. The rejected tender was 12s. a dozen on both occasions. Copper cans for kitchen use, 5s. a dozen last year and 20s. a dozen this year. The rejected tenders were 18s. and 19s. 6d. respectively.

Q. Whereas basins have fallen from 12s. to 5s., cans have gone up from 5s. to 20s.?—That is so. Coffee pots were 5s. a dozen last year, and 60s. a dozen this year.

Q. 5s. last year and £3 this year?—The rejected tender was 6s. a dozen on both occasions. Cruets, 4 bottles (E.P. on N.S.) Rodgers, 12s. a dozen last year and 30s. a dozen this year. The rejected tender was 35s. a dozen in each case.

Q. With reference to these coffee pots, the 60s. is so startling that I must ask Mr. Lough if he can tell us how—

(Mr. Grant.) All the tenders will be gone into.

(The Inspector.) Go on with the evidence, Mr. Oxley.

(Mr. Grant.) No one pretends all these tenders, for many thousands of contract goods, can be gone through without there being such slips. When I call the witnesses you will hear the way these slips occur. A contractor would come and say, "That's a mistake, we 'withdraw it,' and so on. And anyone who goes through this amount of money will find these sort of slips?—Inmates' carving forks, 5s. a dozen was the accepted tender in 1905 and 12s. a dozen in 1906. The rejected tender in each case was 6s. Fire guards—

(Mr. Grant.) You should read the next one—inmates' table forks—where the same figures occur?—Yes, 2s. was accepted in 1905 and 2s. in 1906, and the rejected tenders were 2s. I was only reading one. I am picking out items.

(The Inspector.) The inmates' carving forks 5s. last year and 12s. this year, but there are —

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Grant's point is the next item which is apparently only one tender.

(Mr. Grant.) Oh, I do not say that. For the officers' forks, above, there is the same price—10s., 10s., 7s., 7s.

(Mr. Robb.) How many are there?

(The Inspector.) These rather tend to make one suspicious. If these are uniform other articles are certainly not uniform. In one, carving forks, the price jumps up from 5s. to 12s. It makes one think.

(Mr. Grant.) There are many explanations of these contracts.

(Mr. Robb.) I would like to hear them?—Fire guards were accepted at 10s. a dozen last year and 20s. a dozen this. The rejected tender in each case was 6s. The inmates' (Taylor's) table knives, 3s. a dozen last year, and 1s. a dozen this year. I think that must be a mistake. Fire irons were 2s. a set last year, and 5s. a set this year. The rejected tender was 2s. a set each year.

Q. One moment. Can you give us the frying pans?—Frying pans were 2s. 6d. a dozen in 1905 and 10s. a dozen in 1906. Six shillings a dozen was the rejected tender in each case. Inmates' (Taylor's) table knives, 3s. a dozen was accepted in 1905, and 1s. in 1906. This, I think, is an almost impossible price. I think 1s. a dozen must be a mistake. Rodgers' inmates' carving knives, 10s. a dozen accepted in 1905, and 40s. a dozen accepted in 1906, the rejected tender being 5s. a dozen in each case. Large kettles, 6s. a dozen accepted in 1905, and 20s. accepted in 1906, 28s. being the rejected tender in each case. Small kettles were accepted at 5s. a dozen in 1905, and 30s. a dozen in 1906.

Q. The small kettles are 10s. a dozen more than the large kettles?—The rejected tender was 18s. on each occasion.

(The Inspector.) I would like to get that point clear because this shows a consistency. The large kettles were a shilling more than the small ones?—1s. a dozen.

Q. This year they rise from 6s. to 20s. and 5s. to 30s. respectively. So the small kettles are 10s. more than the larger. In the case of the rejected tenders, the amounts were 28s. and 18s.?—Half-pint, pint, and 1½-pint ladles, stamped, 10s. a dozen last year, 20s. a dozen this year. The

rejected tender was 6s. on both occasions. Officers' table-spoons (Rodger's) were 12s. a dozen last year, and 3s. a dozen this year. The rejected tender was 6s. a dozen on both occasions. Dessert spoons were 10s. a dozen last year, 3s. this year, and the rejected 4s. on both occasions. So this year the table spoons and the dessert spoons are tendered for at the same price. The tea spoons were 5s. a dozen last year and 2s. 9d. this.

Q. Have you any knowledge as to what is the right difference in the price between a table spoon and a dessert spoon?—No. No, I think, as a rule, a tea spoon costs about half the cost of a table spoon and a dessert spoon comes between. The rejected tenders were 6s., 4s. 6d., and 2s., but in this case the accepted tenders might be about right.

Q. Now come to the soup pails?—Soup pails, 2, 3 and 4 gallons, 60s. a dozen last year, 10s. this, 28s. being the rejected tender on both occasions. Rodger's sugar tongs, 18s. a dozen last year, 10s. a dozen this.

Q. The rejected being 4s.?—4s. on both occasions. Salt spoons, 10s. last year, 5s. this, the rejected tender is 1s. 3d. on both occasions. Bread tins—it gives the sizes—10s. a dozen last year, 5s. a dozen this year, and the rejected tenders were 17s. and 19s. Cake tins, various, were 20s. a dozen last year, and 10s. a dozen this year, the rejected tender being 10s. a dozen on both occasions. Baldwin's No. 333 butts, cast iron, 2 inch, 2½ inch, 3 inch and 4 inch, 6s. per dozen pairs last year, and 3s. per dozen pairs this year, the rejected tender was 1s. 3d. on both occasions. Gauge glasses, best green (with red stripes if ordered), assorted, 1s. a dozen last year and 5s. a dozen this year, 4s. 6d. a dozen being the rejected tender on both occasions. India rubber closet cones, 12s. a dozen last year, and 5s. a dozen this year, 3s. a dozen was the rejected tender on both occasions. Canterbury hoes, 20s. a dozen last year, 12s. a dozen this year, 12s. and 10s. respectively were rejected. Suffolk latches at 12s. 6d. were accepted last year, 12s. this year. The rejected tender was 3s. on each occasion.

Q. Do you know what Suffolk latches are?

(Mr. Grant.) The ordinary thumb latches?—Four dozen is the estimated quantity. Galvanised padlocks, 1½ inch, to pass workhouse key, 20s. a dozen accepted each year, and 8s. a dozen rejected. Copper slate nails, 1s. 6d. per lb. last year, and 1s. per lb. this year; 4d. and 6d. per lb. were rejected. Shovels, London or steel, Nos. 4, 5 and 6, 20s. a dozen accepted last year, 10s. a dozen accepted this year, the rejected tender was 18s. a dozen on each occasion. Enamelled pie dishes, each year the accepted tender was 20s. a dozen, and the rejected tender 6s. a dozen. Taylor's rings, 2s. a dozen last year, 10s. a dozen this year, 5s. was the rejected tender in each case. Belt clips (Bristol's patent steel belt lacing), 10s. per gross last year, 1s. per gross this year, 5s. 6d. per gross was the rejected tender on each occasion. Belting and materials from J. Tullis and Sons—it is worked for the discount, and it much depends on whether it was the same list each year.

(Mr. Robb.) That the current list?

(The Inspector.) Whatever that current list might be?—It was 50 per cent. discount last year and 85 per cent. discount this year. The prices are worked from the list.

(Mr. Robb.) And the other tender—the rejected tender?—Was 15 per cent.

(Mr. Grant.) Probably there is some mistake there?—I think there must be.

Q. As I understand, you have taken out all the differences, and have not inquired whether there is any explanation of it or not?—I am putting it forward just as I found it; I have no means of finding out.

(The Inspector.) Do you find generally in regard to the rejected tenders, the price in the two years is pretty uniform?—In the rejected tenders, yes.

Q. And in the accepted tenders the prices vary in an absolutely unaccountable manner?—It is rather bewildering.

Q. The next thing is the electrical supplies. In the electrical supplies the lowest tender, that of Mr. Pyle, was accepted in both years?—Yes. In 1905 the three kinds of incandescent glow lamps were 12s. 6d., 18s., and 11s. 6d. a dozen. I have not prepared a table because there are only six items.

(Mr. Robb.) Were they Robertson's?—The first was "B.T.H. Edison," the second "Royal Ediswan," and the

third "Electra." Last year they were 12s. 6d., 18s., and 11s. 6d., this year they are 6s., 16s., and 4s. Then we take the carbon brushes lower down.

(The Inspector.) What are the three kinds?—Carbon dynamo brushes, No. 1, were 3s. 6d. a dozen last year, and 10s. a dozen this year. Ditto, No. 2, 4s. a dozen last year, and 10s. a dozen this year. And then motor brushes, there were two kinds, last year at 3s. and 4s. a dozen respectively, this year there is only one kind at 5s. a dozen.

Q. So that whereas incandescent lamps dropped heavily, the carbon brushes have increased?—That is so.

(Mr. Ford.) The same specification?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Is that all the electrical supplies?—That is all.

Q. Now you have the clothier?—That is one of Cartwright's.

Q. Whose was the rejected tender?—Cartwright is accepted, Hollington Bros. rejected, and there would have been a saving of £84 last year.

Q. Have you prepared a table?—Yes. I have taken out a few items. Working suits, 18s. 6d. was the accepted price in 1905 and 1906, 15s. and 15s. 9d. were the rejected prices. Boys' caps, 4s. 9d. a dozen accepted in 1905 and 1906, and 3s. was the rejected price. Boys' overcoats, 70s. a dozen was the accepted price in 1905 and 1906, 55s. and 54s. were rejected. Boys' sailor suits, 45s. a dozen accepted in 1905 and 1906, 35s. and 32s. rejected. Pure woollen serge (dark blue), 2s. per yard was accepted in 1905, and in 1906 it was 4s. 8d.

(Mr. Robb.) That does not give us the rejected price?—4s. 3d. is the rejected price in 1906 and the rejected price in 1905 was 3s. 9d.

(The Inspector.) With regard to the officers' uniforms, I think you found the prices in 1906 are about 22 per cent. less than Cartwright's?—Beaumont was accepted this year and Cartwright the year before, and this year's contract is about 22 per cent. lower. For instance, tunics were 24s. this year, 32s. 6d. last year, overcoats, 22s. 6d. this year, 35s. last year.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Is that on a sheet?—No, these were the only two items.

(The Inspector.) Now children's underclothing?—Cartwright's tender was accepted this year. Grove, of Lambeth, had the contract last year, and Cartwright's prices run about 22 per cent. higher than Grove's.

Q. So the guardians have a much better bargain this year?—No, no. They have had about the same as last year. If they had taken the lowest tender they would have saved £6 on a sum of £26.

Q. A small sum. Now you have prepared a table as to the drapery?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) I do not want to interpose, but you said a small sum. Of course, it is *per se* a small sum, but in the absence of information as to deliveries it may be smaller or it may be 500 suits delivered, therefore it is the essence, the crux of the whole thing that we should know the deliveries?—Bath towels (white)—Cartwright was the lowest one in 1906, but he was not the lowest in 1905; Watts was the lowest, and the sum saved would have been £624.

(The Inspector.) £624 on a contract of £4,300?—Bath towels, at 15s. 6d. per dozen, were accepted in 1905, and 7s. 6d. rejected. The present price remains at 15s. 6d. Boys' washing blouses in 1905, 4s. a dozen was accepted and 10s. 6d. rejected. Bed cases, plain or striped, in 1905, 63s. a dozen accepted, 32s. a dozen rejected. The present price is 63s. a dozen. Striped ingrain bed ticking (all linen, 36 inch), in 1905, 8d. a yard was accepted, and 7½d. a yard rejected. In 1906 11d. a yard was accepted, and the same contractor is supplying Bethnal Green with 36 inch linen bed ticking at 5d. a yard. I do not know whether the ingrain—

Q. You do not know whether it is precisely the same quality?—No, I give the description. Counterpanes (sample A), 60s. accepted in 1905 and 45s. rejected. The price for 1906 is 60s. Counterpanes, red and white, 60s. accepted in 1905 and 40s. rejected. The price for 1906 is 60s. Girls' corsets (sample A). In 1905, 30s. accepted and 15s. rejected. The present price is 24s. 6d. The present price for girls' corsets to Bethnal Green is 15s. 6d.

Mr. Ozley.

2 July.

Mr. Oxley.

2 July.

Q. Is that the same contractor?—No, the Hospitals and General Contracts Co., Women's corsets (sample B—up to 48 inch), 30s. accepted and 25s. rejected. The present price is the same. The same contractor supplies women's corsets to Bethnal Green, 24 to 48 inch, 17s. 6d. Red and black cloth for table covers (72 inch), 4s. 6d. a yard accepted, 2s. 3d. rejected in 1905, present price 4s. 6d. Men's drawers, in 1905, 28s. 6d. a dozen accepted and 18s. 6d. rejected, present prices 30s. and 22s. 6d. Dress preservers, in 1905, 48s. a gross accepted, 15s. rejected, present price 48s. Girls' jackets, in 1905, 63s. a dozen accepted, 45s. rejected, present price 63s. Mattresses, in 1905, 145s. 6d. and 130s. 6d., according to size, accepted, and 130s. and 100s. rejected. Serge (all colours, 52 inch), in 1905, 2s. 2½d. per yard accepted, and 1s. 1d. rejected. The contract price for 1906 is 2s. 6d. a yard. The same contractor is supplying Bethnal Green with the serge, any colour, all wool, 54 inches wide, at 1s. 11d. Shawls (dark woollen), in 1905, 57s. 6d. was accepted and 40s. rejected, the present price is 57s. 6d. Men's vests, in 1905, 28s. 9d. was accepted and 17s. 6d. rejected, the present prices are 28s. 9d. and 21s. Turkey towelling, in 1905, 2s. a yard was accepted, 1s. rejected. The present price is 2s. Diaper (36 inch) in 1905, 1s. 8d. accepted and 8d. rejected. The present price is 1s. 8d. The same contractor is supplying material of the same description to Bethnal Green at 10d.—that means the same description in the tender form. I do not know whether it is the same article. Linen sheeting (80 inch) the present price is 2s. 11d. per yard. The same contractor is supplying officers' linen sheeting (80 inch) to Bethnal Green at 1s. 6d.

Q. Now haberdashery?—Haberdashery is Cartwright this year and was Cartwright last year. Watts was the lowest last year, and the saving would have been £59. This year Cartwright was the lowest and was accepted.

Q. The amount of his tender is £395?—No, £388. It was £395 last year. A few items I have put down. Last year barrel buttons were accepted at 22s. 6d. per gross, and rejected at 16s. per gross. The accepted price this year was 22s. 6d. White pearl buttons were accepted at 6s. a gross last year, and rejected at 3s. 4d. This year the price is 3s. 6d. White bone at 1s. 6d. were accepted, and rejected at 4d. last year. The price this year is 1s. 6d. Silk elastic for children's hats, 2d. per dozen yards was accepted last year, and 8d. rejected. This year the price is 1s. 1d. Ditto, for children's garters, 9d. per yard was accepted last year, and 4d. rejected. 9d. is the price this year. I see it is the same description of elastic for garters for Bethnal Green Guardians at 2½d. per yard. Needles, Knitting, bone, per dozen pairs, 4d. was accepted last year, 1d. rejected. This year the price is 2s. 3d., and the same contractor is supplying knitting needles of various sizes to Bethnal Green at 2s. 6d. a gross. Morrell's best needles, various, at per 1,000, 6s. 3d. accepted last year, 2s. 6d. rejected; 6s. 3d. is the present price. Ditto, best darning needles, 6s. 3d. accepted last year, 2s. 6d. rejected, present price, 6s. 3d. Steel stay busks, per dozen, 2s. 6d. accepted last year, 10d. rejected, present price 2s. 6d. Wool for knitting, all colours, 3s. 6d. per lb. accepted last year, 1s. 6d. rejected. The price this year, for black wool only, is 2s. 6d. Webbing for marking, per gross, 3s. 9d. accepted last year, 1s. 9d. rejected, present price 3s. 6d. Ditto, black and grey dress, per gross, 10s. accepted last year, 5s. 6d. rejected, present price 8s.

Q. For tailors' articles the lowest tender was accepted?—Yes. There is no great variation.

Q. And the shoemaker?—Messrs. Wilkins & Denton were the lowest and rejected in 1905, and the lowest and accepted in 1906.

Q. For leather, Pocock was accepted in 1905 and 1906, and Pangbourne & Co., the lowest, rejected each time?—I have prepared a statement. There are a few variations there.

(Mr. Robb.) Are they in Poplar?—Pangbourne, London; Pocock Brothers, Southwark. Leather basils, 1d. per lb. were accepted and rejected in 1905, 1s. and 1s. 2d. accepted and rejected in 1906. I see pincers were 1d. a dozen accepted and rejected in 1905, 4s. accepted and 1s. rejected in 1906.

Q. 4,800 per cent. more than the rejected person?—I have not done the sum.

(The Inspector.) These variations are very bewildering?—Yes. Then there is the commission yard account. There is not much noticed in the tendering except that

in the accepted tender last year—no, I will not say that—there is very little in it.

Q. Pyle tendered for lead and brass. He is the same man who tendered for the iron?—Yes. I have prepared a statement of the chief variations. Pyle & Co. was accepted, the lowest tender, Middleton Brothers, rejected.

Q. Where did Middleton Brothers live?—St. George's-in-the-East. Sometimes Middleton & Grover and sometimes Middleton Brothers. 21 oz. 3rds glass accepted in 1905 and 1906, 3½d. and 3d. per foot, and rejected 2½d. and 2¼d. This was rather a large item. Rough plate glass, 3d. per foot accepted and rejected in 1905 and 6d. accepted and 2½d. rejected in 1906. Soil pipe, in 1905, 16s. 6d. per cwt. accepted, 16s. 9d. rejected. In 1906, 10s. per cwt. accepted and 20s. 6d. rejected.

Q. What do you observe about that price?—In some cases the highest were accepted and in others they were not.

Q. And the prices following?—There is a great difference in some things. The most remarkable is that the accepted tender this year is ¾d. a foot more for the 21 oz. glass, thirds, and 4,500 feet the estimated quantity, and it is 3s. against 39s. for the 26 oz. and six dozen are wanted.

Q. That points to a bit of a flutter?—That and rough plate are the only, I think.

(Mr. Robb.) Might we ask with regard to glass if the 21 oz. 3rds glass would be the largest size?—Yes, it is £56 5s., the value on the estimated quantity out of a contract of £98.

Q. Probably be the largest item?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) With regard to printing. Out of a contract of £478, £132 would have been saved if the lowest tender had been accepted?—This is the one where the note was on. I have prepared a statement giving a few of the items. There are some very large variations there. For printing the minutes, 4s. per page was accepted, and 3s. and 2s. 6d. rejected for the two last years. Additional copies, 4d. per page accepted, and 1d. per page rejected. The guardians' diary and handbook, 165s. per 80 accepted, and 90s. and 40s. rejected both years. Commercial envelopes, printed address, 1s. 5d. per 50 accepted, 6d. and 1s. rejected. Annual reports, 4s. 8d. per page accepted both years, 2s. 6d. and 3s. 6d. rejected. Extra copies, 100s. per 50 accepted, 40s. and 20s. rejected. Printing on octo. paper, 5s. and 3s. accepted, and 4s. and 1s. rejected. Time books, 22s. 6d. accepted, and 12s. rejected. Relief case papers in 1906, 24s. accepted, and 14s. rejected.

Q. The rejected tender had a note upon it as to trade union conditions. They probably did not apply?—But it had not that note upon it the previous year.

Q. The previous year the loss by not accepting the lowest tender was £121?—No, £127.

Q. This year. Last year the sum was £121?—That might be altered to £127.

Q. This year the same loss was £132?—Yes. I am afraid it is my bad writing.

(Mr. Grant.) The figures must be altered, £409 and £288?—Yes. It was £127 extra if the tender had been split.

Q. The two together. Add the two columns together?—Quite right.

(The Inspector.) What have you to say about the stationery account. Many of the articles are lower this year than last—the same contractor?—There seems a general lowering of prices—that is all. I can give you some of the articles if you wish.

Q. About the tobacco?—It is a question of quality, because the price is fixed and it is selected by its quality. In 1905, 4s. 8d. per lb. for snuff was rejected and 5s. 4d. accepted.

Q. As to conveyance, there is one comment?—Conveyance, as I stated before, it is impossible to analyse it, because the price is given for certain journeys, and there is no means of knowing how many journeys have been taken. At a rough estimate, the rejected tender of Jacobs, who gave evidence, would be about 7½ per cent. less. I do not know what the conveyance bill comes out in a year.

(The Inspector.) That is all I have to ask you, Mr. Oxley.

(Mr. Ford.) Was Furby the rejected tender?—Yes, I think I said so.

(The Inspector.) What are you going to do with Mr. Oxley now?

(Mr. Robb.) I want to ask a few questions. Do you think these tenders which you have described were genuine tenders?—I have absolutely no means of saying.

Q. What is the opinion you draw from these extraordinary figures?—There may be either great recklessness or there may be an ulterior motive.

Q. Nothing else?—There may have been carelessness or there may have been a desire to make a present to the guardians.

Q. Do you think the theory of a mistake is a tenable one: Is it possible?—

(The Inspector.) I do not want to interrupt you, but is this a matter for you to put?

(Mr. Robb.) I think Mr. Oxley is here as an expert and I want to ask him whether it is possible. I can understand one or two clerical errors, but is it conceivable that these extraordinary discrepancies can be credited to errors?—I saw a tremendous lot of equally inconceivable differences in another set of contracts in quite another place.

Q. Was that at West Ham?—I saw some curious differences there.

Q. With the exception of Poplar and West Ham, have you ever in your life seen such tenders?—I have never in my life examined any others.

(Mr. Grant.) He has not long been an Inspector.

(The Inspector.) He has had large experience.

(Mr. Grant.) He is not an expert and is not put forward as an expert. He is examined as an accountant and presents a series of figures. He has had no opportunity of enquiring.

(The Inspector.) I do not think Mr. Oxley should be asked his opinion, for the simple reason that I shall have to make a report as impartially as I can on the matter.

(Mr. Robb.) Let us take it a little more exactly. Excess in one year over another of 400 or 500 per cent. is common?—There are a good many cases where it shows on items.

Q. And there are instances of an excess as much as 4,800 per cent.?—You worked it out. Last irons, 2d. per set in 1905, and 8s. per set in 1906, that is 48 times as much.

Q. That is actually an excess of 4,700 per cent., and the rejected price on each occasion was 8s.?—8s. both times.

Q. So that either the 2d. or the 8s. must be tremendously out?—Yes.

Q. Because the rejected tender was consistent, 3s. on both occasions?—Unless they were both thinking of different articles.

Q. Do you think, looking at the tenders, it was possible?—I was very much puzzled over the tenders. Clog bottoms, accepted tender, 3s. 6d. dozen, and rejected tender, 1d. dozen. I do not know what a clog bottom is, but it is a tremendous difference.

(The Inspector.) And, I think, 1d. was accepted and rejected last year?—They were both 1d. last year.

(Mr. Robb.) That would mean an enormous percentage of excess. Kepp brown, 4d. and 10d., 1905 and 1906, rejected, 1d. and 2d. per lb. If you found one or two items you might think it was a clerical error, but when you find so many, do you still think so?—I do not think it can be. I think this rather accentuates my suggestion. It would be of great help to the guardians if they had the current prices printed on them.

Q. But before we get that we have to search into the reason for this. Is it not curious these mistakes should occur in the accepted and not the rejected tenders. You find in the rejected tenders a curious consistency?—Well, this one—the wax card last year was a penny accepted—

Q. I do not see it on the page. Take the ironmongers. There the accepted tender is Pyle & Co., and I think the most outrageous example is coffee pots, 5s. one year and 60s. the next, per dozen. There is Pryke & Palmer, 6s. a dozen in each year. Mr. Oxley, if you look through Pryke & Palmer's prices, I ask you if they are not fairly consistent throughout?—They seem very consistent.

Q. In many cases the prices are the same for both years. But where they differ there is no variation that could not be explained by normal circumstances, rise in price of metal and so on?—They hardly seem to justify that.

Q. There is very little variation in the prices of Pryke & Palmer in 1905 and 1906?—That is so.

Q. On the other hand, Pyle's prices vary in the most alarming manner?—They are certainly very bewildering.

Q. Do you think that all these items can be explained as clerical mistakes?—I certainly should not think so.

Q. Then on what ground do you think they can be explained?—I do not know. One naturally immediately wants to see the purchases. If you find there have been very few purchases where a thing is quoted at low prices and heavy purchases at high prices one naturally gets very suspicious.

Q. I think you will agree with me the crux of the thing is to get the deliveries?—Yes. And you want to take also the stock in hand.

Q. And the stock in hand when the tender was given. Look on page 2, ironmongery. Apparently the inmates' knives cost more than the officers' knives. Carvers, officers', 20s. dozen, and inmates' 40s. dozen?—Of course, the carving for the inmates is done by the officers, and probably the knives they carve large joints with would be larger knives than those they carve with at the officers' tables.

(The Inspector.) But here the difference is double?—Yes. It is too much.

(Mr. Robb.) And no size is specified?—The inmates' knives are 1s. a dozen. That makes them 1d. a piece. I think that is an impossible price.

(The Inspector.) If any were delivered.

(Mr. Robb.) The soup pails you gave us. Last year they were 60s. a dozen, and this year 10s.?—Yes, 10s. this year. Bone mustard spoons, 15s. a gross last year, and I could go into a shop and buy them at 1d. each. I have bought some.

Q. Canterbury hoes?—20s. last year and 12s. this year.

(The Inspector.) This would be for Laindon, I suppose?—Yes, they were for Laindon.

(The Inspector.) That is important.

(Mr. Robb.) These Canterbury hoes?

(The Inspector.) Here is a small item, two or three dozen, but they jump from 20s. down to 12s. You can find out in no time what was the delivery to Laindon in 1905 and this year?—This year it was three dozen, and 1905 it was six dozen estimated.

(Mr. Robb.) On the other hand, this year, Messrs. Pryke & Palmer's price was 12s. The guardians could in 1905 have bought them for 12s., but they chose to give 20s. Next year Mr. Pyle's price drops to 12s.?—That is so.

Q. Forks, Pyle's price in 1905, 45s., Palmer's price, 19s. 6d., yet Pyle was accepted. So apparently the guardians paid 25s. 6d. more a dozen for forks than they need have done. It is quite clear they have power to take separate items?—There is a clause which gives the right to accept the tender for one or more articles.

Q. So they could have said to Mr. Pyle, "We will not take your forks when we can get Pryke & Palmer's"?—Yes.

Q. Do you know Pryke & Palmer is a well-known firm?—I had never heard the name till I saw it here.

Q. Then spades—the item before that. Pyle's price is 30s. both years. Pryke & Palmer's is 22s. and 17s. 6d.?—Yes. 22s. and 17s. 6d. Those spades were for Laindon.

Q. And Suffolk latches?—Two dozen for the workhouse, one dozen for Laindon, and one dozen for the schools.

Q. Pyle's was 12s. 6d. and 12s., and Palmer's 3s. each year. So the guardians paid Pyle four times as much as they need have paid Pryke & Palmer?—That is so.

Q. To come to small items, nails and tin tacks?—Tin tacks, 6d. a thousand accepted in 1905, and 3d. in 1906, and 1½d. per thousand rejected each year.

Q. So that although metal has gone up 10 or 15 per cent., Mr. Pyle is able to halve his price, whereas Palmer are the same price for both years?—

(Mr. Grant.) There are 30,000 tin tacks wanted—

Mr. Oxley.

2 July.

Mr. Oxley.

2 July.

(Mr. Robb.) That is not the point. It is the accumulative effect of these items. It is another example of paying three or four times as much for an article as was necessary?—It is most marked.

Q. If you take the gross amount of the two tenders there is only £18 between them?—The reason is the tremendous variation in prices. For instance—

(The Inspector.) Take shovels on the same page.

(Mr. Robb.) You have been showing where Pyle exceeds Pryke & Palmer. Can you show where he is abnormally low to balance it?—Shovels 20s., and 10s. against 18s. both years, Pryke & Palmer. Enamel basins, accepted 5s., rejected 12s., cans, accepted 5s., rejected 18s.

Q. Look at sash lines. You will find 1s. accepted and 6s. rejected. Have you ever heard of anyone buying a gross of sash lines for 1s.?—I do not know what the gross is.

Q. They are dependent upon the whole tender?—

(The Inspector.) If you get shovels, the price drops from 20s. to 10s.?—Two dozen for the workhouse, two dozen for Laidon, half a dozen for the schools. For the current year. The previous year I have not got.

(Mr. Robb.) Nickel spoons, engraved, 2s. per dozen. Pryke & Palmer's price is 5s. The next item is extraordinary, tank and pipe cover fitted asbestos, Pyle 9d. per lb., and Palmer 2s. per lb.?—That is so.

Q. Pie dishes, Pyle's, 20s. a dozen, Palmer, 6s. a dozen, each year. Taylor's rings?—I do not know what they are. Pyle 2s. and 10s., and Palmer 5s. a dozen in each year. They were for the workhouse this year.

Q. Now, Hopkinson's, I suppose they are the patent valve people. Pyle's, 2s. and 2s. 6d., Pryke & Palmer 4s. in each year. Copper cocks, Pyle's price is 6d. and 1s. 6d. against 1s. 6d. and 1s. 3d.?—At 6d., estimated quantity 44, and at 1s. 6d. estimated quantity 23 lbs.

Q. Of course, we do not know the deliveries. Have you any doubt as to the items being priced with the object of the gross price?—It is difficult to say. It looks so curious. It makes one anxious to hear the explanation.

Q. Valve seats, 1s. a dozen, Pyle, and 3s. 6d., Pryke & Palmer. I suppose they would be articles not in constant use?—24 dozen one year and 5 dozen the other.

Q. These items are subject to percentages off the list prices?—I am puzzled unless there are different kinds of lists.

Q. Belting, Tullis, of Glasgow, at per cent. discount off their list. No variation would justify the difference between 15 and 85 per cent.?—50 and 85.

Q. 15 and 85. Mr. Pyle in 1906 offers 85 per cent. off these prices. Pryke & Palmer offer 15 per cent. off. Can any variation in the price of metal explain such discrepancy. I assume they were tendering on the current lists at the same time?—I assume these firms

have a great many current lists. The 15 per cent. in Tullis' has been left off. It should be 15 per cent. off each year. 50 and 85 from Pyle and 15 from Palmer.

Q. Lines, Pyle offers 5 and 75 per cent. off, and Pryke & Palmer 40 and 45. So there is a variation in Palmer's of about 12½, and Pyle's is very much larger, 70 per cent. difference?—It is difficult to account for it unless in some way or other there is a different list.

Q. It struck me that of printing you told us possibly the increased price was accounted for by the fact that trade union conditions were insisted upon?—The lowest and rejected tender was marked "accepted subject to trade union conditions."

Q. Showing that the trade union conditions were insisted upon?—They are, according to the conditions of the contract. That is usual.

Q. Look for a moment at the drapers. In 1905, 4s. a dozen for boys' blouses. That is 4d. a piece. That is suggestive of sweated labour, is it not?—It is a very low price.

Q. 4d. for boys' blouses, including material, does not sound as though the person who made it could get much out of it?—It does not.

Q. It would hardly seem as though trade union conditions were insisted on as in the case of the printer. Apparently in Poplar almost as much is paid for a dozen knitting needles as for a gross at Bethnal Green?—2s. 3d. per dozen pairs in Poplar and 2s. 6d. per gross in Bethnal Green. It would be half a gross. There is nothing to show that the sample is the same.

Q. In Bethnal Green for silk elastic for children's garters they pay 2½d. In Poplar, 9d. a yard?—It does not say how wide.

Q. The difference in silk or stuff would not account for that?—I don't know. I am not an expert in garters.

Q. Do you think that by splitting a contract it would account for a lower price at which Cartwright could supply Bethnal Green?—It may be a different material. When tenderers know the contracts are split they keep as low as they can.

Q. In the item for bed ticking, 11d. a yard. The same contractor supplied Bethnal Green at 5d.?—Cartwright 5d. a yard. "Striped or grey" is added.

Q. Do you think it would be important in connection with the deliveries to also have particulars of the stock?—It is very important.

Q. If one is to gauge the genuineness of the tenders, one must have the deliveries and stock at the time the tenders were received?—And the average annual consumption.

(The Inspector.) There was the item, table knives, 3s. in 1905, which dropped to 1s. in 1906. The other tender was 6s. I find last year six dozen was the estimated quantity of these table knives, but the amount actually supplied was 18 dozen. What I suggest to the guardians is to find out what the stock in hand is. Now, when do we sit again?

(Mr. Robb.) I ask you to give us a rest of a week to consider the position. This evidence is of great importance and will alter the whole of my case. I was going to ask you to subpoena a large number of contractors, but the labours of Mr. Oxley have rendered it unnecessary. I ask you to adjourn until to-day week.

(Mr. Grant.) I shall have to make a similar application when the case is closed. I do not know what the case is.

(The Inspector.) It is of vital importance we should get through as soon as possible. It is not doing anyone good to hold it over.

(Mr. Grant.) The duty of the guardians is to have

their case fully heard when it comes. You have some evidence to call?

(The Inspector.) I don't think so. There are some I might like to call, but it is very much a matter of opinion. If I were a member of the board of guardians and such figures came out as presented to-day, I should not lose a minute in finding out where the mischief was. It demands an urgent and immediate inquiry. Would it be well to adjourn until Friday?

(Mr. Robb.) What can we do on Friday? I venture to say the extra day or two would shorten the inquiry.

(The Inspector.) Then we adjourn until Monday.

TENTH DAY.

Monday, July 9th, 1906.

Mr. J. S. OXLEY; recalled, and further examined.

Mr. Oxley.
9 July.

(Mr. Robb.) I have had an opportunity since last Monday of carefully considering the effect of Mr. Oxley's evidence, and, subject to what I am about to say, I confirm what I told you last Monday: This evidence will enable me to materially shorten my case, and dispense with the attendance of a number of witnesses. But, sir, in order that I may do that without prejudicing this Inquiry and without limiting in any way the scope of the Inquiry in regard to contracts and tenders, it is, I think, essential that Mr. Oxley's investigations should be extended to the year 1904, and further, that, in addition to the analyses he has already given us, he should give us a third. He has already prepared statements showing the saving if the lowest tender was accepted, and the additional saving if contracts were split up between the lowest and the accepted tenders. If my instructions are correct there will be found far greater discrepancies disclosed if the actual deliveries are taken in each year, and then the prices of the lowest rejected tenders set out against them in the form of a *pro forma* invoice. For example, take the tenders of Messrs. Pyle & Co. and the tenders of Messrs. Pryke & Palmer, for Ironmongery, what I ask is this: Let there be a third column, or, if you like, let this statement be and take Pyle & Co.'s invoices.

(The Inspector.) I think, since we last met, Mr. Oxley has taken out deliveries as supplied to him by Mr. Lough—the actual deliveries, which he will give.

(Mr. Robb.) In regard to ironmongery?

(The Inspector.) Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) One must obviously go further. What I ask is: Take on the one hand Pyle's invoices for 1905-6 and then re-copy these invoices in black, and set against each item what Pryke, Palmer & Co.'s price would have been.

(Witness.) I have done that.

(Mr. Robb.) Then that is most handy.

(The Inspector.) With reference to your request for an analysis of the tenders for the year before, I wrote to Mr. Lough, but, unfortunately, he has not been able to find the papers, and these probably were destroyed.

(Witness.) Rejected tenders.

(Mr. Grant.) We cannot say definitely as to that. I have a memorandum. Would it be convenient if there should be a complete and thorough search made? Of course, these are treated as old papers. We will tell you after a day or two if we can find them. If we can find them we shall produce them. Mr. Robb's suggestion is a useful one. If we take 1904 that will give three years. It would not be absolutely fair, but it would approach to a fair comparison, if we also take three years of the Guardians' expenses and so on. Therefore it seems fair if the three years' test was applied to everything. If we can find the papers.

(Witness.) If the rejected tenders could be found.

(Mr. Grant.) We shall do our utmost to get all the information.

(Mr. Robb.) Then, sir, I find in my original letter of 31st May there are points which I should undertake to bring forward with a view to see what further evidence is necessary to call. I think, sir, I have called evidence upon all those questions, or, rather, I have dealt with evidence. It is not necessary for me to produce evidence as long as facts are elicited from witnesses called by you or Mr. Grant. There are two items I referred to. The extravagant expenditure upon the school building, etc. I had in mind, or my clients had in their minds, the Shenfield schools. I have certain evidence, and I was about to prepare further evidence with regard to that. But I don't think there is anything in dispute about the figures

if we can put in or agree to a return of the expenditure on the schools. The expenditure is so large for ground and buildings and accommodation for so many children that I think there should be no difficulty. My instructions are that the cost comes to a very large figure per head per child, and it is that figure I am anxious to ascertain. If we had such a return it would show that.

(Mr. Grant.) Already we have been preparing some evidence in regard to the schools, because that was one of the things directly impeached in Mr. Robb's letter of May 31st. Unquestionably, sir, from one side or the other, the figures will have to be given, and, I think, if you will allow me to say so, it will be convenient that the figures should be put in by you. As to the figures there can be no dispute.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) As to the figures there can be no dispute. As to the explanation of the figures I don't think it will be fair to ask you to give that, because you may not be familiar with the facts and you may not know all that was to be known about the facts in which the school was started, the obligations which were cast upon the guardians, and the difficulties which they had to face. There the figures may be put in as to the cost of the schools, but I shall ask leave then—I shall hardly have to ask leave; it will be my right, I think, but I put it in a courteous way—to ask leave to call evidence on those figures, to give any explanation of them if I can, and on that evidence—it will be evidence in chief—there will be ample opportunity for you or anyone else to cross-examine. That must also apply to some extent to other matters, such as the travelling expenses of the Guardians, which is now being prepared. This may be put in as a form of return and anything on that return which you or Mr. Oxley care to criticise, or anyone else, and if this were put to me before the stage of the Inquiry closed that could be dealt with or explained, and then I should ask leave to give any evidence in answer or explanation of the figures. May I mention an illustration? We ask to explain the expenses in regard to guardians as guardians, or in regard to officers, or in regard to inmates, in travelling expenses, and so on. Well, sir, the draft returns were handed to me on Friday, I think it was, Mr. Lough, Thursday or Friday?

(Mr. Lough.) Friday.

(Mr. Grant.) No, Thursday, surely?

(The Inspector.) A very short interval at all events.

(Mr. Grant.) Yes, but we did our best. What was handed to me was this. Have you that return? Give me the first page. What was handed to me was a figure like this. I take an illustration. January 1st, Jones 6s. 6d. An item like that brings no information to anybody. I told Mr. Lough it was no good presenting a return in that form. We shall have a long cross-examination as to who Jones was, why he went to Lingfield, or somewhere else. Now, sir, I take an actual figure. This is one of the items. July 11th, 1903, I think, but am not sure. Yes, July 11th, 1903, Charles McMahon from Lingfield, 12s. 6d. July 25th, Charles McMahon from Lingfield, 10s. 6d. If Mr. Oxley dealt with those two items it would be asked why does it cost 12s. 6d. to go to Lingfield and 10s. 6d. to come back. Obviously there is something to explain. Why does it cost 12s. 6d. to go to Lingfield when the mere 3rd class railway fare is lower? What I said was, the vouchers for every one of these items must be gone over and we must be able to give details, whether officer, inmate or guardian, what the 12s. was made up of, and why he went to Lingfield. Then where there are 23 pages of the return now, with 30 items to each page, the explanations I have asked for will probably reach from 23 to 100 pages. Until that is done you will agree that it will not be possible to say whether

Mr. Oxley.

9 July.

the expenditure incurred was a reasonable expenditure or not, and that would be one reason why that return will be delayed. I have no objection to you or anyone else seeing it in its present form, but it won't convey much information to you. The general point I want to make is that all returns asked for of this kind should be supplied as ample as possible, and if there is any further question to be asked it should be asked and answered, and when I come to deal with my case as far as the case of the guardians is concerned, the guardians or I should answer any inquiry. That is the shortest way of dealing with the matter.

(The Inspector.) First, with regard to the Shenfield schools, the whole correspondence is on the file on the table. It led to an Inquiry which was held here in reference to the extension of the borrowing powers of the guardians, and the case for the guardians about the schools was placed in a concise way. I suggest I should make a *précis* of that correspondence which would account for that part of the case, and you should see it and make any suggestions or corrections you like, and we should accept it as a statement.

(Mr. Grant.) That shows you the difficulty I am in. I was not until this moment aware there had been any Inquiry about the schools.

(The Inspector.) It was about the extension of the borrowing powers.

(Mr. Grant.) I didn't know anything about it. Mr. Lough knows of it, no doubt, and Mr. Lansbury.

(The Inspector.) Looking through the papers, the case of the guardians about the schools was stated by Mr. Lansbury in a singularly concise way.

(Mr. Grant.) If we could have the whole of the cost and that memorandum put upon the notes, and you take the trouble and be so kind as to give us a *précis* of it, we shall have probably all that is necessary for this Inquiry.

(The Inspector.) The guardians have the correspondence in the same form.

(Mr. Grant.) I don't know. I am not complaining about the Local Government Board keeping anything back. I am only still partially instructed, and have to pick these things up as I go along, and now I hear for the first time about this particular matter gone through by the Local Government Board and Mr. Lansbury. If I had time I would have got it.

(The Inspector.) The expenditure on the schools was so large and so striking, I asked the Architect to go down and look through the work, and what money had been spent, which I shall put in the *précis*. It will save time. I don't wish to have to adjourn over August and September. I think that will be a considerable saving of time.

(Mr. Grant.) I think it would. When you have made these preliminary points, may I make a suggestion about saving time?

(The Inspector.) What was the other point? With regard to figures—travelling expenses—I am not to hold an audit of the accounts. That may be left to the Auditor. The charge included a general one, that large sums of money, larger than other unions, unreasonably larger sums, have been spent in travelling expenses. We shall not be helped by going into fares to Laindon.

(Mr. Grant.) If I remember rightly, the figures given me in the course of the Inquiry, the travelling expenses showed an increase. I think it went from £300 in one year to £500 the next, and £700 the next.

(The Inspector.) Larger figures.

(Mr. Robb.) I shall hand in the books. It goes from £540 in 1901 to £1,545 in 1905. I am quoting from the abstract of accounts of the guardians, page 23, and the real object in asking for a return is to show at a glance in what particular items the increase had taken place.

(The Inspector.) How many to guardians, how many to paupers, and how many to convalescent homes?

(Mr. Robb.) How many to Laindon, &c.?

(Mr. Grant.) You can only do that by going through the vouchers and items in the way Mr. Lough has done, and there are minutes. We can present the result in a short *précis* to you. We shall do it at once. One of our clerks will do it as well as any one.

(The Inspector.) We shall get the figures supplied.

(Mr. Grant.) Where is that return gone? A return is given to me of the cost for instance. I want 1903. The half year to Lady Day, 1904, is put down in this way. From the master's cash account, on account of the farm colonies, £8 15s. 4d. From the master's cash account, on other travelling expenses of guardians, £1 11s. 7d. From the clerk's cash account, on account of farm colonies, £16 8s. 4d. From the clerk's cash account, on account of other travelling expenses of guardians, £60 13s. 6d., and those two columns come to £25 3s. 8d., and the second column to £62 5s. 1d. The total is carried out at £87 8s. 9d. The same form of analysis in a different form would be what you want.

(The Inspector.) There is an increase which requires explanation.

(Mr. Grant.) Let us take the figures down.

(The Inspector.) I think before we—

(Mr. Grant.) You have already had three years given, and I think it necessary, if you will allow me, to go on, Michaelmas, 1903, £67; Lady Day, 1904, £87; Michaelmas, 1904, £159; Lady Day, 1905, £87; Michaelmas, 1905, £160; Lady Day, 1906, £106. There are items added. Add fares from ledgers £66 15s. 10d.; add from superintendent's, £196 8s. The total for the whole of that, £938 15s. 9d.

(Mr. Robb.) I cannot—

(The Inspector.) When we have done with these figures, if Mr. Corrie Grant will give us a rough analysis showing how much—

(Mr. Grant.) You shall have it at once.

(The Inspector.) And then someone will explain it.

(Mr. Robb.) Would it be possible with regard to these contracts, tenders, and so forth, while taking the evidence of it, for Mr. Oxley or someone to sit as a sub-inquiry—Mr. Broodbank representing the alliance, and Mr. Lough, or some other official, representing the guardians—and matters could be gone into contemporaneously, and we should not lose time?

(The Inspector.) I shall have to consider that suggestion and find out what it involves.

(Mr. Grant.) That is a very useful suggestion, and I shall readily accept it. May I follow with one of mine? It will be unpleasant to you, but it will be pleasant to everybody else. We sit five hours a day and we take half-an-hour for lunch, which is generally three-quarters. It works out at four or four and a quarter hours. All the afternoon we are exposed to the sweltering heat. Could we instead of sitting at 11, sit at 9.30 and sit continuously to two o'clock, which would give four and a half hours, and then rise for the day? I know what that means to you. You would have to stay in London instead of going to your country house. We should not mind making that sacrifice. Unfortunately we haven't a hotel here to give you the accommodation you require.

(The Inspector.) I have an immense amount of other work, and I shall have to consider that.

(Mr. Grant.) If you please.

(The Inspector.) One suggestion I wish to make. There is a witness whom I look upon as indispensable, and who, I hope, will help to raise the Inquiry to a higher plane. That is the local secretary of the Charity Organisation Society, Mr. Martley. His evidence I am going to take. He will be sympathetic to the guardians, although I don't suppose it will be altogether in their favour. I am going to take him on Wednesday. He wants a holiday and is going away, he tells me, on leave. I propose to examine him upon the evidence he gave before the Charity Organisation Society.

(Mr. Grant.) May I see that evidence.

(The Inspector.) It is the evidence on unskilled labour.

(Mr. Grant.) May I have it for a moment?

(The Inspector.) (giving the copy.) I don't think there is anything leading to cross-examination.

(Mr. Grant.) Speaking of Wednesday for this gentleman, I have a witness—Miss Grant—perhaps I ought to say, to save misrepresentation, that she is no connection of mine, although she bears the same name. She is obliged to leave London shortly, and has asked me if I could call her on Friday, July 13th, or Thursday, July 26th.

(The Inspector.) I may call her on Thursday.

(Mr. Grant.) The 26th?

(The Inspector.) This Thursday.

(Mr. Grant.) Thursday won't suit her.

(The Inspector.) We shall see about that. Now, Mr. Oxley, since our last meeting you have given Mr. Lough some figures of the actual deliveries?—I have as far as Mr. Pyle's tender is concerned—the actual quantities purchased during the year 1905-6. I have made an analysis of these, and I have here two copies. I have taken the form that I put in on the last occasion, and I have added the 3rd column, quantity purchased, and the two last columns, total amount of goods purchased, and the total amount that would have been paid had they been purchased under Pryke & Palmer's tender. The saving to the guardians if they had been purchased under Pryke & Palmer's tender would have been £265 15s. 10d. In addition to that I think there is a sum of some £60 that you have to allow, because the total does not tally with the details as worked out in the total. Mr. Lough has not been quite able to discover where the fault is, and he is looking into it.

(Mr. Grant.) Give us—?—I don't suppose you want me to read the whole.

(The Inspector.) No. Take the first one.

(Mr. Grant.) They are all numbered?—Yes. No. 1. The prices are the same as the prices of the 1904 tender forms. First one, estimated quantity of asbestos, 14 lbs. Mr. Pryke's tender was 2s. 6d. and 1s. The other tender 1s. 3d. each year. 21 lbs. was the quantity actually purchased and the amount came to £2 12s. 6d.; if they had been purchased under the rejected tender, £1 6s. 3d., or actually half. If you take 5, 6, 7 and 8—the cans—the prices in the accepted tender were 5s., 6s., 7s. 6d. and 10s. The prices in the rejected tender were 18s., 16s. 6d., 23s. and 32s. Three times as much.

Q. In every one of these four items of cans, including the cans of 5s. and 20s., there were no cans purchased?—No cans purchased.

Q. In any one of these four items?—Not one of these items. That was where Pyle's was lower compared with the rejected tender.

Q. No. 5?—The accepted tender was 5s.; the rejected tender 18s. a dozen.

Q. Take 1907 as well. Pyle's tender in 1905 was 5s.; Pyle's in 1906, 20s.; Pryke's in 1905, 12s.; and Pryke's in 1906, 12s.?—Quite so, but we don't know the purchase in the 1906 tender.

Q. You have taken the purchase?—1906-7 is not over yet.

Q. Of course?—

(The Inspector.) But it is evident from that figure that when the price of cans was low and one-third what the rejected tender was there was no purchase?—No purchase at all.

(Mr. Grant.) Will you ask Mr. Oxley to look at these 12 items—the estimated number required in each year. Look at these four items of cans. Cans, not copper cans, one gallon, two gallons and three gallons. Estimated quantity in 1905 was a dozen for each item, four items, and the estimate in 1904 was a dozen in each case. What is the estimate now?—None.

Q. You understand what is meant by estimated quantity required being put down at a single dozen in each case?—I imagine because they may require a dozen.

Q. It is the other way, I imagine. When we don't know whether they want any quantity they always put one dozen. That is our explanation—when we don't know whether we want cans or not?—

(The Inspector.) That is an explanation given of the business capacity of the guardians?

(Mr. Grant.) No.

(The Inspector.) It could allow a man to put in an absurdly low tender for an item which is calculated as total.

(Mr. Grant.) You will see it repeatedly, over and over again, one dozen, and whether the business capacity of the guardians was wrong we shall argue later. I call attention to the fact where there is an estimated quantity required of one dozen, our explanation is that when we put that down we didn't know whether we should want any?—21. Estimated quantity was put down as two dozen and the price in the accepted tender was 5s.; the price in the tender next year was 12s., but none were ordered when two dozen were put down.

Q. Pryke & Palmer's tender was also 6s. and none ordered?—Yes.

Q. I put this to you. If you have a business contract dealing with contracts for three years, what would one dozen mean?—Two dozen in this case.

(Mr. Robb.) Shan't we have the cross-examination at the proper time?

(The Inspector.) Yes, we shall go on?—Of course, there was a large item of soup pails, 48. Three dozen estimated at 60s. and three dozen purchased. If they were bought at 10s.—the price in 1906—28s. was the rejected tender. If these had been bought off the rejected contractor the price would have been four guineas instead of £9.

Q. What do you mean "bought at 10s."?—A sixth of £9.

Q. If they had been bought at 10s. the price would have been 30s. instead of £4?—They were bought at 60s.

(Mr. Grant.) You are only selecting a few items. Are you going past 48?—If I am asked about it I should.

Q. In your evidence?—I am selecting a few.

Q. Ask for any page?—I shall give 48 if you like.

Q. I simply ask you. What is the next after 48?—The next one, 66, pudding tins. Estimated quantity, 2 dozen; 5s. the estimated price in 1905; 10s. in 1906.

Q. For Pyle & Co.?—Yes. 22s. and 22s. 6d. rejected tender.

Q. None were ordered?—None were ordered.

Q. May I suggest, Mr. Oxley, that you give one or two items in which the figures were favourable to Pyle & Co.?—Certainly.

Q. Take 37?

(The Inspector.) I think if Mr. Oxley finished it would be better.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Oxley is taking all these figures and taking items which he thinks extravagant or reflected upon the guardians, and his cross-examination is postponed. Three weeks hence I shall have an opportunity of cross-examination.

(The Inspector.) I thought you were going to cross-examine to-day.

(Mr. Grant.) Not upon these figures handed to me to-day.

(Mr. Robb.) Your figures.

(Mr. Grant.) I haven't seen them before.

(The Inspector.) They are your figures.

(Mr. Grant.) No, they are not my figures. The figures may be taken from the guardians' books?—37. Estimated quantity was 6 dozen; and the estimated price 5s. a dozen.

Q. Pyle's price?—Pyle's price 5s. a dozen. Pyle's price next year 30s., and the rejected tender each year 18s. Though the estimate was 6 dozen, they only purchased three dozen.

Q. And the price in Pyle's tender came to 15s., whereas ordered from Pryke & Palmer it was £2 14s.?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Only half the estimated quantity ordered that year when the price was very low.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, then, 66 is the last item?—The rings and washers, 90 and 91. The accepted tender was 1s.; rejected tender, 2s. None were ordered.

(The Inspector.) Have you any Canterbury hoes?—What number?

Q. 94?

(Mr. Grant.) 94 is nuts and—96 is what you mean?—Canterbury hoes. I am told the Canterbury hoes is one of the omissions in the figures sent to me. The quantity estimated was purchased.

Q. We shall leave that altogether for the present. Now the next?—Belt clips is only a small item. In that case—

Q. What is the number?—132. The accepted tender was 10s.

Q. Read the whole figures. The estimated quantity, 1905-6, six gross; estimate, 1906-7, six gross. Quantity actually purchased 1905, two gross. Pyle's price in

Mr. Oxley.

9 July.

Mr. Oxley.

9 July.

1905, 10s.; Pyle's price in 1906, 1s.; Pryke's price in 1905, 5s. 6d.; Pryke's price in 1906, 5s. 6d. Cost at Pyle's price to purchase to guardians, £1, and cost at Pryke's price to guardians, 11s. Is that correct?—That is correct.

(The Inspector.) Go on?—The discount, number 139. The estimated quantity was £50 worth to be bought.

(Mr. Grant.) Yes?—The actual quantity.

Q. In each year?—In each year. The actual quantity, £279.

Q. In 1905?—In 1905. We don't know what has been bought in 1906. The discount was 5 per cent. last year, 77½ per cent. this. Pryke & Palmer's discount each year was 25 and 30 per cent.

Q. And the total?—£279 the guardians pay. If they had bought it under Pryke's tender it would have been £220.

(The Inspector.) That is a very remarkable case?—It is a very large addition, and much larger quantity ordered than estimated.

(Mr. Grant.) You know in 1906-7 there was an entirely new set—I will keep it until my cross-examination. There is a perfectly simple explanation?—I have been told no explanation.

Q. You haven't asked for them?—Of course not.

Q. You must not put it to me like that. Our officers have been here the whole time ready to afford Mr. Oxley any information he chooses to ask for, and Mr. Oxley never asked for a single explanation from an officer?—I hadn't time—

(The Inspector.) Mr. Oxley, go on?—The steam tube fittings, £145, and the estimated quantity that was required 200 lbs.

(Mr. Grant.) In 1905?—Estimated fittings, £30. The quantity purchased was £7 10s. The discount in 1905 was 40 per cent.; in 1906, 25 per cent. The other two discounts were 70 per cent. and 65 per cent.

Q. The guardians paid for this £7 10s. 3d.?—£7 10s. 3d.; and they would have paid £3 15s. if they had bought them from Pryke & Palmer.

(The Inspector.) The amount ordered was less than that estimated?—£200 estimated; £7 10s. ordered; "simplex" tube fittings (146), estimated to be required £75 worth in 1905; £50 in 1906. As a matter of fact, they purchased £247 worth in 1905 when the discount was 5 per cent. The discount for this year is 2½ per cent. The discount offered by Pryke was 25 per cent. each year. Therefore they paid £247 to Pyle and would have had to pay £195 if they had purchased from Pryke and Palmer.

(Mr. Grant.) Take the next item, Mr. Oxley?—That is 147. Of course there can be no comparison because it is not in this year's tender.

Q. But you are not basing them on this year's tender?—No. It is only a one year article. £50 worth estimated and 8s. 6d. only ordered, and the discount—Pyle offered 85 per cent., whereas Pryke & Palmer only offered 20, and the price paid was 8s. 6d. against £2 5s. 4d. if they had been bought from Pryke & Palmer. That is one of the cases where a very large discount is offered by Pyle and a very small purchase is made.

Q. Yes?—I don't know if there are any others. I have taken a few from each page.

(The Inspector.) Have you any questions, Mr. Robb?

(Mr. Robb.) Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) Might we just have this headed so that we may identify it. It is called, "Poplar Union Tenders, Tenders and Prices." May we call it tenders and purchases compared?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) I gather, Mr. Oxley, your examination of the actual deliveries in these cases has justified the view you expressed a week ago?—Yes.

Q. That is, it shows even a larger saving than your first analysis which was a comparison of tenders?—My first analysis was something like—

Q. I will give you the figure—£187?—Yes.

Q. The actual difference shown on gross tenders between Pryke & Palmer and Pyle was £187 16s. 2d.?—Yes.

Q. It shows this, the apparent saving the guardians might have made if they had accepted the tender of Pryke & Palmer instead of Pyle's?—Yes.

Q. When you took actual deliveries you found that they might have saved £265 15s. 10d. on that one contract?—Yes, subject to this, that there is a small correction in figures to be made.

Q. Yes. And of course for anything we know now to the contrary, this might apply to other tenders?—It may, or may not.

Q. You have only picked out one instance?—This and the electrical lamps, the only ones sent to me.

Q. I want to ask you about that—about the electrical supplies. Have you prepared?—I haven't prepared a table because I hadn't time and there were only six items. Do you want the figures for the electrical glow lamps?

Q. Yes?—No. 18a?

Q. Yes?—The tender asked 16 dozen of B. T. H.

Q. That is, British Thompson & Houston?

(Mr. Grant.) Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) What is the capacity?—I am at present reading from the tender 1905-6—tender form 18a.

(Mr. Grant.) 18a. Would you mind just giving me—?—I think it is the same.

Q. I thought it was 1906?—I have 1905-6.

(Mr. Robb.) 16 dozen?—16 dozen was the quantity.

Q. What is the candle power?—It does not say. Glow lamps at—per dozen.

Q. Would it be possible to tender to a specification for electrical glow lamps without specifying the candle power. It might be 8, 16, 32 or 100?—

(Mr. Grant.) We have only one globe in the work-house?—It does not state the candle power.

(Mr. Robb.) Perhaps we may know—Mr. Lough may tell us the candle power.

(Mr. Lough.) They read, 8, 16 and 32, I think.

(Mr. Grant.) We shall get that checked. Mr. Lough says 8, 16 and 32.

(Mr. Robb.) How many of each?

(Mr. Grant.) That will be in the contract. We will give you that—how many glow lamps.

(Mr. Robb.) What do you find the price?—The price I think I gave last time, was 12s. 6d. a dozen.

Q. 12s. 6d. a dozen?—For the B.T.H. Estimated quantity 16 dozen.

(Mr. Grant.) There is a finished list in regard to the electric lamps. A little further on. That explains the other dozen. Incandescent glow lamps per dozen. Estimated quantity 16 dozen.

(Mr. Robb.) Whose tender was that 12s. 6d.?—Pyle.

Q. And what was Pryke & Palmer?—This was the lowest tender.

(Mr. Grant.) You can tell us what Pryke & Palmer's was?—No. The ones Mr. Lough sent were the tenders where the lowest were not accepted.

(Mr. Robb.) You have no price?

(Mr. Grant.) In order to make a fair comparison between Pyle & Co. and Pryke & Palmer you are bound not only to take the tenders where Pyle was higher, but where Pryke was lower?—My comparison was between prices for two successive years. I don't even know Pryke & Palmer's tender.

Q. That is an entirely distinct and separate contract?—Yes. If I may continue. 16 dozen estimated quantity in 1905 and 12s. 6d. the price. 12 dozen were purchased and the amount returned as having been paid for that was £22 10s. At 12s. 6d. it works out at £7 10s.

(Mr. Robb.) Apparently the guardians paid twice the tender price?—I don't know.

(Mr. Grant.) You don't know, Mr. Oxley, and haven't asked?

(Mr. Robb.) Please—

(Mr. Grant.) Don't interrupt?—I have only the return Mr. Lough offered me. These are figures Mr. Lough sent me and the mistake was pointed out on Saturday in the multiplication, and I am told that it should be 36 dozen.

Q. Mr. Oxley, do be fair?—

(Mr. Robb.) I protest. I was in the middle of a question to Mr. Oxley when I am interrupted in this

way; after I put my question I won't give way; I shall not be interrupted.

(The Inspector.) You had better give way to Mr. Grant.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Oxley can tell us of this distinction between the price he is giving us—£22—and the price charged to the guardians—£20—was mentioned on Saturday. Mr. Oxley mentioned it to Mr. Lough and Mr. Lough will tell you what he told Mr. Oxley.

(Mr. Lough.) Mr. Turner.

(Mr. Grant.) Tell Mr. Davy what happened.

(Mr. Lough.) We have been ascertaining what the tender is. You have the figures there.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, Mr. Lough.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Corrie Grant—

(The Inspector.) Let us go on.

(Mr. Lough.) The actual supply in No. 1 item, 36 dozen, I believe?—It is merely an error in copying.

(Mr. Grant.) That would be £22 10s. The figures are correct, but the number given to Mr. Oxley first was incorrect.

(The Inspector.) What was the number of the first?—12 dozen.

(Mr. Grant.) As an actual fact, 36 dozen.

(The Inspector.) Whose mistake was it?

(Mr. Grant.) A clerical error in the office?—I was going to point it out when Mr. Grant asked about candle power.

(Mr. Grant.) I think I am justified now in interfering. Where we have a complete answer to a figure of this kind we ought to be allowed to give a complete explanation.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Oxley was bound to explain it. You would not let him.

(The Inspector.) You seem to be in a position to cross-examine fully already.

(Mr. Grant.) On some items I am?—Shall I go on?

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Oxley, I was putting a question to you when Mr. Corrie Grant intervened. It was this. I want to emphasize it. These figures which you submit to us are new—are not your figures?—Sent me from this office.

Q. They are figures supplied to you by the guardians from their books and papers?—That is so.

Q. Figures which have been in the possession of the guardians and their officers for months past—years past in some cases?—Of course there were so many items it was easy to make a clerical mistake.

Q. Of course, but the clerical mistake was not yours. It was a mistake made in the office which you were about to explain?—Yes. The incandescent glow lamps, estimated quantity required 1905 was 16 dozen and the price 12s. 6d. The quantity purchased was 36 dozen and the price was £22 10s. The price in the current tenders for the same things was 6s. a dozen. So when they were 12s. 6d. they estimated for 16 dozen and purchased 36 dozen. Going on to Royal Ediswan—

Q. What was the estimated quantity required in 1906-7?—16 dozen.

Q. The point is, Mr. Oxley, when the price is high in this instance the estimated quantity is exceeded by 50 per cent.?—Rather more than 50 per cent.

(Mr. Grant.) Rather more than 100.

(Mr. Robb.) 16 dozen and 36 dozen?—Yes.

Q. I want to be on the right side. The next year you get a heavy delivery in that year. Next year the price drops by 100 per cent.?—Yes.

Q. So that you get when heavy deliveries are called for—you get an abnormally high price by comparison, and the next year the price drops in what apparently is an inexplicable manner?—Yes. Then the Royal Ediswan lamps. Estimated quantity 16 dozen, 1905; price 18s. a dozen.

(Mr. Grant.) Quantity supplied?

(Mr. Robb.) One moment, Mr. Grant, please?—The quantity in 1906 asked for was 19 dozen, and the price was 16s. 2s. a dozen less. The quantity purchased between 1905 and 1906 was 108 dozen and the purchase price was £97 4s.

Q. That was at the high price?—At the high price. 108 dozen instead of 16 dozen.

Q. After the heavy delivery the price dropped?—Only 2s. a dozen in this case.

Q. It dropped?—The electrical lamps. What is the actual power it does not give. It only gives efficiency for all of them.

(Mr. Grant.) Read that?—Incandescent electra, 16 dozen, quantity estimated in 1905, and 11s. 6d. the price. There were none purchased. The price in 1906 was 4s. and 16 dozen was again estimated for. Efficiency 16 candle power, $3\frac{1}{2}$ to $3\frac{3}{4}$ watts per C.P. The efficiency 8 candle power $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4. So it does not give the candle power, only the efficiency for different candle power.

Q. That is better than candle power, isn't it?—If you say 16 candle power you want so many, and if a different candle power you want another.

(Mr. Robb.) Carbon brushes?—Carbon dynamo brushes, No. 1, at per dozen. There were 12 dozen estimated quantity and 3s. 6d. the price in 1905. None were ordered. In 1906 two dozen, the estimated quantity, and 10s. a dozen was the price.

Q. The carbon dynamo brushes, No. 2—?

(Mr. Grant.) How many of them were ordered—I mean No. 1?—I said none, sir. Carbon dynamo brushes, No. 2, 12 dozen estimated for 4s. per dozen the contract price; none were ordered. In 1906 two dozen, the estimated quantity, and 10s. a dozen the price.

(Mr. Robb.) You don't know yet whether any have been supplied for that year?—No, I do not. Motor carbon brushes—there were two items in 1905, 6 dozen of each, estimated quantity, 3s. and 4s. per dozen the tender price. None were ordered. In 1906, motor brushes, carbon, various, are mentioned, so I suppose that includes both. There is 3 dozen, estimated quantity, and 5s. per dozen the estimated price.

Q. And were any ordered?—None were ordered in 1905-6.

Q. So that with regard to this, so far as you know, no carbon brushes have been ordered at all?—None.

Q. Although they form collectively the largest item of the tender?—No, you see—

Q. Taking them together as one item?—No, taking them together, in round figures about £6, and the others £25; not the largest.

(Mr. Grant.) How do you make it £6?—I am speaking of the whole of the brushes.

(Mr. Robb.)—Have you been able to take the competitive tenders and see the prices?—No.

Q. Have you obtained any information as to the price of carbon brushes?—I have not.

Q. Assuming, for the purpose of argument—

(Mr. Grant.) Let us finish 8?—8, are lamps, carbon.

(Mr. Robb.) I am on carbon brushes now. Answer my questions, please. If the proper price of that number of carbon brushes is something like £30 or £45, instead of £5 or £6, that would affect the gross amount of the tender?—Yes, but I do not know what the price is.

Q. No, I am only suggesting a point. At all events, as far as you can see, there were no deliveries?—Yes.

Q. Would it be possible for you to take out for us the prices from the competitive tenders, and compare them?—If I were given the competitive tender. I do not know if there was a competitive tender; the lowest tender was accepted.

Q. You may take it from me that there was?—If Mr. Lough gives me the competitive tender, I will give the price.

Q. In 1905 there certainly was competitive tendering for electrical supplies, and I am in a position to put the tenderer in the box if necessary?—I did not deal with the arc lamp carbons the other day, and I will give them now. They are practically the same prices each time. Three farthings a foot in 1905—1,000 feet wanted—and 1d. a foot in 1906—1,000 feet wanted. That is a small difference.

Q. So much for the electrical supplies. Now, Mr. Oxley, on the last occasion you gave us some figures about margarine, and I think you said you would confirm those. I will deal with one or two general items and clear them off first?—I think the Metropolitan Asylums Board was mentioned.

Q. I don't think so. I do not recollect it?—I heard it mentioned. I find that the M.A.B. do not specify

Mr. Oxley.

9 July.

Mr. Oxley.

9 July.

margarine in 2 lb. rolls, or pay anything like the price you mentioned, 72s. They specify Van den Berg double crown and Jerger's Primus brand, and in the contract the price for this, supplied by Percival, is 62s. 6d. per cwt.

Q. Percival is the contractor for this union?—I think he is.

Q. For margarine?—I think so; yes, he is.

Q. The position is this: Percival is supplying the same brand of margarine, Van den Berg's double crown at £3 2s. 6d., to the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and at £3 12s. per cwt. in this case?—But not in 2 lb. rolls.

Q. And Poplar Guardians are paying per cwt. for the same article 9s. 6d. additional?—Yes, it is the same specification.

Q. Yes, Van den Berg double crown. We have been told that for some reason it is taken in Poplar in 2 lb. packages, and it is not so taken by the Metropolitan Asylums Board?—No. It is taken in bulk. The current L.C.C. contracts are for the same brand and the price is £3 1s. 11d. per cwt. Some time ago a portion of the butter to the M.A.B. was specified in 2 lb. rolls, but this was knocked on the head and a very substantial saving was effected.

Q. Do you know what the saving would be per cwt.?—No, I do not. That is the whole of the information I have about it.

Q. Do you know what the price is at Bethnal Green?—I have got West Ham's cost. The price paid by West Ham for Van den Berg double crown for the year ending September last was £2 19s. per cwt.

Q. That is still less?—Yes.

Q. And Stepney?—Well, I have Bethnal Green. The only occasion on which the Guardians have purchased Van den Berg's margarine has been the Michaelmas half-year, 1903; Jerger's Primus and Le Dansk brand were accepted, and it was referred to the house committee to decide which should be used. The house committee eventually left it to the master's discretion to purchase which he considered best. He tried the brands. If anything there was more of Jerger's Primus used during the six months. The price was, Van den Berg double crown 66s.; Le Dansk 75s. Percival was the contractor. And Michaelmas half year, 1905; during this period the contract was accepted for Van den Berg double crown brand margarine, and the contract price was 57s. per cwt., and the contractor was Mr. Percival.

Q. Fifty-seven shillings?—Yes.

Q. For the same brand?—Yes. That is the half-year in 1905. Stepney does not seem to have used Van den Berg's. It was accepted, but there was an alternative one, and apparently they used the other.

Q. Have you come across any instance of any other public institution paying so high a price for this brand of margarine as Poplar?—No, I have not, but I have not looked.

Q. So far as your inquiries have gone?—I do not think so, no.

Q. So far as your inquiries have gone, the prices for the same brand vary from 57s. to 72s.?—Yes.

Q. And Poplar is highest with 72s.?—Yes, I gave you 75s.

Q. That was Le Dansk?—The other brand, yes.

Q. So that we get the position of the same contractor supplying the same article to different unions in the Metropolis at prices showing this disparity?—I beg pardon, there is one at 68s. per cwt. but that is a margarine mixture, containing ten per cent. of butter. I have the electric light tenders now. If you please, we will take them. There are a large number of them.

Q. Yes, we will take them?—In the first one I take up the dynamo brushes were £3, 2 guineas, 9s. and 5s. against 3s. 6d., 4s., 3s. and 4s. accepted.

Q. Three pounds a dozen?—Three pounds No. 1, 2 guineas No. 2.

Q. That is against 3s. 6d. and 4s.?—In another one there is 9s., 14s., 10s. 6d. and 14s., so that there are great variations in prices. Another one, 15s., 7s. 6d., 5s. 6d., 3s.

Q. Are they local tenders, or—?—One is Millwall, another Pryke & Palmer.

Q. Is there a tender by the General Electric Company?—Pryke & Palmer, Greaves is Millwall, Rugby of

Warwick, and the British Thompson Houston Co., but they only tender for electrical lamps.

Q. What price?—8s. 6d.

Q. As against?—18s.

Q. Accepted?—Yes. That was the largest item in the tender.

Q. So that the guardians gave Mr. Pyle 18s. for 108 dozen, against 8s. 6d. per dozen tendered by the British Thompson Houston Co.?—Yes, they only tendered for one item.

Q. But it was the largest item in the tender?—Not on the estimated quantity.

Q. It was the largest quantity actually purchased, actually delivered?—Yes.

Q. I am anxious to clear up one point. My suggestion is that with regard to the prices for carbon brushes, Pyle's tender is fictitious, but I want you to take the tender of some well-known firm for those carbon brushes?—Pryke & Palmer were 9s. against 3s.; 14s. against 4s.; 10s. 6d. against 3s.; 14s. against 4s.

(The Inspector.) Take another tender?—Greaves of St. Leonard's Road, £3 against 3s. 6d.; £2 2s. against 4s.; 9s. against 3s.; 5s. against 4s.

(Mr. Robb.) So that Pyle's prices for these carbon brushes are at least two or three hundred per cent. under the others?—Yes, they vary.

Q. I mean in some cases they are more?—There is one here—Stephen Smith, of Millwall, 15s. against 3s. 1d.; 7s. 6d. against 4s.; 5s. against 3s.; 3s. against 4s.

Q. So that, upon all those items of carbon brushes, where Pyle's prices are apparently so extraordinarily low, there have been no deliveries, but where Pyle's price is 18s. per dozen lamps against 8s. 6d. of a well-known firm, 108 dozen of these lamps are ordered and delivered by Pyle?—That is so.

Q. Six times the estimated quantity?—Yes.

Q. If there are any other items you think well to compare for prices, Mr. Oxley, you might do that after the interval. Oh, one or two questions on the last analysis of yours. Item No. 9, coffee pots?—One dozen, the estimated quantity.

Q. Price 5s.?—Price 5s.

Q. And delivered?—5s. of a dozen delivered. The next year the accepted tender price was 60s. a dozen.

Q. You do not know what the deliveries are?—No. The amount purchased was 2s. 1d., and if they had been purchased under the rejected tender, it would have been 2s. 6d.

Q. Now, item 30, Rodgers' carving knives for officers?—Seven dozen the estimated quantity required, last year. Eight dozen purchased.

Q. Last year?—Last year. Thirty shillings the price. This year 27s. the price and 6s. in the rejected tenders.

Q. In each of the rejected tenders?—Yes. £12 the total amount of the order. £2 8s. if ordered through the other contractor.

Q. So the guardians paid for the table knives £12, whereas they might have obtained them from a respectable firm, Pryke & Palmer, at £2 8s.?—Yes.

Q. They paid six times as much as they need have paid?—Not quite, nearly five times.

Q. Now take a low-priced article—inmates' carving knives?—Two dozen was the estimated quantity required in 1905; two dozen the estimated quantity required in 1906, one dozen purchased under the 1905 contract—the 1905 contract price was 10s. per dozen; the 1906 price, 40s. a dozen. The rejected tender price each time was 5s.; so that they paid 10s., and would have paid 5s. under the rejected tender.

Q. So that if the contractor was getting on item 30 £10 more than the other tenderer, he could have afforded to lose on this in one year?—He would not have got 5s.

Q. But he would still be getting more. If you got 500 per cent. more than the market price on one item, you could correspondingly reduce other items?—Yes.

* Note.—The items B.T.H. lamps and Royal Ediswan lamps have here been confused. 36 dozen B.T.H. lamps were supplied by Pyle & Co. at 12s. 6d. per dozen, the B.T.H. Co. having tendered at 8s. 6d. 108 dozen Royal Ediswan lamps were supplied by Pyle & Co. at 18s. per dozen, the rejected tender—Greaves—being 14s. 6d. per dozen.

Q. Have you any doubt that that has been done?—It looks rather like it.

Q. Have you compared, Mr. Oxley, items 29 and 35. It is a little curious?—29 officers' carving knives. They apparently cost 20s. a dozen in both years from Pyle. If you come to the inmates' carving knives, 35, in 1906 they cost 40s. per dozen?—Ten shillings in 1905 and 40s. in 1906.

* Q. In 1906 Pyle's price for inmates' knives is 40s. and for officers' 20s.?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Pryke & Palmer's tender is 12s. for officers and 8s. for the others.

(Mr. Robb.) Another curious item is 55, salt spoons. Pyle's price is 10s. and 5s. in each year, and Pryke & Palmer's 1s. 3d. in each year?—Yes.

Q. Per dozen?—None ordered.

Q. They are a specific article—Rodgers'?—Yes; a proprietary article, I think.

Q. Then saucepans, item 56?—3 dozen was the estimated quantity in 1905, 2 dozen the estimated quantity in 1906. One and seven twelfths of a dozen were purchased. 20s. was the accepted tender each year, and 12s. the rejected tender each year. On the quantity purchased £1 11s. 8d. was paid, and 19s. would have been paid if the goods were purchased under the rejected tender.

Q. So that they could have obtained for 19s. the saucepans, for which they saw fit to pay £1 11s. 8d. I understand that all these articles are to sample. There can be no question of any variation between the articles of the two tenders because they are all to sample. They are according to the tender form. And here again we are dealing with a proprietary article—Kenrich's saucepan?—Yes.

Q. I mean, so that the quality of the article is fixed, not merely by the sample?—Kenrich may have two or three qualities.

Q. But you will see several sizes?—He may have several qualities.

Q. Then the sample would determine that?—It should determine that.

Q. Take the next item. Apparently it is for another size of saucepan. The guardians paid £4 7s. 6d. against three guineas, the rejected tender?—Yes.

Q. Now as to bolts and nuts, item 71?—860 pounds the estimated quantity 1905, 468 the estimated quantity this year. 833 pounds actually purchased. The price in 1905 was 3d., in 1906, 4d. The rejected tender was 2d. in each case. The guardians paid £10 8s. 3d., and under the rejected tender £6 18s. 10d. would have been paid.

Q. They might have made a saving of about £3 10s. on that item?—Yes.

(Mr. Johnston.) Would you tell me the estimated quantity?—Apparently, there is a mistake in the copy. It should be 660. Perhaps, after all, though, it is a 6. It is not quite clear.

(Mr. Robb.) When we get to the prices subject to discount we find the same state of things. I am putting

it shortly. You will correct me if I am wrong?—I think they are rather more marked.

Q. When Pyle's percentage of discount is low, his deliveries are high?—They are frequently.

Q. And when his percentage of discount is high, his deliveries are either low, or none at all?—That is so.

Q. Is that an unfair inference to draw from the whole of the discount prices?—No, I think not. I do not say it applies to every one.

Q. But generally speaking?—Yes.

Q. I really don't think I need ask any more, Mr. Oxley.

(The Inspector.) I should like to ask you one question on a small matter. "Sad irons." You will see the rejected tender, Pryke & Palmer's, was 1½d. for the first year, and 1½d. for the next year?—1½d. for the first year, and 1½d. the next year.

Q. That might be accounted for by the rise in the price of metal?—Yes; about ten per cent., I think.

Q. You will see Pyle's down there in the first year 4d. and in the next 2d.?—Yes. The price of metal in the meanwhile having gone up.

Q. Mr. Pyle is here, and he is next on my list, but I think before he is called I should like to say that there is rather a difficulty about calling the contractors, and they are called by me at the request of the guardians themselves, as well as at the request of Mr. Robb.

(Mr. Johnston.) While we are waiting for the witnesses, I could give you the information you asked for as to knives in stock. It was suggested on the last day that the guardians should find out what the stock in hand was as regards table knives. I have these figures here now.

(The Inspector.) Will you put them up here.

(Mr. Johnston.) The number of coffee pots in stock, Lady Day, 1905, none; Lady Day, 1906, none. There is a note here to say that they are ordered as required.

(The Inspector.) Have you any information, Mr. Lough, as to whether any have been ordered this year?

(Mr. Lough.) Not at present.

(The Inspector.) Coffee pots jumped up from 5s. a dozen to 60s.

(Mr. Johnston.) The number of inmates' knives in stock at Lady Day, 1905, was 2,500; at Lady Day, 1906, 1,999.

(Mr. Robb.) Is that in stock or in use. Surely it must be the number in use, not the number in stock.

(Mr. Johnston.) No, the figures are the number of inmates' knives in stock.

(The Inspector.) Just make a little further enquiry about that.

(Mr. Johnston.) A large quantity was ordered at the time of the King's Coronation; 24 dozen, estimate for 1906-7 was to balance the number of forks in stock. Mr. Lough assures me that is right—the number of knives in stock, not in use.

(Mr. Robb.) Or Mr. Diamond?

(A voice.) No.

(Mr. Robb.) Are they summoned before lunch?

(The Inspector.) I suppose we could all get lunch now, couldn't we? It is twenty minutes yet before one.

(Mr. Robb.) I could start Mr. Broodbank.

(The Inspector.) What about him?

(Mr. Robb.) There is a great deal of general matter and he has some returns. I am afraid there is no alternative but to adjourn.

(The Inspector.) Then we will adjourn for half-an-hour.

Mr. H. PYLE; sworn and examined.

(The Inspector.) What is your name?—Henry Pyle.

Q. And your business?—An ironmonger.

Q. Where do you live?—At 196, High Street, Poplar.

Q. In Poplar?—Yes.

(Mr. Good.) I represent Mr. Pyle on this occasion. I have seen a copy of the shorthand notes of the last occasion. In them there are certain suggestions, and I

hope the witness will be confined to the suggestions in that shorthand note. Otherwise I shall ask you to grant a short postponement, so that I may consider the position.

(The Inspector.) I quite realize the difficult position in which you are placed.

(Mr. Good.) I had to work all day on these papers yesterday.

Mr. Oxley.

9 July

Mr. Pyle.

9 July.

Mr. Pyle.

9 July.

(The Inspector.) What contracts have you held under the guardians?—At the present time?

Q. We will take last year?—Last year I held the ironmongery and lead and glass.

Q. And this year?—The ironmongery, electrical supplies and the glass.

Q. Did you do the electrical supplies last year?—No, sir.

Q. Do you hold contracts for any other union than Poplar?—No, sir.

Q. Have you had an analysis of your contract—this paper?—I don't know which one you refer to, sir.

(Mr. Good.) Yes, sir; he has.

(The Inspector.) The one headed asbestos?—Yes, I think I had that.

Q. For how many years have you held the guardians' contract for ironmongery at Poplar?—Ten years.

Q. Ten years consecutively?—I believe so, yes.

Q. Was there any year in which you missed tendering?—No.

(Mr. Robb.) I gather that you do not contract for any other public institution except the Poplar Board of Guardians?—Yes, I do.

Q. For any other?—For the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum.

Q. Which is connected with the Poplar Board of Guardians?—I don't know anything about them, sir; I only contract with them.

Q. With the exception of the Poplar Board of Guardians and the Poplar Sick Asylum, do you contract for any public institution or public body in London or elsewhere?—Not at the present time. I have held a contract for the Bethnal Green Board of Guardians and the Stepney Board of Guardians in years gone by.

Q. But for ten years in succession and without interruption you have held a contract for the Poplar Board of Guardians?—Yes.

Q. May I ask you when you started in business for yourself?

(Mr. Good.) I do not know whether this is material to this Inquiry. It is going into his private business. The witness is here to offer you every assistance about the contract.

(Mr. Robb.) Hadn't you better wait and see?

(Mr. Good.) I have your question, and I object to it?—I don't think it is a question that ought to be asked me.

(The Inspector.) Tell me, how long have you been in business in Poplar?—I will, sir; since 1892.

(Mr. Robb.) An independent business?—In the ironmongery business.

Q. When did you start in business on your own account?—I have told you.

(Mr. Good.) Again, sir, I object to this?—I have told the Inspector, you were here and heard my remarks.

(Mr. Robb.) I want the exact date?—I can't give it.

(Mr. Good.) Really, Mr. Inspector, I must ask for your ruling?—How the devil do I know the exact date.

Q. Is it anything to do with the Inquiry—what time he started?—I don't even know where I was born!

(Mr. Robb.) You won't do yourself justice if you go on like this?—You ask me a proper question and I will answer, Mr. Robb.

Q. When you started in business, did you start on your own account, or with any other person or persons?—Absolutely on my own account.

Q. Had you any partner or person interested in your business in any way?—None whatever.

Q. Any person who invested money as a sleeping partner?—No.

Q. That you swear?—I swear; I am on my oath.

(The Inspector.) He said he had not.

(Mr. Good.) You wait till you see me before you answer these questions. I object to them.

(Mr. Robb.) Did you, in the first year you commenced business, hold a contract with the Poplar Board of Guardians?—No.

Q. How long had you been in business before you commenced tendering for the guardians?—

(Mr. Good.) That is another way of putting a question that I have objected to.

(Mr. Robb.) How long had you been in business before you first held a contract for the guardians?

(Mr. Good.) Under your advice I shall ask the witness not to answer the question.

(The Inspector.) You advised him.

(Mr. Good.) Certainly. The witness is ready to assist you for the purposes of the Inquiry, but going into private details many years ago I object to strongly.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you decline to answer the question?

(Mr. Good.) It is not a question of declining; it is a question which should not be put.

(The Inspector.) I don't know that; I do not see that it is an unfair question, but of course the witness can decline to answer.

(Mr. Robb.) How long had you been in business when you first held a contract for the Poplar Guardians?—I think my solicitor has replied.

Q. Will you please look at your tender for 1905-6 and 1906-7?

(The Inspector.) I think the witness has made a mistake. You said you had no electrical supply contract in 1905?—I was not aware of it, sir. (Having been shown a document): That is accounted for; I was speaking from memory.

Q. You forgot you held a contract last year?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you the tenders before you?—Yes.

Q. Item 1. Asbestos (United) engine packing at per lb.—have you that?—Which year are you speaking of? 1905-6?

Q. Yes. What was your price per pound of that?—Two and sixpence per pound.

Q. Was that a fair and proper price at that time?—Yes.

Q. Do you know that Pryke, Palmer & Co. tendered at 1s. 3d. in the same year—half your price?—It is nothing to do with me what other people do.

Q. Do you know Pryke-Palmer's?—I have seen their premises.

Q. Are they a well-known and respectable firm?—I could not say.

Q. You are in the ironmongery business. Do you suggest to the Inspector that you do not know Pryke, Palmer & Co., of Thames Street?—I have just said I know the place.

Q. Are they a well known firm in the business?—I told you I could not say.

Q. Can you suggest why their price for asbestos engine packing should be 1s. 3d. a pound while yours was 2s. 6d.?—It is a matter of opinion.

Q. What is your opinion?—I have just said that the asbestos I supplied was worth 2s. 6d. a lb.

Q. The tenders were to sample, were they not?—Not for asbestos.

Q. How do you know that?—Because I had to pay for it.

Q. How do you know it was better than Pryke & Palmer's tendered for?—

(Mr. Good.) Perhaps you will give us the quality Pryke & Palmer's tendered for. If you will describe it the witness perhaps can answer you. How can he possibly tell?

(Mr. Robb.) You told us that yours was superior. How do you know?

(The Inspector.) I don't think you said it was?—No.

(Mr. Robb.) Item 2. Asbestos millboard per lb.; What was your price per lb.?—In 1906 I believe it was sixpence.

Q. Pryke-Palmer's was 2d.?—1905, I beg pardon.

Q. Pryke-Palmer's was 1½d. in that year?—Yes.

Q. Your price was four times as much as theirs?—Yes.

Q. How do you explain it?—There are various kinds of asbestos.

Q. What sort did you supply?—I supplied Italian asbestos millboard.

Q. Have you any explanation to give of that item?—No.

Q. With regard to both your items, your deliveries exceeded the quantities estimated by the guardians?—That I know nothing of—about the guardians' estimate.

Q. Surely you have an estimate on your tender form?—I don't know whether they exceeded it or not.

Q. Surely you would know. How did you make out your invoice unless you knew the quantity delivered. Do you say you did not know the estimated quantity when you tendered, and didn't know the actual quantity delivered when you made out your invoice?—No, I do not mean to say that.

(Mr. Good.) Perhaps you will give him the quantity.

(Mr. Robb.) Then you will amend that statement?—I did not quite follow you from the first. Will you go over the matter again?

Q.—I asked you whether it is a fact that in both these instances the quantities supplied by you exceeded the quantity of the guardians' estimated requirements?—

(Mr. Good.) Mr. Robb, be fair to the witness. How much? It might be exceeded by one lb.

(The Inspector.) In one year 14 lbs. was estimated for and 21 lbs. delivered. The next year the estimate was 56, and 76 lbs. were delivered?—I cannot tell that without consulting my books, and this is a matter of memory. I see that there are 56 lbs. estimated for. I do not know how much was delivered. I did not limit the guardians to any quantity. If they exceeded the estimated quantities, they did that.

Q. Very well. Items 5, 6, 7 and 8—cans for kitchen copper. One gallon, two and three gallon cans. What were your prices there—taking cans for kitchen copper first?

(Mr. Good.) Will you take basins?

(Mr. Robb.) Take anything you like. Enamelled basins, No. 4, what was your price for enamelled basins in 1905-6?—12s. a dozen.

Q. And this year?—5s. a dozen.

Q. Is that for the same article?—Well, practically.

Q. Is it for the same article?—Practically.

Q. What do you mean by practically?—You might hear my answer to this question. My remark about the basins is that I had a large quantity in my stock.

Q. I am not going into that. I do not want your explanation about the price. Was your tender for the same article in both years?—Well, that is rather a difficult matter in some cases.

Q. A difficult matter, sir, when the wording of the tender is the same. Were you tendering for the same article in both years?—No.

Q. No! In what respects were your tenders different?—Well, in the later year the basins were supplied smaller than those in 1905.

Q. Is it so specified?—No.

Q. If it is not specified, why did you supply them smaller in one year than another?—Because I supplied them to the guardians' requirements.

Q. How did you know the guardians' requirements except by the tender form?—When the orders were issued I had to take my particulars from the guardians' officers.

Q. But you were tendering before the orders were issued, were you not?—Yes.

Q. How can you maintain that it would affect your price when your tender was put in before the orders?—Because they had some of the smaller basins in 1905.

Q. Do you mean to say you knew at the time you put your tender in, exactly what they required, although it was not specified in the tender form?—No.

Q. Then you ought to have tendered for the same article?—That is a matter of opinion.

Q. A matter of opinion when the specification is exactly the same in the tender form for each year. What right have you, as a contractor, to depart from it?—I can do as I like.

Q. You can do as you like?—Yes, with regard to my prices. If I like to reduce the price I can do so.

Q. I am not on your prices, but on the quality of the article supplied, and I ask you, when you get a uniform specification in both years, what right you have to supply one class of article one year and a different article next year?—I have explained that in 1905 there were various sizes of basins supplied, and I anticipated that in 1906 some of them would be small ones, and reduced my price accordingly.

Q. But these are specified as large?—That has nothing to do with me. That is the board's matter.

Q. Who told you that small ones would be wanted?—Nobody.

Q. How did you know it?—From my own knowledge.

Q. How did you get that knowledge?—From supplying some small ones in 1905.

Q. What right had you to assume that when you supplied small ones in 1905 you would be required, after a specification for large ones, to supply small ones in the succeeding year?—I thought it would apply.

Q. So when you see "large" you think it means small?—No.

Q. How did you know that small ones were required when large were specified?—I tell you. In 1905 they had some small ones, and I anticipated that during the year 1906 they would require some more small ones.

Q. If they wanted them why not specify them?—That is nothing to do with me.

(Mr. Good.) He was tendering by sample.

(The Inspector.) You mean you delivered small basins instead of the large ones?—I delivered basins according to the requirements.

Q. With a difference in price of 12s. to 5s.?—It all depends.

Q. I ask about the first year?—It all depends as to large basins. Some people would reckon a 9 inch one a large one, and others would look upon an 8 inch basin a large one.

Q. The other contractor contracts for 12s.?—Just so, I contend my price in 1906 was cheaper than the other contractor.

Q. Why?—The difference between 5s. and 12s.

Q. I suppose you had the same sample each year?—As I say, as the board wanted these basins, they would order them according to the size they required.

Q. But you had the sample to go by. I am worrying you about this because there are so many cases of it, and I want you to tell me what authority you had for supplying even one single 5s. basin on a 12s. basin specification?—Well, these basins were put under that contract, and supposing the nurses wanted some small basins they would be ordered from me, and come off the contract number.

Q. And you make some 7d. a piece on them?—Yes.

Q. And who would give the order—the master of the workhouse?—It all depends; sometimes it would be the master, and sometimes it would be sent from the North Street offices.

Q. In any case, if a small basin was ordered, not a large basin, a present would be made to you of something like 6d.?—It was simply a matter of profit. Yes.

Q. And a loss to the guardians?—Not necessarily so. You cannot get many small basins under 5d. a piece.

Q. Do you say that if the guardians accept, under a contract for large basins at 12s., small basins only worth 5s. they do not lose by it.—That is a matter for them.

Q. A matter for the guardians?—Yes.

Q. That is to say, you hold that you are entitled to take advantage of their want of business habits, let us say?—I don't say that at all.

Q. Did you make any rebate on your invoice. You have told us that although your price in 1905 was 12s. a dozen for large basins, that you supplied them small?—Yes, I have said that.

Q. And you knew they wanted them small. What rebate did you give the guardians if you supplied them small instead of large?—None.

Q. Did you point out to them what you were doing?—No.

Q. Did you consider it your duty as an honest tradesman to say, "I am supplying you with small basins worth

Mr. Pyle.

9 July.

Mr. Pyle.

9 July.

5s. a dozen instead of large ones worth 12s., yet notwithstanding I am charging the same price?"—No, it was such a small matter that I did not consider it much.

(Mr. Good.) As a matter of fact, you only supplied nine small basins during the whole of this period.

(The Inspector.) In the contract there are 147 items, and in a great number of cases there is the same thing.

(Mr. Robb.) Well now, we have dealt with that item No. 4.

(Mr. Good.) No, you have not dealt with the rejected tender yet.

(Mr. Robb.) 1905, I suppose. Your price for large basins was 12s. a dozen?—Yes.

Q. Next year your price was 5s. Pryke & Palmer's price was 12s. in each year?—Yes.

Q. You say it is a fact that small basins being wanted instead of large, accounted for a drop of 7s. a dozen in your price?—Yes.

Q. Is there any other reason?—No.

Q. And you were able to tender at 5s. a dozen because of your special knowledge?—My special knowledge, yes.

Q. Was that fair to the other contractors?—There was not a contractor.

Q. To the other tenderers, then?—I know nothing of them.

Q. Were you tendering under equal and fair conditions. Did you think?—

(Mr. Good.) That stands to reason.

(The Inspector.) You see, Mr. Good, this is a matter that concerns all London, and it is certain that the whole question of the form of tender must be reconsidered?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) I take it that this is a question which I should have asked, whether the amount of the tender last year was printed on the form that anyone might know.

(Mr. Good.) This witness is in this difficulty, or rather I should say he has this advantage, that he has previously tendered and knows the sort of article the guardians require. He has had ten years' experience.

(Mr. Robb.) And not only the quality of the articles but special knowledge as to the size. You have knowledge behind the specification in the tender. You know that although they asked for large, they wanted small, did not you?—Oh, no.

Q. But you have just told us why you tendered at the price of small ones, have you not?—I took my chance of that. They might have had large ones and they might have had small ones.

Q. You had to take your chance?—Yes.

Q. I will leave it at that. Did you take many of these chances?—(No answer.)

Q. Have you looked through your deliveries, Mr. Pyle. I am not going right through it?—Yes.

Q. Have you taken out the figures showing how much you delivered at low prices and how much you delivered at high prices?—No.

Q. I wish you would do so before the next sitting. Well now, we come to the next item.

(Mr. Good.) Perhaps, Mr. Robb, you will assist me.

(Mr. Robb.) I will assist you long enough if you will have patience. We are not on the fringe of the subject yet. You will get all you want.

(Mr. Good.) That is a matter of opinion.

(Mr. Robb.) I shall do my best to satisfy all reasonable requirements.

(The Inspector.) The immediate trend of this Inquiry is not the conduct of the contractors but that of the guardians.

(Mr. Good.) And that was the reason I was objecting to some of Mr. Robb's questions.

(Mr. Robb.) Items 5, 6, 7 and 8 are all cans. For item No. 5 your price is 5s. per dozen. Pryke & Palmer's is 18s. last year. Did you deliver any?—I could not say.

Q. Well, you can take it from me that you didn't. So that you did not lose anything by tendering at 5s. as against 18s. Item No. 6, your price was 6s., Pryke & Palmer's was 16s. 6d. Did you deliver any at 6s.?—I could not say.

Q. It would have been a great advantage to the guardians if they had got from you a number of these articles at 6s., the market price of which was apparently 16s. 6d. And yet on these low prices the guardians did not call for any deliveries. No 7, your price was 7s. 6d. a dozen, Pryke & Palmer's was 23s. Did you deliver any?—I could not say.

Q. Well, you can take it from me that you didn't?—All right, sir.

Q. No. 8, your price was 10s., Pryke & Palmer's was 32s. Did you deliver any?—I could not say.

Q. No. 9?—Before you go any further, Mr. Robb, if the guardians had wanted any articles of this kind and this price, they would have been delivered.

(Mr. Good.) I will deal with this matter.

(The Inspector.) What does a "dozen" mean?

(Mr. Robb.) "One dozen"—the estimated quantity. Has that any special meaning in the Poplar Union?—12.

Q. Have you heard it suggested that "one dozen"—estimated quantity—means that none are wanted?—No.

Q. You did not know that?—No.

Q. I should just like you to answer before you go any further why in the world cans for the kitchen copper went up from 5s. to 20s. in a year. Why was your tender in 1905 5s. and in 1906 20s.?—Well, as far as I can remember. It is a very long time ago. In 1905 I tendered for a copper can made of tin. I may explain myself. This copper can is a receptacle to put under the copper, and I intended that it should be made of tin. In 1906 I tendered that it should be made of copper.

Q. Was there any sample of that?—I could not say from memory.

Q. How did you know that the word copper had changed its meaning between 1905 and 1906. That it did not mean tin any more?—As far as I can remember I might have made a mistake in 1905.

Q. You made a mistake by putting in an article made of tin whereas copper was specified?—No.

(The Inspector.) He did not put in any.

(Mr. Robb.) What right have you, Mr. Pyle, when the guardians said they wanted a particular article, what right had you to assume that they wanted something else—what right had you to tender for something else?—The article is not specified here.

Q. I see.

(The Inspector.) But there is a sample, is there not?—I don't know, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) Did you take another chance?—I took another chance.

Q. Did you take any steps to augment this want of detail in the specification?—No.

Q. Did you go and see anyone about it?—No. I supplied no cans at the 20s. price.

Q. Did you go to anyone; any guardian or official, to get information and say, "Look here, I cannot understand this. What does it mean?"—No.

Q. Never?—No.

Q. Never on any occasion?—Never on any occasion.

Q. Then out of your own inner conscience you evolved the fact that although tin was meant, copper was substituted. You worked that out of your own brain?—Yes.

Q.—Unaided?—Unaided.

(The Inspector.) One moment. Mr. Lough, can you tell me exactly about the samples. Did you have samples of these copper tins?

(Mr. Lough.) I think so.

(The Inspector.) And the contractors would look at it?

(Mr. Lough.) Yes.

(The Inspector.) Have you got a sample of No. 5?

(Mr. Good.) I will assist you. He means by copper to go underneath the copper, not of copper metal. I think the tender form meant cans for kitchen copper.

(Mr. Robb.) It is not what your client thinks.

(Mr. Good.) My client has not the memory of Datas.

(Mr. Robb.) No. 9, coffee pots. What was your price for coffee pots in 1905?—5s. per dozen.

Q. And this year?—I believe it was 60s.

Q. How is it that coffee pots went up from 5s. per dozen in 1905 to 60s. this year?—Because it is an entirely different article.

Q. An entirely different article?—Yes.

Q. Have you supplied any this year?—No. There have only been three months elapsed since the contract was made.

Q. Then you have supplied none?—No.

Q. You supplied some last year?—I believe so. I could not say from memory.

Q. Quite a small quantity last year?—Five at 5s.

Q. You supplied five?—Yes.

Q. How did you know that it was an entirely different article this year?—Because I looked at the samples and the particulars of the sample.

Q. What samples?—Coffee pot samples.

Q. What samples did you take particulars of. Do you say that the guardians' samples differ every year?—Yes.

Q. Now, sir, you have been a contractor for ten years?—Yes.

Q. Is it not the practice to take as a sample one item out of last year's supply?—No.

(Mr. Robb.) I should like to see these samples.

(Mr. Lough.) They are periodically examined and this year the samples were renewed.

(The Inspector.) Do you mean to say they are all new samples?

(Mr. Lough.) All new samples.

(The Inspector.) They were entirely changed?

(Mr. Lough.) Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) Then your suggestion is that the guardians are responsible for providing coffee pots this year at 60s. a dozen as against 5s. per dozen last year?—Yes.

Q. What is the difference in the pots?—One is made of tin and the other of britannia metal.

Q. Coffee pots?—Yes.

Q. Britannia metal coffee pots. Will you swear to that?—I am on my oath.

Q. Who do you buy them from?—

(Mr. Good.) Now, sir, I object.

(The Inspector.) All right.

(Mr. Robb.) I want to know who you get britannia metal coffee pots from, sir?—

(Mr. Good.) Don't answer, Mr. Pyle.

(Mr. Robb.) Will you swear you can buy britannia metal coffee pots from anyone?

(Mr. Good.) Don't answer.

(The Inspector.) I think he can answer that.

(Mr. Good.) Do you rule that the suggestion is Yes. I will keep nothing back from this Inquiry.

(The Inspector.) The suggestion is that there are no such things as britannia metal coffee pots. Are there?—Yes.

Q. Made in Birmingham?—Yes, I believe they are made in Birmingham.

(Mr. Robb.) Who do you buy them from?—

(Mr. Good.) Again, don't answer. Mr. Robb is too persistent.

(The Inspector.) (Looking at sample.) Is this the coffee pot. I sent for it. Do you mean to say this is worth 5s. or anything like 5s.?—It is worth more.

(Mr. Good.) Did you have an opportunity, Mr. Robb, of looking at these samples? I think Mr. Robb is an extremely good advocate, but—

(The Inspector.) All right, Mr. Good.

(Mr. Good.) If you please.

(Mr. Robb.) This is the sample. It was open to you and to Messrs. Pryke & Palmer. They saw the same samples, I suppose?—I suppose so.

Q. I suppose so. We will make quite sure. We will have them here. Do you know that they tendered for this article at 6s. per dozen?—I did not know their tenders at all. I was not concerned with their tenders, but I heard that this year they tendered at 6s.

Q. 6s. a dozen?—Yes.

(Mr. Good.) The same year, Mr. Robb?

(Mr. Robb.) This year your price is 60s. a dozen and Pryke & Palmer's is 6s.?—Yes.

Q. How do you explain the difference?—Well, I should say that they could not possibly supply it for the money.

Q. What do you say?—That they could not supply it for the money.

(The Inspector.) They could not supply it for the money?

(Mr. Robb.) Have you got a sample of what you previously supplied for 5s. I should like to see it?—I think, No. I could not say off-hand.

Q. Well now, sir, I will go to something else. Do you say that 60s. a dozen is a fair and proper price for these goods?—Yes.

Q. Who are the makers of them?

(Mr. Good.) Again, really—

(The Inspector.) Why really?

(Mr. Good.) Joe Chamberlain.

(Mr. Robb.) At all events, if Pryke & Palmer's offered to supply them at 6s. a dozen, they would be throwing away a good deal of money?—Yes, no doubt about that.

(The Inspector.) Don't make these suggestions. It is bad enough as it is.

(Mr. Robb.) Take item 15. Cruets, 4 bottles, Rodger's, a proprietary article, is it not?

(The Inspector.) Is it a proprietary article—Rodger's?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) So that there cannot be any mistake about that. What was your price last year?—12s.

Q. And this?—30s.

Q. How do you explain the increase in one year. Why did you jump from 12s. to 30s. for a proprietary article in one year?—It is a matter of tendering.

Q. What kind of tendering?—Tendering.

Q. Was the 12s. a fair and proper and reasonable price?—I was like Pryke & Palmer's with the coffee pots.

Q. Was 12s. a fair and proper price?—I was willing to supply them at that.

Q. Was 12s. a fair and proper price?—I don't answer that question. I can put them in at what figure I like.

Q. Was 30s. a fair and proper price?—(No answer.)

Q. Which of these two prices do you say was a fair and proper one?—Unfortunately I should lose money on both prices.

Q. I see, then you would lose an enormous amount in 1905?—Yes.

Q. Of course, you would not lose it, because I see you only supplied 5 altogether. You did not supply a round dozen?—I supplied what I charged for.

Q. You supplied five?—What I charged for. What was on my invoice.

Q. Did you know what was in stock when you put in that tender?—No.

Q. Did you know what the probable requirements would be?—No.

Q. And you were taking your chance?—(No answer.)

Q. You were taking another chance?—I don't follow you at all. I lost money by some items, and you have admitted that.

Q. Give me an instance where you supplied any substantial quantity, any large quantity, at a small price. I know there are small deliveries. Show me any large deliveries at a small price?—They might come along later.

Q. They might?—Yes.

Q. Now, I ask you whether you consider it proper tendering that your prices for proprietary articles should vary by 200 to 300 per cent. in one year?—I can please myself with regard to tendering.

Q. You don't suggest the manufacturers' prices varied to that extent?—No.

Q. No, but yours?—Well, I dare say I could please myself what prices I put in.

Mr. Pyle.

9 July.

Q. Why did you do so?—Because I thought I would.
Q. Why did you think you would?—I don't think I have got to explain to you that reason.

Q. What was the reason then?—I thought I would.

Q. Why did you think you would. You did not do it out of caprice?—You have got it in the expression—I thought I would.

Q. Why did you think you would?—I cannot demonstrate to you the reason for that.

Q. You are a business man, are you not. An iron-monger tendering for large public institutions. You don't do things like a wayward child, because you thought you would?—That was my price to the board. I can put in what prices I like.

Q. Why should your prices for one article be 12s. in one year and 30s. in the next?—I have no reason.

Q. No reason?—No.

Q. Was it because you were tendering to the Poplar Board of Guardians?—No.

Q. Would you do the same if you were tendering to any other public institution?—Yes.

Q. Now, look at item No. 30.

(Mr. Good.) But before we go to other items we had better show that the rejected tenderers' price was 35s.

(The Inspector.) The proper price for this is about 30s.?—Yes. About that.

Q. Pryke-Palmer's is 35s. And yours 30s. And you supplied 12 only the first year?—Yes.

Q. Did you not run the risk that the guardians looking at the low price might have ordered ten dozen of them?—I certainly ran the risk.

Q. Why did you run that risk?—It is one of the risks of tendering.

Q. Did you put in that price in order to keep your tender low?—Yes.

Q. And you took your chance that the guardians would not order an extra quantity?—I don't quite follow you.

Q. Would it not be that you believed that the guardians would not order from you an excessive quantity at that low priced tender?—No. If they ordered any amount I would have supplied them.

Q. Did they order any at that?—In this case they took 5.

Q. That does not make up the estimated quantity. Can you give me any case where you have lost heavily by one of your low tenders being called for by the guardians? There is one case here, that of the five cruet. There is a loss here on those five.

(Mr. Good.) May I call your attention to item No. 32?

(The Inspector.) We have not got to item 32 yet.

(Mr. Good.) My client has lost money on it.

(Mr. Robb.) We have not come to that yet.

(Mr. Good.) You see the estimated quantity is six dozen, whereas my client supplied 18 dozen.

(The Inspector.) But the next year the tender was 1s.

(Mr. Good.) And the rejected tender was 6s.

(Mr. Robb.) Will you look at No. 30, please.

(The Inspector.) I wish to ask you for 21. Inmates' carving knives—Taylor's. That was a proprietary article?—In what year? There is nothing about inmates' carving knives in 1905.

Q. Rodger's carving knives?—

(Mr. Robb.) Forks.

(The Inspector.) I beg your pardon. In 1904-5 you tendered for them at £1; in 1905-6 you tendered for them at 5s., and did not deliver any. In 1906 you tendered for them at 12s.?—Yes.

Q. Have you any explanation for these figures?—Because the sample in 1906 was altered to a different pattern fork.

Q. Was the sample also altered in 1905?—I could not say.

(Mr. Robb.) Look at No. 30, please. Knives, officers' (Rodger's), table. That would be a proprietary article?—(No answer.)

Q. What was your price in 1905-6?—30s.

Q. And this year?—27s.

Q. And you know that Pryke & Palmer's was 6s. in each year?—Yes.

Q. So you made a very substantial profit?—I don't know.

Q. Did you know that Pryke & Palmer's total price for the 8 dozen worked out at £2 8s. as against your £12. Can you say, after that, that you did not make any substantial profit?—No.

Q. I suggest to you that you charged about five times as much as Pryke & Palmer's, who were tendering to the same sample?—

(Mr. Good.) Or might have been.

(Mr. Robb.) Well, it is suggested that the guardians varied the samples. I don't make the suggestion, if Mr. Pyle's solicitor likes to make the suggestion.

(Mr. Good.) It may be that Pryke & Palmer's did not see the samples at all.

(The Inspector.) It may be so.

(Mr. Robb.) What was the proper price of Rodger's carving knives of that description?—The price charged?

Q. The price you charged?—Yes.

Q. 30s.?—Yes.

Q. 20s., I think. 30s. That is right. Then Pryke & Palmer's must have been willing to throw away a lot of money by tendering at 6s.?—Yes.

Q. Did you know their prices were the same in each year?—Yes.

Q. 6s.?—Yes.

Q. Look at the next item. 31. Dessert knives. Also Rodger's?—I may say, before you come to that, these knives cost me 26s. a dozen.

(The Inspector.) Why did table knives cost so much more than carving knives?—Because—

Q. Table knives cost 30s. and carving knives only 20s.?—That reverts to my system of contracting. I was prepared to lose money on the carving knives.

(Mr. Robb.) That is your system. You were prepared to lose money on some items and make up on others?—Yes.

Q. According to what you think will be required?—According to my own anticipations of what I imagined would be wanted.

Q. Your anticipations have been invariably verified in practice?—Oh, no.

Q. I ask you?—I believe I supplied some of these officers' knives—

Q. No doubt you have. You have supplied them at 30s., whereas Pryke & Palmer's would have supplied them at 6s.?—I cannot see how they would do it without a loss.

Q. They were willing to do it, and they are a reputable firm?—So am I. I am willing to supply carving knives at a loss, and Pryke & Palmer's were willing to supply table knives at a loss.

Q. Then your practice is to put fictitious prices in your tenders?—

(Mr. Good.) I object to that. Fictitious is not a very nice word.

(The Inspector.) Say fancy prices.

(Mr. Grant.) May I intervene for a moment. It is neither fictitious or fancy prices. I am intervening here not as representing Mr. Pyle, but the general public. The word fictitious is an outrageous word to use. He puts in a price at which he says he will lose, and will lose if the guardians did order any at that price. And then it is called fictitious.

(The Inspector.) Call it fancy then.

(Mr. Grant.) I object to fancy, then.

(The Inspector.) We won't quarrel about the English language.

(Mr. Robb.) Then we will call it a philanthropic price.

(Mr. Grant.) I am going to quarrel about the misuse of the English language, because anyone who classes actual prices and fictitious prices does not know the English language.

(The Inspector.) What do you mean about actual prices?

(Mr. Grant.) This is an actual price. Mr. Pyle says I am prepared to supply articles at that price if the guardians accept my tender. The guardians do so, and therefore he is bound to supply goods at that price during his contract, and therefore it is not a fictitious price, but an actual one.

(Mr. Robb.) This is all very well in theory. But when you see a gentleman takes a certain percentage off one item, and puts on a greater percentage on another and practices what he calls a system of tendering, that tender I say is fictitious. We will call it a manipulated tender then.

(Mr. Grant.) May I repeat what I said? I did not rise to defend Mr. Pyle. I rise to the general interests of justice.

(The Inspector.) It is in the interests of the guardians. You appear for them.

(Mr. Grant.) And a wider interest too.

(Mr. Robb.) As long as we know whether Mr. Corrie Grant or Mr. Good is looking after the general interest of justice—as long as we have a definite knowledge of that particular sphere—

(The Inspector.) Don't you think it is hot enough as it is?

(Mr. Robb.) I have to confine myself to a more common task—that of looking after the interests of my clients. Perhaps we can go on.

(The Inspector.) Perhaps the witness will state what he means.

(Mr. Robb.) How would you describe your system of tendering?—I don't think I can explain myself in the matter.

Q. You think not. Don't you think it calls for explanation?—No.

Q. Do you think it is a honest system?—Take one thing with another, I do.

Q. You do?—Yes.

Q. But when it comes about that a low-priced article is not delivered or only delivered in minute quantities and the high priced article delivered in substantial quantities, do you think that the way the practice works out is quite honest?—That has nothing to do with me.

Q. Who has to do with it?—I could not say.

Q. No. Who has to do with it?—I could not say.

Q. Now, look at item No. 34, dessert knives, children's. Your price in one year was 2s. 6d., and the next 4s. 6d. Pryke & Palmer's was 4s. 6d. in each year?—Well, 2s. 6d. would be nearer the mark.

Q. Then why did you tender 4s. 6d. when 2s. 6d. would be nearer the mark?—Because I thought I would make a little more profit.

Q. Yes, a considerable percentage more?—Only the same price as Pryke & Palmer's.

Q. Never mind them. Let them look after themselves. You thought you would make a little more profit, eh?—Yes.

Q. Therefore you turned an article worth 2s. 6d. into 4s. 6d.?—Yes.

Q. The estimated quantity was 30 dozen. Did you only deliver 12. Is that so?—In what year is that?

Q. Last year?—I cannot remember everything. I suppose if you state it, I must take it so.

(Mr. Good.) Is the list here?

(Mr. Oxley.) I only had three copies.

(Mr. Grant.) May I ask that we have more in the morning?

(The Inspector.) I cannot promise that.

(Mr. Grant.) We will get it. I will order them from some stationers in the city.

(The Inspector.) Here is this return. It gives the figures different for each year.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Oxley will give this in evidence presently. I have marked this. We are dealing with the return marked "Poplar Union. Ironmongery. Tenders compared."

(Mr. Oxley.) Poplar Union—Contract prices.

(Mr. Grant.) At any rate we will have enough copies. At present witness can have mine. It is more important that he should have them than I should. At any rate,

Mr. Pyle or his solicitor won't object to me saying this to him: don't answer any question you are asked about until you have found the item you have been asked about.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Pyle, did you supply better classes of articles for officers than you did for inmates?—Certainly.

Q. For instance, did you supply better knives for officers than for inmates?—Yes.

Q. How comes it then that officers' carving knives are 20s. a dozen and inmates' carving knives are 40s. a dozen? Look at the items 29 and 35 of the present year?—The samples in that case for 1906 were altered to stag-handled knives, Rodger's patent carving knives.

Q. Each item was altered?—Item No. 35.

Q. For the inmates?—Yes.

Q. Then the inmates had carving knives which cost twice as much as those for the officers did. Is that what we are to understand. Handles with stags' heads?—I did not say that.

Q. It was a stag handle. It is a fact that the inmates' carving knives cost 40s. and those for the officers only 20s. a dozen?—Yes.

Q. You seem to remember all these samples fairly well?—Yes, I have a good memory for some matters.

Q. Look at 32. Was the sample altered between 1905 and this year?—No.

Q. Inmates' knives 3s. a dozen one year, and 1s. the next year. The rejected tender 6s. in each year?—Yes.

Q. Is Taylor's a proprietary article. How can you supply them for 1s. this year and wanted 3s. a dozen last year?—I should lose money.

Q. Another chance?—(No answer.)

Q. Another chance?—That is your suggestion.

Q. But you are taking a chance, surely?—If you take it so. My prices were there, and if any were required they would be supplied at these prices.

Q. Yes?—Yes.

Q. Look at item 78.

(The Inspector.) We had better keep in order. I should like to ask witness about item 48. Soup pails. Three dozen estimated for, three dozen ordered. The price in 1905 was 60s. Then it dropped to 10s.?—In that case I should lose money on the 10s. a dozen pails.

Q. Did you make a bit at 60s.?—No. I believe these pails cost me on an average 4s. 6d. each, speaking from memory.

Q. Then you would lose very heavily supposing this year the guardians ordered a lot?—Yes.

Q. They might order twice the number estimated for?—I should have to take the chance.

Q. Would you lose something like £2 5s. or £2 10s. You would risk it?—Yes.

Q. Why should you run the risk?—It is a matter concerning myself. I ran the risk, and if they were ordered I should supply them.

Q. Were the low figures put in to keep the total low?—That is just as it happens.

Q. Why else should they be put in?—As I say, it is a matter of tendering again.

Q. What was the object. It would save us much time if you told us exactly?—The object is this, that as a rule the lowest tender is accepted.

Q. And I suppose the object is, to tender as low as you can on some articles, to keep the tender low, even though you would lose money supposing they were ordered?—That is so.

Q. You hoped they would not be ordered?—There were several items on which I should lose money.

Q. It is a matter of judgment what articles are to be put in below cost price?—

(Mr. Robb.) And here after having lost in 1905 at 60s., you decide to make a greater loss by coming down to 10s. a dozen?—I did not lose at 60s. a dozen.

Q. The Inspector put it to you?

(The Inspector.) I did not understand him to say a loss, but that he made very little.

(Mr. Robb.) Then if you made very little at 60s. you would lose very heavily at 10s. Look at 55. Salt spoons

Mr. Pyle,

9 July.

Mr. Pyle.
9 July.

(Rodgers). Your price 10s. a dozen, Pryke & Palmer's, 1s. 3d. in each year. Your price 10s. and theirs 1s. 3d. You would not lose very heavily there?—Well, I should not get very much, Mr. Robb.

(The Inspector.) It is only fair to the witness to say that he did not deliver any at 10s. a dozen.

(Mr. Robb.) It is the proper price. These are salt spoons?—That affects my trade. I cannot give you my trade price.

Q. What is the proper retail price?—That all depends. It is not always the same.

Q. Do you suggest that for salt spoons for the inmates the guardians ought to pay 1s. or 10s. a-piece?—I think it is a very fair price for the article they receive.

Q. Of course, Pryke & Palmer's were tendering at 1s. 3d. for the same article?—I have nothing to do with other people's tenders.

Q. I assume you all saw the same samples. Do you suggest that the guardians had one sample for one contractor and another for another?—In all probability they would lose money at 1s. 3d. a dozen.

Q. Now, look at item 78. Copper wire. What was your price per lb.?—2s.

Q. And Pryke & Palmer's?—10d.

Q. 87. India-rubber insertion. Estimated 112 lbs. Is that so?—These things are rather new to me.

Q. You supplied 209 lbs. as against the 112 estimated?—Yes.

Q. What was your price?—2s.

Q. Per lb.?—Yes.

Q. Pryke & Palmer's, 1s. 9d. In 1905?—Yes.

Q. Item 92. Spades, 17 dozen estimated quantity, 18 dozen supplied. What was your price last year, because we have only the delivery last year?—My price was 30s.

Q. Pryke & Palmer's 22s.?—22s., then he drops to 17s. 6d. I don't know how he gets that.

Q. 17s. 6d. I beg your pardon. There is an example where we find the estimate exceeded. You got a substantial delivery at that price?—I contend that the spades I supplied were worth the money.

Q. Can you give any item where you supplied at a low figure in excess of the quantity estimated for?—That would take some time to go over.

Q. I think it would. Here is another instance, item 110. Iron (best charcoal sheets), 112 lbs. estimated for, 304 lbs. delivered. What was your price?—3d.

Q. And Pryke & Palmer's?—2d.

Q. 1½d., I think?—I have 2d. here.

Q. So that you delivered three times the estimated quantity at double the price of Pryke & Palmer's?—Yes.

Q. Will you show some corresponding item which would balance this. Have you an item. Show me anywhere where you delivered low priced articles in excess of the estimated quantity?—As I say, I cannot go over the matter. I wish to point out that they could not buy them at 1½d.

(The Inspector.) You say they cannot be supplied at 1½d.?—No, sir, not best charcoal sheets.

Q. Why then in the tender form for 1906 did the price go down to a penny. That would be another case where you would lose money?—Yes, I should lose money there.

Q. That is to say, if any were ordered?

(Mr. Robb.) But when your price was 3d., three times the estimated quantity was ordered?—That has nothing to do with me. I have to supply whatever is ordered.

Q. Very fortunate for you?—No.

(The Inspector.) Might not the fact that you delivered three times the estimated quantity last year have enabled you to exercise your judgment and drop your price to a third. You would argue that having supplied such a quantity they would have had some in stock?—No, I don't believe anything is ordered for stock in the Poplar Union. As works go on certain articles are wanted to complete that work.

(Mr. Robb.) So that your tender is a complete leap in the dark?—So to speak.

Q. And you generally landed on the right side of the hedge?—Yes, fortunately for me.

Q. It is fortunate, is it not. Now, there are here some 100 or more articles, many of which you tendered for under cost price. Very fortunately for you the guardians don't order these articles at all, or only in very small quantities. Whereas when we get to high priced articles, twice those of other contractors, they order three times the estimated quantity. That is sheer good luck?—There are several instances to the contrary. I have not limited the quantity where I have lost—

Q. For instance, there was five coffee pots, and so on. But your good fortune has been so apparent?—That is a matter of opinion.

Q. Your judgment has been so good. There are no items where you have been badly hit. Show me one single item where you have tendered under cost price and supplied them, and have been badly hit?—I am just proving to you, on these cans. Items 6, 7 and 8.

Q. Did you supply any?—Is that so, in there?

Q. You did not supply any. Just look again, Mr. Pyle. In fact, to sum it up, you had an unparalleled run of good luck. The guardians have never hit you on one single article?—Oh yes, there are several items.

Q. Supplied in excess of the estimate?—I could not say without going through the quantity.

Q. I put it to you, whenever the estimate is exceeded your price is high. Whenever the deliveries are below the estimate or no deliveries at all your price is low. That is the general run of your tendering. Just look again. Item 111. Nails (wire clout). Estimate 56 lbs. Delivered 112 lbs. What was your price for that item?—4d.

Q. And Pryke & Palmer's?—1½d.

Q. Any loss on that, was there?—They would lose by it.

Q. But we must not lose 110. Tin tacks. 30,000 estimated for, and 38,000 delivered. What was your price in 1905?—6d.

Q. Pryke & Palmer's?—1½d.

Q. What was the proper price for tin tacks, 6d. or 1½d.?—It is a matter of opinion.

Q. Is it a matter of opinion that prices should vary 300 per cent. on an article like tin tacks?—I could not say. It was my price.

Q. That is another example of delivering twice the estimated quantity at a price four times that of another contractor?—It is only a matter of 15s.

Q. I am wrong. 8000 more delivered. Item 121. Pie dishes. Estimated 3 dozen, delivered 1 dozen. What was your price?—20s.

Q. Pryke & Palmer's?—6s.

Q. What is the proper price for enamelled pie dishes, 20s. or 6s.?—It all depends upon the size.

Q. What is the size?—I don't remember.

Q. You don't remember?—I believe it was 18 inches, and to the best of my recollection mine was a fair price.

(The Inspector.) Pie dishes in 1904 were 1s. 6d. only?—In that year I believe the dietary scale was altered and they had a smaller pie dish.

Q. It was different in size?—Yes, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) Look at copper pipe, No. 133. Do I understand that to mean copper there, or tin?—That could not be misconstrued.

Q. The estimate was 112 lbs., was it not. The delivery 351 lbs.?—Yes.

Q. The delivery, therefore, was three times the estimate?—Yes.

Q. What was your price per lb. in that year?—2s.

Q. 3s. was it not, in each year?—2s.

Q. Pryke & Palmer's, 1s. 2d. Have you the prices there?—I don't see it.

Q. Belting and materials, from J. Tullis & Sons, Glasgow?—Yes.

Q. What discount did you offer in 1905 and 1906 respectively?—50 and 85.

Q. Pryke & Palmer's?—15 per cent.

Q. 15 per cent. in each year?—The estimated requirements was £20.

Q. What did you actually supply?—£6 0s. 10d.

Q. Now what were the manufacturers themselves allowing?—That is a trade matter.

Q. Take the next item. Brass work. Estimated quantity £50. Quantity delivered, £279 4s. What discount did you offer in those years?—5 per cent. and 77½.

Q. Then when you offered 5 per cent. your delivery was £279 as against £50?—That is so.

Q. Pryke & Palmer's, 25 per cent.?—Yes.

Q. Well, I ask you to look at all these items which are subject to discount, and tell me whether it is not a fact that, taking them as a whole, where the delivery is in excess of the estimate, your discount is low. Where there is either no delivery at all, or only a small delivery, your discount is high. Is that the case. For instance, look at 141 and 142. 141, lines, estimated required, £20, delivery £12 4s. 10d. Is that right?—That is so.

Q. What is the discount you offer in each year?—5 and 75 per cent.

Q. Did the makers' discount vary 70 per cent. in a year?—That is a trade matter.

Q. Look at item 133. Your price is 2s per lb. in each year, and theirs is 1s. 2d.?—Yes.

Q. And you supplied three times the estimated quantity?—Yes, and at a reasonable price too.

Q. It is fortunate for you you were never asked to supply three times the estimated quantity of any of these low priced articles. You don't suggest that you were, do you?—I should have supplied them if they had been required.

Q. Do you suggest that you were ever required?—I can not say without going through the estimates.

Q. Well, now look at some of these discounts. Items subject to discount off manufacturers' prices. They are items 138 to 147?—Yes.

Q. Another trade matter?—Yes.

Q. Do you suggest they varied to the extent of 70 per cent. Take No. 146, by way of contrast, simplex tubing and fittings, estimated requirement, £75, and your actual delivery was £247 14s. 4d., was it not?—Yes.

What discount did you offer in each year?—5 per cent. and 2½.

Q. Against 25 per cent. each year offered by Pryke & Palmer?—Yes.

Q. So that was an instance of your allowing a nominal discount and supplying three times the estimated quantity?—That was a matter which did not concern me. It was ordered and I supplied it.

Q. Can you show me any instance where you offered a high discount—one of these 70 or 80 per cent.—where you supplied the estimated quantity or over?—Yes, in lines and screws.

Q. Five per cent. : and the other offered 40 per cent. I am afraid you are confusing it with this year in which we have not any contracts. Do you suggest lines. Let's have your explanation. Item 140, you offer that as an item where you delivered in excess of the estimate and allowed a large discount?—(No answer.)

Q. You only supplied £7 against an estimate of £25?—Yes, but Pryke & Palmer's would have been—

Q. That is not the point. I call your attention to 146, you know simplex tubing where you supplied three times the estimated requirements to the Guardians, and you only allowed 5 per cent. and 2½ per cent. as against 25 per cent. which was offered by Pryke & Palmer?—Yes.

Q. I ask you by way of contrast to that to show me any item when you have allowed a heavy discount and you supplied up to or in excess of the deficit?—I do not know if there is any instance or not.

Q. Then I suggest to you it works out in practice that whenever your discount is low you deliver a substantial quantity of articles. Whenever your discount is high you either supply none at all or purely a nominal quantity?—I supply whatever is ordered in either case.

Q. You don't suggest these are ordinary trade discounts, do you?—I don't think I need explain that.

Q. But look at this. You offer on lines, Belfast Rope Works Company, 5 per cent. one year and 75 per cent. next year. Do you suggest the Belfast Rope Company's prices or discounts varied by 70 per cent. in one year?—I cannot tell you what they would do with their discount.

Q. How could you fix your own unless you know what the makers offered?—As I said before, it was a matter of chance.

Q. And you have been so lucky that whenever you have offered a high discount the guardians wanted a little or no supply, and whenever you have offered a low discount they required a substantial supply. That is chance?—Chance.

Q. The ordinary tradesman would be in the Bankruptcy Court by this sort of thing, if he did not have your luck, would he not?—If anybody else had taken my place he would be in the same position as I would. In some years I have done fairly well over these contracts, in others rather badly.

Q. Your suggestion to the Inspector is that it is an absolute chance and nothing else that the deliveries work out in this way?—They are my prices and I abide by them.

Q. But the guardians have never in any instance taken advantage of your philanthropy to force you to supply them at a quarter or a third of the cost, whatever it might be?—That I cannot say. If they did so, the goods would have been supplied.

Q. They never have?—I cannot say without going all through the estimate.

Q. They have never come to you and said, "Look here, Mr. Pyle, we have a right to take a particular item and we are going to do it." They have always dealt with your tender in bulk?—They have always had what they wanted.

Q. Look at item 147. Doulton's lavatory basins. I see you offered 85 per cent. off list prices. What did you actually supply?—8s. 6d.

Q. You could afford to allow 85 per cent. off an order for 8s. 6d. Do you suggest Doulton's were allowing 85 per cent. on lavatory basins?—I do not suggest anything in regard to trade matters.

Q. Now, Mr. Pyle, will you look at that. (Handing an article to witness.) Do you know that?—

(Mr. Grant.) Can I see it, Mr. Pyle?

(Mr. Good.) We are most eager to see it.

(Mr. Grant.) Perhaps it would be better read. It is a little brass tablet—

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Pyle will read it.

(Mr. Grant.) I want it on the shorthand notes, that is all.

(Mr. Robb.) Let Mr. Pyle read it?—"The ready clothes receiver. Gillock and Madeley's patent. Henry Pyle, Ironmonger, Poplar."

Q. That is "The Ready Clothes Receiver, Gillock and Madeley's patent, Henry Pyle, Manufacturer"?—That is so.

Q. Gillock was labour master?—Oh no, I am not the manufacturer.

Q. Why does your name appear on it?—As supplying it.

Q. Gillock was the labour master of the workhouse, was he not?—I believe he was some years ago.

Q. You know all about Mr. Gillock, don't you?—No, I don't.

Q. Was he a stranger to you?—Pretty well.

Q. Was Mr. Madeley a stranger to you?—I knew Mr. Madeley.

Q. You know him rather well?—I knew Mr. Madeley.

Q. Will you listen to what Mr. Walton, the present master, says? It is page 210 of the shorthand notes. "Question—Now I want you to tell me this, has the master ever taken any of the contractors down there?" Meaning the beer cellar. "Answer—They have been down there with him. Q.—Drinking beer?—I cannot say they were drinking beer. Q.—They would not go down there examining the decorations or anything of that sort?—I don't suppose so. Q.—Can you suggest any other purpose they would have gone there for?—No. Q.—Now the names of the contractors who have been in the cellar with the master?—I have seen Mr. Whitlock. Q.—Mr. Whitlock is the milk contractor?—Yes. Mr. Pyle, Mr. Kirk, and several have gone whom I don't remember." Is that true?—Perfectly.

Q. What did you go down into the beer cellar with Mr. Madeley for?—I believe to have a glass of bitter.

Mr. Pyle.

9 July.

Mr. Pyle.

Q. How often did that occur?—I cannot say.

9 July.

Q. More than once, I suppose?—Yes, on one or two occasions.

Q. Then you were in the habit of visiting Mr. Madeley at his house, I believe?—I have been to Mr. Madeley's house.

Q. Frequently been in his company?—No, not frequently.

Q. Frequently been out with him in the evening?—No.

Q. Up West with him?—No.

Q. Do you swear you have never been with him?—I believe on one or two occasions I have.

Q. In Mr. Jacob's brougham?—No.

Q. What did you visit Mr. Madeley for?—On business matters.

Q. Was it necessary to go into the beer cellar on these excursions to transact business?—It was his polite way of doing business. The beer I drank was not his, I understood.

Q. You returned his politeness?—No.

Q. Have you ever directly or indirectly given anything in any form or shape to Madeley?—No.

Q. Or to any person on behalf of Mr. Madeley?—No.

Q. Or in whom Madeley was interested?—Never.

(Mr. Grant.) If you have got it, Mr. Robb, you are bound to put it to him now.

(Mr. Robb.) What were you doing with Gillock and Madeley in connection with that patent?—I was supplying these things, that was all.

Q. To the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. Gillock and Madeley, two of the workhouse officials, patent some article and you supply it for them to the workhouse. Did they get anything out of these profits?—No.

Q. Who got the profits?—I did.

Q. You did?—Yes.

Q. And they gave you that patent for nothing?—No, they did not. They did not think it was a success, and I took the matter over from them.

Q. You took the matter over. Then you had to pay them something?—No.

Q. How did you take the matter over?—I only paid the patent fees.

Q. When?—I cannot say what year it was.

(Mr. Grant.) Did you pay them or repay them?—I believe I paid them after the patent was on the market.

Q. That is my question. Did you pay the patent fees or repay them. That is to say, had Gillock and Madeley already paid the patent fees in order to secure the patent, and did you repay them?—No.

(Mr. Robb.) What did you do?—I paid the patent fees.

Q. Who to?—The Patent Office.

Q. Before the thing was started?—Well, after it was on the market.

Q. You told us it was not a success, and you took it over. You now say you paid the Patent Office. How many of these articles did you supply to the workhouse?—I cannot say from memory.

Q. What did you charge altogether for them?—I believe I charged 6s. 2d. each.

(Mr. Good.) Can you find from your books how many you supplied?—Oh, yes.

(Mr. Robb.) Did you supply some hundreds?—Yes, I believe so.

Q. What were they used for?—The receptacles for clothing or boots, or such like, to go underneath the bedstead.

Q. And these articles, patented by these two officials, were not a success. They were not articles of general utility, were they?—No.

Q. You never sold them to anybody else except the Poplar Board of Guardians?—Yes.

Q. Who to?—The Victoria Park Chest Hospital.

Q. How many?—I believe 130, or something like that.

Q. Anyone else?—No one else that I know of.

(Mr. Good.) You can tell us that from your books?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) You would have an account with Gillock and Madeley in your books?—No, I have no account.

Q. No account?—No.

Q. Although you paid money on their behalf?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) He did not pay money on their behalf.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) That is the sort of misleading question put to the witnesses over and over again, and they do not see the effect of the answer. He has not said he paid money on their behalf. He said he paid the patent fees to the office. These patent fees were not paid to Gillock and Madeley. They were paid on his own behalf.

(Mr. Robb.) Surely—

(Mr. Grant.) Excuse me, they were paid on his own behalf.

(The Inspector.) Did the patent become yours?—Yes.

Q. It is described as Gillock and Madeley's patent.

(Mr. Grant.) Because that is the name in which the patent was taken out.

(The Inspector.) It was registered under that patent?—Yes, I believe so.

(Mr. Grant.) Messrs. Gillock and Madeley I suppose had registered a provisional patent?—That is so.

Q. They pay about £1 for that, and you have about six months in which to test the patent.

(The Inspector.) I do not think it is a matter of the slightest importance, but as the point is raised, we may as well—

(Mr. Grant.) He paid the money on—

(The Inspector.) Will you allow me to ask the question. (To witness.) Just recall your memory. You say you paid £1 1s. to the Patent Office?—No. I believe Messrs. Gillock and Madeley paid the provisional patent.

Q. Did you pay them for that provisional patent?—No, they paid for that.

Q. And you paid the further fees?—I paid the further fees, yes.

Q. It is your patent now, Mr. Pyle?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) And you opened no account in your books with respect to that item?—No.

Q. Do you keep a ledger?—

(Mr. Grant.) Again I point out how unfair that is. You were asked whether you opened an account in your books with Gillock and Madeley, and you said no, you did not, but I presume you have entered their patent in your books as one of the transactions you have had?—Yes, where I have supplied them.

(The Inspector.) You did not pay them a royalty?—No, I did not.

(Mr. Good.) I should like to know whether the patent is in force now. How many years ago is it?—A considerable time.

Q. Would I be right in saying it was ten years ago?—Eight or ten.

(Mr. Robb.) May I ask who represents Mr. Pyle. With the exception of that patent, had Gillock and Madeley, individually or generally, any interest with you in any business concern?—No, none at all.

(Mr. Grant.) I do say that Mr. Robb having put a question like that ought to produce evidence and put it to Mr. Pyle. Either this is a fishing cross-examination or it is not. If it is a fishing cross-examination we ought to know it. If Mr. Robb has any fact which justifies any one of the insulting questions he is putting to Mr. Pyle, let him produce the fact at once and put it straight to Mr. Pyle.

(Mr. Robb.) I require at this moment nothing else to justify my cross-examination than Mr. Pyle's own figures. I venture to suggest that his method of tendering and his own figures would justify any cross-examination however severe, and I will not be dictated to by Mr. Grant. (Applause in Court.)

(Mr. Grant.) That has happened several times. (To the Inspector.) I am going to ask you whether you are going

to preside over your own Inquiry and are going to keep order in your own Court.

(*The Inspector.*) I must say I am extremely obliged to the gentlemen who attend this Inquiry for the order which they have kept latterly. I am very much disappointed at this outburst because it is the first for some days.

(*Mr. Grant.*) May I say in answer to that, that that is due to the fact that when I saw how this Inquiry was being conducted I requested the guardians to put officers in this room to keep order.

(*The Inspector.*) Have you any questions to ask Mr. Pyle?

(*Mr. Grant.*) I must put this to you. Mr. Robb has now said that his cross-examination is based entirely upon the sheets which have been supplied to him by Mr. Oxley.

(*The Inspector.*) He said the facts disclosed justified his cross-examination.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Then he has charged Mr. Pyle, by his cross-examination, with obtaining secret information from the guardians' officials, he has charged Mr. Pyle with having relations with Mr. Madeley, which are not justified by his business relations, he has charged Mr. Pyle with receiving drink from Mr. Madeley, he has charged Mr. Pyle with having business relations with officers of the guardians which would have been improper in his position as a contractor, and he has made other charges which I cannot remember for the moment.

(*Mr. Robb.*) All of which I understand Mr. Grant undertakes to defend in place of Mr. Pyle's own solicitor.

(*Mr. Grant.*) We won't trouble who is defending him. The best man is defending him I hope. Now I say this, if Mr. Robb has a tittle of evidence justifying all the charges made against Mr. Pyle I challenge him to produce it now before this Inquiry goes on, and let us make the answer to his charges on the same day he makes the charges. I challenge him to do it.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Of course, this indignation is simulated for a purpose.

(*The Inspector.*) Do not say anything of the kind.

(*Mr. Robb.*) That any reasonable being, even Mr. Corrie Grant, can feel indignation at the searching questions to a person responsible for that tender, I cannot conceive. I say again that a man who has put in such a tender as that, who has tendered on that system, ought not to be surprised at whatever question is put to him, and at whatever explanation is asked of

him when he comes into the box. And I suppose Mr. Grant can find no other refuge from the damning facts of this tender than this simulated indignation which he cannot in his heart feel.

(*Mr. Good.*) Now after that outburst from Mr. Robb, perhaps I can get on, but before I deal with this question, let me say these are certainly flourished to my client without him having an opportunity of consulting me or instructing me upon the various matters. Only at the last moment at my request did he get the list which he has now before him. In fairness to Mr. Pyle I ask that I might have a short time to consider the form of my questions to Mr. Pyle to elucidate these matters, and my instructions are they can be elucidated.

(*The Inspector.*) How long do you want?

(*Mr. Good.*) I should like until to-morrow morning. If you have any other witness—

(*The Inspector.*) Yes, I have.

(*Mr. Good.*) I recollect, sir, that I shall be engaged in another Court to-morrow. I should like to ask whether it could stand over until Wednesday morning.

(*The Inspector.*) You may take the chance of Wednesday afternoon.

(*Mr. Good.*) If you please, sir. Then I may deal with this witness on Wednesday afternoon?

(*The Inspector.*) Yes, if you like to chance it.

(*Mr. Good.*) On Thursday morning, if it goes over, of course?

(*The Inspector.*) Do you want a copy of these documents?

(*Mr. Good.*) Oh, yes, I want a copy of those.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I have ordered a dozen copies in the City already. We will supply Mr. Good.

(*Mr. Good.*) So many charges seem to be in the air at the present moment.

(*The Inspector.*) Oh, no, they are not in the air. Of course, if you ask for an adjournment I give it to you.

(*Mr. Good.*) If you please. Then may I say Wednesday afternoon.

(*The Inspector.*) Yes.

(*Mr. Good.*) I may make it clear. Mr. Robb has finished with this contractor?

(*The Inspector.*) This is not a Court of Law but an Inquiry, and I allow a good deal of latitude.

Mr. Pyle.

9 July.

Mr. F. J. PERCIVAL, Contractor; sworn and examined.

(*The Inspector.*) You are a contractor for provisions?—Yes.

Q. And you contract for Poplar Union and some others?—Yes.

Q. Can you say what others?—They are so many I cannot tell you.

Q. Have you had the Poplar contract a good length of time?—Yes, sir, a good many years I should say without reference to my books, which I have not got with me, as I came straight from Holborn.

Q. Never mind, Mr. Percival, it is comparatively a small point. Now with reference to the margarine contract. I believe you had to supply Van den Berg's brand, three crowns?—Double crown.

Q. In Poplar and some other place?—Yes.

Q. Is that a proprietary article?—No, I should not call Van den Berg's. It is one of his brands.

Q. It is a known brand?—It is a well-known brand.

Q. And in the same year?—Double crown, I take it, would be the standard.

Q. Now I understand you deliver that brand to Poplar for 72s. a cwt.?—Yes, I believe so, speaking from memory. I have not the tender with me.

Q. And you deliver it at a very much less price to a good many other institutions, such, for instance, as Bethnal Green at 57s.?—I don't serve Bethnal Green with margarine.

Q. We will take West Ham, 59s.?—I don't think that is right, sir. I have not my books with me, but I don't think it is right. I take it the chairman is speaking of the present contract?

(*Mr. Oxley.*) Yes?—I cannot say.

(*Mr. Heber Hart.*) (*representing Mr. Percival.*) This gentleman had no intimation to bring his books.

(*The Inspector.*) No, we shall get the point in a moment. We have got that margarine is supplied at considerably lower prices to several unions.

(*Mr. Hart.*) I do not know whether you would like him to have his books. He only had a general subpoena to attend here.

(*The Inspector.*) I will take anything you like to send me about the prices.

(*Mr. Hart.*) What I mean is it is rather difficult to tell the prices offhand.

(*The Inspector.*) Can you tell us as to the difference in the mode of delivery. Some deliver in bulk?—Yes.

Q. And some in 2 lb. rolls?—Poplar has 2 lb. rolls and quarter-pound pats for the out-relief. I don't believe any other board of guardians do it.

Q. How much would that add to the cost?—The difference recognised in the trade for putting it into 2 lb. rolls, butter or margarine, is about 4s., and in quarter-pound pats so much more—about 6s.

Q. There is a slight waste and a good deal of labour?—Yes, and also moisture extracted.

Q. Only 4s. difference?—Yes, if the contract is taken at the same period and at the same time.

Q. I think you will find 4s. does not cover the difference in cost at Poplar?—I do not know to which you allude. You say there is a difference in the period.

Mr. Percival.

9 July.

Mr. Percival.

9 July.

Q. Take the Metropolitan Asylums Board. The current contract price is 62s. 6d., and the current London County Council contract price is 61s. 11d., while Poplar is 72s. ?—I cannot say. That is considerably more than 4s., but there is a difference in the period of the contracts, a difference in the date upon which the contracts were taken. When I am dealing with any contract for any particular union I deal with that contract on its own merits.

Q. Was their tender for margarine advertised for or were you asked to give an estimate?—At Poplar?

Q. At Poplar?—There was a contract under the old system for butter and an alternative tender for margarine, so far as my memory serves me.

Q. You had the old butter tender?—Yes.

Q. The butter tender was 10s. or 12s. a cwt. more delivered in Poplar than that as delivered in some other institutions?—What union would that be?

Q. Bethnal Green contract was 115s. per cwt.—butter, Wright's Taunton, three churn brand; and the description in Poplar is best butter, three churn brand, Wright & Co., 24 boxes, 2 lb. rolls, and the price 125s. ?—Yes.

Q. Making a difference of some 11s. ?—Yes. The tenders fell on different days and in different surroundings. Poplar was for the winter, Bethnal Green only the summer months.

Q. What do you mean by different surroundings?—When you are dealing with a contract you have got your mind on that particular one thing. We are filling in hundreds of contracts a day during these periods. You bend your mind upon that particular one thing and take the vagaries of the market.

Q. You see the point is that it has been alleged the guardians have been extravagant?—They have taken a step in the right direction in having margarine mixture instead of butter.

Q. But still it is said that with more care they could have got their margarine for less?—Perhaps they pay more for some of their other things. We are obliged to vary the price in various places.

Q. You know the system of contracting here, don't you?—No, I do not.

Q. Do not you contract for the provisions?—I put in a tender for the provisions, yes.

Q. Is it not a fact contractors have put in some articles extremely low and some articles proportionately higher so as to bring their total tender down?—My prices are not put in that way. I do not know what system other contractors have.

Q. Is not that rather a general system?—I don't think so. I think it is rather foolish.

Q. You might get shot for one particular item?—I should not care about risking it myself. The guardians reserve the right to accept—the whole or part.

Q. If you knew not much of an article would be required you might be tempted to put in a lower price?—Supposing there was a small item you would not spend very much over it, whether you put in 8d. or 8½d. or 10d. or 10½d. It would be a smallish item. I should not believe in putting in a 1s. article at 2d.

Q. No, but it is within your knowledge that it is done?—I should not like to do it. I have had too many years experience.

Q. Do you believe any man's judgment would enable him to do that?—In what way do you mean.

Q. Judgment as to whether the estimated quantity would be ordered or not?—So far as I am concerned, I have never gone into the question whether the estimated quantities in the tender compared with the actual amount taken or not. I fill in the tenders and I give instructions for them to be carried out.

Q. In your business March would be the wrong time to contract for dairy goods and such things, would it not?—It seems to me the principal one.

Q. It is more risky, that time than any other?—Not necessarily. You see changes in the market for provisions occur from day to day.

Q. Of course, all contracts are a matter of judgment?—Judgment, speculation and experience.

Q. You don't believe in putting in articles at fancy prices to lower the total amount?—Ridiculous, I think, sir.

Q. It would always be ridiculous?—They are always in evidence.

Q. Because of the risk he would run with the board of guardians?—And also his reputation.

Q. Well, that would be quite another question?—It would be a risk if he put in at 2d. and it was worth 6s.

Q. It gives the guardians an opportunity of replenishing their stock with cheap articles?—Yes.

Q. You supply best English cheddar to Poplar at 8½d. per lb., Bethnal Green 7½d. per lb., and Lambeth 7½d. per lb.?—Yes.

Q. Does that mean because Poplar is a 12 months' contract and the others six months?—Partly it would be. I should not be thinking of Bethnal Green or Lambeth when I was thinking of Poplar, or of Poplar when I was thinking of Bethnal Green or Lambeth. I should deal with each particular place on the merits of the case. It is according to whether I had been fairly successful, and I was full up, and I had got a lot of my stock—

Q. You have contracted for some years with Poplar?—Yes, a good many years.

Q. Without a break?—I cannot say that.

Q. It occurs to me in this way. If I were a contractor and always contracted I should think I gave the guardians satisfaction, and I think I might charge them a bit more?—I don't know. I don't think they throw very much away as far as I have been able to understand.

Q. I won't ask your opinion of the whole system of contracting?—I don't think it would be of very much use to you.

(Mr. Robb.) With regard to your 72s. Van den Berg double crown?—Yes?

Q. Have you ever obtained so high a price in any other institution?—So far as I am aware Poplar stands out by itself in the respect that it asks for margarine to be done up in a different way. It is also at a different period from some of the others.

Q. And when they are going to split this up in ounce or half-ounce pats they might as well have it in bulk as in 2 lbs.?—It is for the guardians to say as to whether they want the manufacturer to do the labour or whether they will do it themselves.

Q. I was really asking for your opinion. Can you as a matter of experience, conceive any good reason why margarine in bulk should not be equally as convenient for splitting up into ounce or half-ounce pats as 2 lb. packages?—Quite as convenient, I should say.

Q. So really considerable sums have been thrown away. Of course, it is not a matter that concerns you, but that is the inference?—I should hardly call it throwing it away, because I believe they have saved the labour.

Q. That would save the price?—Yes. I have not worked it out as to whether the one would counteract the other.

Q. You get a little more in Poplar than elsewhere?—Not that I know of. I have not a list of my prices.

Q. You were saying Poplar stood out by itself?—

(The Inspector.) So far as having it in boxes was concerned.

(Mr. Robb.) But that does not account for all?—When I say it stands out by itself, it is with regard to the margarine. You asked with regard to the prices. I say it stands out by itself because it has to be done up in these small parcels.

Q. Yes, but surely that would not account for the whole of the disparity. I think you told the Inspector you were not actually supplying Bethnal Green?—No.

Q. I think you tendered in March last?—I cannot say.

Q. And I think your tender price was 57s. ?—I cannot tell you.

Q. There is no doubt you have put in tenders as low as 57s. for this particular brand?—I cannot say. It is no use my saying when I put in hundreds of contracts in March, as to what I put in any particular instance.

Q. What is the lowest price you quoted for this particular brand in any union?—According to this (document handed to witness) I have quoted 74s. for Bethnal Green, but this is a different article.

Q. Are you able to say you did not tender for 57s. to Bethnal Green?—I cannot say at all. By the paper just put before me it looks like 74s.

Q. At all events the price does vary from 57s. in some places?—Not that I know of.

Q. What is the lowest figure?—I cannot say.

Q. You know Poplar is the highest?—In the case I quoted Bethnal Green at 74s.

Q. But surely that is not the same article?—

(Mr. Oxley.) You see it is Le Dansk.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, that is not the same thing. Can you tell me of any public institution that pays 72s. or more?—I cannot call any to mind without referring to my books.

Q. Well whether the price at Bethnal Green is as low as 57s. or not; do you supply the London County Council at 61s. 11d?—Yes.

Q. That is a difference of 10s. 1d.?—Yes.

Q. Do you suggest it costs 10s. 1d. per cwt. to make up these 2 lb. packages?—No, I don't.

Q. I suggest to you that in the trade you can have packages of various weights for 2s. per cwt. extra?—My idea is 4s.

Q. How would the other 6s. be expended?—It is a matter for me as to what I like to quote. Different institutions had different dates and different periods.

Q. I am not complaining of you. Get as much as you can, but it is a fact that the Poplar Guardians are apparently paying 6s. per cwt. more than is allowed for packing for any other public institution?—Yes.

Q. And so I revert to my original suggestion that you had a little more in Poplar?—Poplar has a different period. It takes the winter.

Q. Are there any other differences in Poplar?—Not that I know of.

Q. You are the special agent, are you not, for this particular Van den Berg?—Not that I know of. I did not know I was.

Q. You are not?—No.

Q. I think at Poplar only one brand is specified?—If you say so, I suppose it is so.

Q. This year, at all events, only one brand is specified?—Yes.

Q. Of course, it practically means no competition?—I should think there is competition. It is a general contract.

Q. In effect that is what it amounts to?—You mean there is no competition for Van den Berg or cheesemongery?

Q. There is no competitive brand specified?—You mean so far as Van den Berg is concerned there is no competitive brand. There is a competitive brand so far as cheesemongery is concerned. They can all compete for it.

Q. I suggest to you you are specially privileged for Van den Berg?—I see. I thought you said I am Van den Berg. I wish I was.

Q. I dare say you do. I suggest you have privileges others do not enjoy. You are a very large customer for one thing?—I do not know anything about his other customers, or what his privileges are to other makers.

Q. It is the custom, is it not, in some unions to specify two or three brands?—Oh, yes.

Q. I mean when you see only one brand specified as in Poplar, it is rather an inducement naturally to put a little on the price?—I don't know that it is.

Q. Apparently it has had that effect?—I don't think so.

Q. Surely you cannot name any other institution paying as high a price or higher than Poplar?—I do not carry in my mind the prices other institutions are paying.

Q. Would you like to put in a return?—I do not know whether I should be able to get official information as to what other unions charge.

Q. As far as I am concerned, if you will write the Inspector a letter setting out the prices I should be quite happy to accept it?—The prices other unions pay?

Q. Yes?—It seems the Inspector has already got the prices of other unions. I do not know whether I should be able to obtain them.

Q. Surely you have got information?—What I have got do you mean, or other people?

Q. What you have got?—Of course, I have got information as to what my own contracts are.

Q. It is not a question, if you will permit me to say so, which affects you, but rather whether the guardians have made the best bargain they might. You are entitled, as a trader, to make the best bargain you can. I suggest to you, at all events, that you are supplying two or three public institutions at 10s. per cwt. cheaper, which you explain is on the score of different packing?—And different periods.

Q. You say most of the contracts are March contracts?—We do not know from one day to another what we are going to do.

Q. Most are March contracts?—Yes.

Q. And I suggest you have tendered to some institutions—I suggest Bethnal Green, I may be wrong—as low as 57s. for the same article?—I think you are under a misapprehension.

Q. Well, you can give the Inspector the information. As a matter of convenience will you send a statement showing the prices?—The prices I sent in?

Q. Yes?—I will send those accepted. We keep the accepted but would not keep all the rejected prices.

Q. But these are all 12 months' contracts?—No.

Q. What is your contract—half-year?—No, 12 months.

Q. Is not that more favourable to a lower price?—I should not think so.

Q. When you are dealing with the whole year, cannot you tender a little closer?—It is very difficult to know what is going to happen next week let alone 12 months in advance. It is pure speculation.

Q. The season does not affect margarine?—Of course it does. It would if it was in this room at the present time. It is hot enough.

Q. At all events you cannot name any other public institution paying a similar or a higher price than Poplar?—I cannot say I can.

(Mr. Hart.) I understand you have been supplying the Poplar Guardians for the last 10 or 12 years?—I should say it is quite as long as that.

Q. You were first asked to supply margarine in March of this year?—Yes.

Q. Until that time you never supplied any in Poplar?—No, never.

Q. Do you know any of the guardians?—No.

Q. Have you ever had any relations with any of them other than strictly business relations?—I don't know any of them.

Q. Never seen them?—No.

Q. Your relations with this matter would be confined to sending in your tender and supplying the goods?—That is so.

Q. Would there be any reason so far as you are aware why the Poplar Guardians should favour you?—Not the slightest except it be that they were satisfied with my supplies.

Q. Had Mr. Madeley, who I understand was the late master, any reason why he should favour you?—No.

Q. When you were applying your mind in March of this year to the tender with regard to margarine, was there anything to influence you except ordinary business processes to your own interest?—Not the slightest.

Q. Had you any reason whatever for quoting a higher figure to the Poplar Guardians than, in precisely similar circumstances, you would have quoted to other people?—Not the slightest, in precisely similar circumstances.

Q. If there be, as seems to be the case, a difference in the figures quoted to them and those quoted to other people, you say that would be explained by circumstances of a business character appealing to your mind as a business man?—Yes.

Q. Now in these circumstances you say one feature was the method in which they wanted the stuff supplied?—Yes.

Q. And another circumstance was that the contract was to be for the whole year instead of six months?—Yes.

Q. The Metropolitan Asylums Board was mentioned and you appear to have quoted a different figure to them

Mr. Percival.

9 July.

Mr. Percival. at some other time. Would the figure you quoted to the Metropolitan Asylums Board be largely influenced by your knowledge as to the quantity that board would take?—Yes.

9 July.

Q. And it is the fact that you knew the Metropolitan Asylums Board would be certain to take a great quantity: that was one of the elements to make your tender lower in their case?—It would be, of course.

Q. As regards the Poplar Guardians, were there any data before your mind to guide you as to the amount they would be likely to require?—It would be very uncertain. They would not guarantee any quantity.

Q. There was nothing to guide your mind?—I did not know whether they would have margarine or butter.

Q. Would that be another element to tend to make your quotation to them higher than to the Metropolitan Asylums Board?—Yes.

Q. Something has been said about privileges with regard to this brand of margarine. Whatever be the case as to that, I suppose you would be treated by the margarine people on the footing of a merchant and not a cheesemonger?—Yes.

Q. And that might account for some difference, in the terms upon which you could get the stuff, from the ordinary retail provision merchant?—Most probably.

Q. As to the butter. Is that a case where the contract with Poplar was for one year?—Yes.

Q. And cheese, too, I think?—Yes.

Q. And is it a fact that where you have to speculate upon the winter months—the months from September to March—as early as the preceding March, does that render it necessary for you to be very careful in the figure you quote?—Most decidedly.

Q. And would you say that was one element which caused the price to Poplar to be high if it was high?—Yes.

Q. Would a similar remark apply to cheese?—Well, the cheese market is an uncertain element. Since this meat scare there has been a tremendous increase in the consumption of cheese and the market has moved up. It is very uncertain.

Q. Does the same observation apply—if you have a contract for the winter months as long in advance as the previous March, it influences you and makes you very careful as to price?—Yes, the period is further away and you cannot tell what is going to happen.

Q. Although it might appear to a person who did not understand your business that a contract for the whole year would be at a less rate—that you would quote a less figure for that than six months. The opposite is the fact?—Yes, I should say so.

Q. That would be the tendency?—Yes.

Q. Now with regard to Mr. Madeley. Except when he communicated with you upon the telephone as to the supply of goods, have you ever had any knowledge of or relations with him?—None whatever.

Mr. R. H. GIBBS, Guardian; sworn and examined.

Mr. Gibbs. (The Inspector.) You are a guardian of the poor of this union?—I am.

9 July.

Q. What district?—Millwall.

Q. How long have you been a guardian?—Two and a half years.

(Mr. Robb.) I want to ask you particularly, first of all, with reference to the supply of meat. As I understand, you made a statement in regard to that to several persons?—In what way, sir?

Q. Well, is it a fact you complained about the meat which has been supplied as not being up to tender?—Yes, sir, I have.

Q. When did you complain, Mr. Gibbs?—Fifteen months ago.

Q. When was the last complaint?—That would be the time I took action. I made no complaint. I knew it would be useless.

Q. Useless to complain?—Yes.

Q. Why?—I took a certain attitude myself, which I thought would be more effective, and I think it has been.

Q. Beyond the fact that you knew he was master of the workhouse and looked after the supply of goods you knew nothing about him?—No.

Q. Well, Mr. Percival, one other question. When you came here this afternoon you did not know in the least you were going to be asked about margarine?—I had not the slightest idea.

Q. But you are happy to come here to answer any question in your power?—I gave up a very important engagement to be down here.

Q. And having, as we know, a considerable business you cannot without investigation supply the actual figures as to what you were supplying these goods to other people?—That is so.

Q. As far as you are concerned, putting it generally, you are prepared to state, and to state upon your oath, that there is nothing, and never has been, in your relations with the Poplar Guardians, except of a strictly business character, and your tenders were arrived at by your usual business methods?—That is so.

Q. With no exception whatever?—None whatever.

Q. You know of no circumstance that would induce you to quote what would be unfair to Poplar Guardians?—Not the slightest.

(The Inspector.) You are, as I understand, the agent for Van den Berg?—An agent in the respect that I buy of him. I am a customer of Van den Berg. I am not an authorised agent.

Q. You are not in an exceptional position. You see the point is this, as to the proceedings of the guardians. Taking your figures, the total is £4,436. Out of that no less than £2,838 was the price of the Van den Berg double crown. So, of course, the contract was a gift for you. But still, we are now criticising the guardians' mode of giving that tender?—I do not see it was a gift.

Q. It was a gift to Van den Berg?—Yes, but I take it Van den Berg would scarcely make any difference in the price.

Q. Would that give you any advantage in taking the contract?—None whatever. Van den Berg would not raise his prices.

Q. What I mean is this: You say it was limited to one particular brand, and if you are Van den Berg's sole agent that would give you practically?—Yes, but I am not sole agent. Any cheesemonger supplies it. I buy the very best I can of Van den Berg, and whether anyone gets better terms than me I don't know.

Q. I should mention yours is the lowest tender both this year and last?—Oh.

(The Inspector.) I may say, it has come to my knowledge that it has been said that an oath in this Court is of no effect. An oath in this Court has as much effect as an oath in any other Court, and false swearing is treated in exactly the same way.

(Mr. Hart.) On behalf of the witness recently examined, I may say the evidence given by him would have been the same had you made that statement before.

Q. What was the particular circumstance?—Do you mean the latter one or the first?

Q. Give us the first?—It would be 15 months ago.

Q. Yes, take that first?—To put it clearly, things had been going on some considerable time.

Q. Going on, how?—In the stores—the relief stores downstairs.

Q. How had things been going on?—I knew what I thought was not satisfactory by a long way, and I felt it was so bad at one time that I had to put down my foot. I called on the chief clerk, Mr. McCarthy, Mr. Diamond and Mr. Crooks. Mr. Crooks dealt with the matter very quickly. He laughed, and said he did not know anything at all about meat.

Q. What were you complaining about. The quality of the meat?—Yes. I asked Mr. Crooks to come into the stores. He simply laughed and said he did not know anything at all about meat. As I said, I do.

(The Inspector.) What is your trade?—Provision caterer.

(Mr. Robb.) You have got a restaurant?—Many—dozens.

Q. And have you had experience in supplying meat?—From my boyhood. I was a boy in Paddington refreshment rooms; before I was 20 I had the management of a club consisting of about 3,000 members. From there I went to Messrs. Spencer, Turner & Boldero.

Q. Have you been buying meat all your life?—All my life.

Q. What were you complaining of when Mr. Crooks laughed?—Well, he did not come into the stores.

Q. He did not?—No, he did not.

Q. Did you ask him to?—I did.

Q. He did not come in?—No, he passed it. He may have been busy.

Q. What was it you complained of then?—Coarse meat, low quality—very low quality indeed.

Q. Well now, the meat specified was prime English ox beef, and good English wether mutton?—Quite so.

Q. And I think the price you pay is 7d. or 8d. per lb.?—Yes.

Q. What were you being supplied with?—Defrosted meat.

Q. And what else?—Canadian, American. Of course, that was spread over a good time.

Q. What was the meat you were really being supplied with worth per pound?—Taking the average, 2s. a stone of 8 lbs. We buy it by the 14 lbs.

Q. What would that work out per pound?—Threepence taking the average. The stuff I drew the guardians' attention to I could have bought for 1s. 6d., and I offered to bet them a five pound note I could repeat the stuff in three or four hours.

Q. What do you say you were paying for it—8s.?—No, not 8s. I forget the exact price. I think it was 4s. 2d.

(Mr. O'Leary.) 4s. 3d.?—Yes, for 14 lbs. It had been going on a considerable time. I noticed many meats in the market quite as good.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you regard the present specification as satisfactory from the guardians' point of view?—No.

Q. Is it an economical way of getting the meat supplied?—Certainly not, not by a long way.

Q. What state of things does it bring about?—Anything could be supplied if you don't have a good storekeeper. If you had a competent storekeeper, a man who would not have the stuff in the stores, you would get rid of the stuff; but you have got to have the man.

Q. Did you get the man?—No, we did not. I do not know about this man. It would have been the same thing had I not brought him up to the scratch.

(The Inspector.) You cannot say that.

(Mr. Robb.) Did you see any clods and stickings supplied?—On that particular day there were clods and stickings.

Q. "Prime English ox beef, and wether mutton"—clods and stickings were supplied to that tender?—Yes.

Q. What are these clods and stickings worth?—They would be got easily at 1s. 6d.

Q. You offered to?—To repeat the same thing.

Q. Was your offer accepted?—No, I was laughed at, sat on.

Q. After that did matters go on again?—No, it was brought before the board by Mr. McCarthy. I had taken certain action; of course, I was ruled out and sat on.

Q. Why?—You will easily understand. If you have got 24 members, the majority takes it.

Q. What action did you advocate?—Well, better stock came along and I got satisfied.

Q. And then a few months ago you had to complain again?—No, I did not complain again.

Q. I thought you said—?—A few months ago you said—a few months later. No, I did not complain—only to the storekeeper.

Q. Do you know a man named Haswell?—That is the man I am talking about.

Q. Has he ever been to you and made any statement?—He has been to me on the same matter. I found some in the stores that did not satisfy me, and I fetched the butchers in and they saw the stuff. But he was a young man and did not want to get into trouble. He promised

me faithfully such a thing would not happen again, and I believe it has not, because I have been in several times and it certainly has been going on very well since.

Q. That is the present man?—Yes.

Q. Who were the butchers?—One in High Street.

Q. What is his name?—Saunders.

Q. Did he confirm your view?—Quite so.

Q. Did you report the matter?—No, I did not think it necessary.

Q. Were you asked not to report it?—No, I spoke the same as I did before.

Q. What did Comfort come to you about?—I hardly like to say. The fellow asked me not to bring him into trouble. He begged me not to report the matter, not to get him into trouble. He was a married young fellow with a family, and I took a lenient view of it and said, "On your promise it shall not happen again."

(The Inspector.) It did not happen again?—No, it did not.

(Mr. Robb.) What was wrong then?—The same condition of things as before. Low quality. Meat not up to tender.

Q. What kind of meat was it?—There was one clod and sticking, and the best part of a pony, I recollect.

Q. Do you mean a pony of meat?

(The Inspector.) A fore-quarter of beef. Use reasonable terms.

(Mr. Robb.) I am told it is a well known term.

(The Inspector.) Well, I did not know it?—The same as leg, or ribs, or shoulder.

(Mr. Robb.) You do not mean there was horse-flesh?—No, certainly not.

Q. You mean it was a particular sort of meat known technically as pony?—Not English killed.

Q. There is no doubt a quantity of foreign meat was supplied?—There was undoubtedly a very large quantity.

Q. How did you distinguish this quality?—I could tell by the feel and look. Any housewife could tell the difference.

Q. And as a matter of experience, you are satisfied that low class meat has been supplied, as against these high price contracts?—Yes.

Q. And when you have complained about it to the board, you say you have been sat on?—Undoubtedly, sir, by a section of the board I should have thought would be the very last, when I was looking at it as food for the working people.

Q. What do you say is a fair allowance for waste in cutting up meat? Suppose you are cutting up prime English joints free from bone, what is a fair allowance of waste?—To serve out in the stores, do you mean?

Q. Yes?—Nothing.

Q. When you get a joint of that description there ought to be no waste?—Most decidedly not.

Q. Do you know waste is claimed to a very large extent?—It is part of my duty to supply our stores, and we have 15 lodges varying from 50 to 100 people. We had to supply them. Five or six hundred stone of meat was cut up daily and we had no waste.

Q. Do you think it is reasonable in these stores to claim as much as five per cent. of meat as waste?—Certainly not.

Q. The out-relief distributor told us the other day—I think I am within the mark—that 5 per cent. of meat was claimed as waste?—I believe there is some allowed for waste.

Q. Who by?—The butcher, I believe; meat is sent back in its place.

Q. Oh, that is not the same thing. This allowance for waste is in the cutting up and distributing, I understand?—If you are on that point it is ridiculous.

(The Inspector.) (to Mr. Johnston.) Would you like to cross-examine the witness to-morrow?

(Mr. Johnston.) Certainly.

(The Inspector.) (to witness.) With regard to this complaint of yours. The first complaint, when Mr. Crooks said he was not a butcher, was 15 months ago?—It would be.

Mr. Gibbs.

9 July.

Mr. Gibbs.

9 July.

Q. And things bettered themselves after that?—Yes.

Q. When was your last complaint?—Not to the board at all.

Q. Have you ever inspected the meat at the work-house?—Only on one occasion.

Q. Ever had to find fault with it?—No, I cannot say I have. I went in one morning and found 40 shoulders of mutton. I asked them what they were going to do with them and they said boil them. They were what we call Dutch shoulders. To boil shoulders of that sort was most ridiculous. It was like putting a tallow candle in water.

Q. Would English wether mutton include Deptford mutton—mutton killed here?—Certainly not.

Q. What do you mean—English fed?—No.

Q. What does English wether mutton mean?—English fed mutton.

Q. I put it to you and you said no?—You said Deptford killed.

Q. Is Australian or New Zealand mutton dressed with the head on?—No.

Q. Does any sheep ever come from Australia with the head on?—Oh, yes.

Q. What : sheep?—I never bought any myself.

Q. As a rule they have got no heads?—No.

Q. Or shanks?—Yes.

Q. What do you mean, they have the shanks left on?—Oh, yes. The carcass comes complete with the heads—

Q. And shanks on?—No, no.

ELEVENTH DAY.

Tuesday, July 10th, 1906.

(The Inspector.) What were we on, Mr. Robb?

(Mr. Robb.) I have one or two further questions to put to Mr. Gibbs, who was in the box, but before we go to that there are one or two matters I want to clear up. I am anxious if possible to fall in with your views, and complete my evidence either to-day or to-morrow. Of course, in doing that I don't want to overlook any evidence I properly ought to call in support of my case. The whole matter has assumed such an aspect that it is quite possible in taking the evidence shorter one might overlook points to which attention ought to be directed. I take it if it should become imperative, and it should appear that by inadvertence some point has been overlooked, an opportunity would be given, assuming it is a proper case, to call further evidence.

(The Inspector.) Of course, I shall call any evidence I think necessary.

(Mr. Robb.) If you please. Then with regard to the returns. I take it all the returns that have been mentioned will be forthcoming, and with regard to the contracts—

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Robb has asked Mr. Lough altogether, I think, for six returns. We said we would supply two heads. As to the other four heads, I asked your direction, and you said you would consider it. And now Mr. Robb takes it for granted we are going to supply these other four.

(The Inspector.) I don't think he does. We have got no. 1 as to the electric light.

(Mr. Robb.) May I ask what are the figures for the electric light?

(The Inspector.) It is almost impossible to give them clearly.

(Mr. Robb.) I have only one remark on that, and that is that the information should comprise the efficiency of the installation worked out on 8 c.p. lamps. That is the usual way of working it out.

(Mr. Oxley.) It is units—

(Mr. Robb.) As you know, I think I have some little acquaintance with electric light works, and I think if I had Mr. Giles here I might be able to—

(The Inspector.) You had better see what returns we have.

(Mr. Robb.) I would point this out : to say so many units were consumed in a given period may be entirely misleading.

(The Inspector.) I cannot say anything about it at present.

(Mr. Robb.) You see, sir, if you assume an installation is conducted on an extravagant basis, credit may be claimed for a number of units which are out of all proportion to the number of 8 c.p. lamps installed. A lamp cannot consume more than a given amount of energy.

(The Inspector.) I think we had better reserve that question until we have seen what returns we have got.

(Mr. Grant.) You mentioned that your Engineering Inspector was going to supply a report.

(The Inspector.) He is.

(Mr. Grant.) I only want that we should have it supplied.

(Mr. Robb.) Then with the Laindon figures. We understood—

(The Inspector.) Those will be supplied.

(Mr. Robb.) I don't know what course you propose to take with regard to the contracts and tenders, whether you propose to call any further contractors?

(The Inspector.) No, I do not.

(Mr. Robb.) If you do not, I do suggest there either should be the contemporaneous inquiry I suggested to you, or Mr. Oxley should be asked to work out the whole of the tenders in the same way as Mr. Pyle's. I know it is a very large order, but I suggest it is of immense importance for this reason : if my instructions are correct, if the whole of the contracts are worked out, the actual deliveries in the same way as Mr. Pyle's, it would be proved an enormous saving might be effected. Not merely a saving of £2,000 or £3,000 a year, which has already been shown, but a very much larger saving. I am sure that will be proved, providing the whole of the contracts are taken and worked out in the same way as Mr. Pyle's.

(The Inspector.) I think yesterday Mr. Grant said he thought that ought to be done.

(Mr. Grant.) Yes, I did.

(The Inspector.) I cannot promise a statement including every minute tender, but I can promise the tenders will be carefully looked into.

(Mr. Grant.) I thought Mr. Oxley might relieve you to that extent.

(Mr. Oxley.) Cannot a selection be made at once?

(Mr. Grant.) The difficulty is when we select what we want, and the municipal alliance select what they want, you spend more time in making the selection. I think you cannot say you have made a fair test of the tenders unless you test them throughout.

(*The Inspector.*) We will test them throughout, and when we see nothing to note in one we will put that one on one side.

(*Mr. Robb.*) You appreciate that I am dealing with that in order to clear the ground and dispense with evidence. Then as to the 1904 figures. It was suggested yesterday the guardians had lost their accounts.

(*The Inspector.*) No; had lost their tenders.

(*Mr. Grant.*) We have not lost them. They have been destroyed.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Of course, that is exceedingly unfortunate.

(*The Inspector.*) That is the only year.

(*Mr. Robb.*) That is the very year we want.

(*The Inspector.*) We might take the year previous.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Yes, take 1903 instead of 1904.

(*The Inspector.*) What do we want?

(*A clerk.*) We have the whole of the unaccepted tenders.

(*The Inspector.*) So we can take the highest and lowest tenders.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I was proposing to call one or two of the contractors to show the nature and quality of certain goods supplied, but think that is sufficiently covered by Mr. Oxley's analysis. For instance, I was going to call the fishmongers to show whether the evidence of the witness Crosbie—

(*Mr. Grant.*) Is that fair?

(*Mr. Robb.*) Mr. Grant, I am not going to call him. I was proposing to say to them: "Have you supplied any articles of the nature described by the witness Crosbie?" but now the examination of the invoices will show that, and much more than that. So if Mr. Oxley will give us that information it will shorten the Inquiry to that extent. Then, sir, there is the question of officers' rations, which have increased very largely. I think we should have some information on that score. I have no doubt the new schools made a considerable difference, as there is an addition to the number of officers, but I don't think that is quite sufficient to explain the increase. In 1896 the rations of officers were £1,600, and in 1905 they were £5,477.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Will Mr. Robb give us the number of officers?

(*Mr. Robb.*) The number of officers is not given. I am taking them out, as well as I can, from the list given in the guardians' abstract.

(*The Inspector.*) The number of officers chargeable to the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund we can get. No doubt Mr. Oxley can give the other officers.

(*Mr. Robb.*) My information is that the number of officers is less than 100.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) The schools—

(*Mr. Robb.*) At all events, there is an increase in the ten years from £1,600 to £5,477.

(*The Inspector.*) If you leave that in my hands, I think I can get the information.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Then we have evidence from Mr. Comfort, the present out-relief distributor, as to the quantities, I think, of beef and bread and milk, and so forth, that he distributed in the present year. I am not sure we have the same information with regard to 1904-5, when Mr. Phillips was the out-relief distributor; and I ask you if you think it is necessary—if you think that evidence material—to call Mr. Phillips?

(*The Inspector.*) I got yesterday a letter from Mr. Phillips to this effect:—"At the Inquiry you are holding at the above offices, in the course of the evidence given by Mr. Comfort, o.r.d., a statement was made and reported in the Press which is totally without foundation, and derogatory to my character as the late distributor, the inference deducible being that either I was dishonest or else incompetent. The statement I refer to was made in reply to the question: 'There was usually a shortage of brandy, was there not?' Mr. Comfort's answer was 'Yes.' The fact is that during the five years and upwards that I was distributor, there was not a single drachm of brandy short or charged as waste. I would therefore respectfully ask that you will have the matter corrected as publicly as the untrue statement was made."

(*Mr. Grant.*) May I see that letter? I have not heard your reading of it.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Then there is only one other matter. I asked—I think it was an occasion Mr. Grant referred to when we had a conversation about these returns—I asked for more information respecting a sum of £460. I was informed it was paid by way of deposit in respect of a proposed home for consumptive paupers in the Isle of Wight. I think Mr. Lansbury stated that no deposit had in fact been paid. That may be so, but I have in my hands a minute of the guardians, dated September 10th, 1904, which says a cheque for £460, representing this deposit, was signed for Messrs. Walton and Lee. Of course, it might mean the cheque was not paid, but I cannot trace charges of this property, for completing or proceeding with.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) The real facts, Mr. Davy, are that the cheque was drawn, but I am under the impression that at the same meeting or the following meeting a resolution was passed cancelling the cheque, and it never went through at all.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Never presented?

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) Never presented, and there is a minute somewhere.

(*The Inspector.*) In what position is that matter?

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) Your Department stopped any further proceedings in the matter. They said they would not sanction it, and therefore the whole thing came to an end. But there is a minute cancelling that cheque. Mr. Robb raised it, and I intended to put it in.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Mr. Marsh can tell you exactly what happened about it.

(*Mr. Robb.*) But I think you will see that the minute which said that the cheque was absolutely signed—

(*Mr. Marsh.*) I had the matter in hand, and discussed the contract with the engineers, Walton and Lee, and we never signed the contract. We could not come to terms.

(*Mr. Robb.*) That is not quite what the minute says; but however that may be, it is clear the cheque was not paid. But I think that minute which says the cheque was actually signed was sufficient justification for the enquiry.

(*The Inspector.*) You see, what happened about that time was this: The board of guardians, impressed with the necessity of making certain provision for tuberculous cases, made a proposal, which came to nothing because the Local Government Board would not sanction it. But what is clear is that the guardians went so far as to negotiate, and were willing, at all events, to pay a deposit.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Then, of course, it is understood that without further evidence the whole of the tender forms are in, and formally in, as evidence for the purpose of this Inquiry. If it is necessary to comment upon any of them later, I do not want to be told evidence has not been called; and I take it for the purpose of the Inquiry the whole of the tender forms are in as evidence.

(*Mr. Grant.*) May we go wider than that, and say every document the guardians have is already in as evidence for anyone who wants to look at them.

(*Mr. Robb.*) An understanding being arrived at on these points, it will shorten my labours a very great deal, and I feel confident of finishing either to-day or early to-morrow.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Before we go on, I have had the minutes looked up, and I find on October 5th, 1904, page 269—Mr. Robb will follow this; he has the minutes, I know—four lines from the bottom of the page, is this statement:—"Your committee recommend cheque No. 1172, £460, drawn for Messrs. Walton and Lee in respect of the Sandown property, be cancelled." That clears it up.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Really you should not say that. If I had seen the minute I should not have raised the point.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I am very sorry. I asked whether Mr. Robb had had the minutes for the last three years, and I was told distinctly he had.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I have no recollection of it.

(*Mr. Grant.*) The clerk tells me that Mr. Robb did not have the minutes for 1904, but he had them for 1905.

MR. R. H. GIBBS; recalled, and further examined.

Mr. Gibbs.
10 July.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Gibbs, I want to ask you one or two further questions. Were you present when the tenders for the current year were dealt with by the board?—I think I was.

Q. And you were present at the meeting for the same purpose last year?—Yes, sir.

Q. Present on both occasions?—Yes.

Q. Are you able to tell us what were the reasons which actuated the guardians in some cases in accepting the highest tenders instead of the lowest—or, rather, the higher tenders instead of the lower?—No, I don't think I can, beyond that they were well-known tradesmen.

Q. Was any reason forthcoming?—No. I may say that remarks were passed that they did not pay trade union rate of wages, or that they did not have healthy conditions to work under, or that he was "no class," and that sort of thing. Those kind of remarks were passed.

Q. Were the tenders considered on their merits?—I should say no.

Q. Were they fully considered and gone into at the time of the meeting?—I should say not.

Q. Did it seem to you that any understanding had been arrived at before the meeting?—I can hardly answer that question, sir.

Q. Well, was the whole thing thrashed out and sufficient information obtained at the meeting?—I should say not—not properly discussed.

Q. In your view they were not dealt with on their merits?—I should say no.

Q. For instance, what reason was assigned for giving the contract for beer to Whitbread, when their price was more than £100 in excess of Thorne Brothers and other well-known firms?—Quality.

Q. Any other reason?—I should have been rather in favour of that myself, although I did not vote that way.

Q. Any other reason given for the acceptance of that tender?—No, sir.

Q. Now take the case of Whitlock, the milk contractor. His price was 9d. ?—Yes.

Q. There were other prices. The Museum Dairy Company's was 8½d. a gallon for milk?—Yes.

Q. Why was Whitlock's tender, the higher price, accepted?—I cannot say why. If I was a larger buyer myself it would have been a very keen cut for the Museum Dairy Company, and I should have preferred to give it to Whitlock and get quality.

Q. You knew Whitlock's contract had previously been cancelled?—No, I did not. I have learnt since.

Q. You heard it in the course of this Inquiry?—Yes. I do not know anything about the firm in connection with here. I may say I must have paid Whitlock some hundreds of pounds eight or nine or ten years ago.

Q. If you had known Whitlock's contract had been cancelled because his milk was deficient in some respect, do you think you would have voted for the acceptance of this tender at a half-penny over other well-known firms?—Certainly not. There is nothing between Whitlock and me. I turned him out of my place through an incident. There is nothing between he and I.

Q. Have you ever been approached by any contractor for information or for any other purpose?—No, sir; they seem afraid to come to me in my position. Afraid I should round on them, I expect.

Q. Now I want to ask you about something you know as a caterer. Do you know what is done with the dripping in the workhouse?—I have heard, but I don't think I can repeat it. It is not used.

Q. Not used in the workhouse?—Not in the proper way. It ought to be put to a lot more use.

Q. Looking at the quality of the meat, I suppose it is good beef dripping?—It would be.

Q. What would it be worth a pound to sell?—2s., wholesale.

Q. Per pound?—2s. a stone of eight pounds, wholesale.

Q. About 3d. a pound?—Yes.

Q. That is the wholesale price?—Yes.

Q. What you would have to give?—Yes.

Q. Is it a fact it is sold to a rag and bone man named Griffiths for 2d. per pound?—I don't know, but I have heard so.

Q. Surely as a guardian you could find out a thing of that kind?—I have heard so. I cannot say as a fact.

Q. Who is Griffiths?—In High Street, nearly opposite the workhouse gates.

Q. What is his business?—A general dealer, sir. I criticised it because I noticed the Schools buy dripping.

Q. Do you know what the Schools give for the dripping they buy?—No. I had thought of going into the matter myself, but I happened to have been so terribly busy.

Q. It would be rather interesting to know what the dripping is sold for?—It would.

Q. Perhaps Mr. Gibbs, as a guardian, you would make it your duty to enquire?—I had intended to do so, but I have been so terribly busy lately.

Q. Mr. Oxley has shown us that with regard to the clothing, and so on, contracts of Cartwright & Co. were accepted, although they exceeded a lower tender by nearly £800?—That is so. I fought it myself.

Q. You fought it?—I wanted to know the reasons why, and I called the master in and asked for information about Watts.

Q. Was Watts the other tenderer?—Yes.

Q. A lower tenderer?—The only two.

Q. Cartwright and Watts?—Yes.

Q. And you called in the master and asked for information about Watts?—Yes.

What information did you get?—That Watt's had supplied the union previously—I understood for two or three years in succession.

Q. Yes?—And had given every satisfaction.

Q. Watts had given every satisfaction?—That is the information I gained.

Q. Who told you?—Mr. Madeley. That is how I understood the answer I got.

Q. Notwithstanding that Watts had given every satisfaction the tenders of Cartwright & Co., which were in excess by nearly £800, were accepted?—That is so. I called for the names, but I did not get them.

Q. You mean on the voting?—I do, but I did not get them. There was no chance of getting them either.

Q. Do you know where Cartwright carries on business?—No, I do not, nor Watts. What I contended was this: Our tender form expresses that firms shall pay trade union rate of wages. Moreover, if there was any dispute appertaining to that trade-contracting, the particular industry affected should be the sole arbitrator in the matter. What more do you want?

Q. That applied to Watts equally with Cartwright?—To any contractor. There is the tender form. What more is wanted?

Q. You can assure us you were quite unable to ascertain any good reason for giving Cartwright an excess of £800?—Exactly.

(Mr. Grant.) Let us settle this matter about Watts. Was there any reason given at all why Watts should not be accepted?—None that I heard. Not a good reason.

Q. Good or bad?—Not any.

Q. Was any reason given?—I don't remember anything at all beyond what I said just now, that certain firms did not pay the trade union rate. "Shoddy firm" would be an expression used. What I contend is that the contract form was sufficient to cover all that. A man did not expect the whole of his private business to be looked into.

Q. Let us keep for the moment to the point about Watts. Was there not some difficulty about Watts?—I never heard of any.

Q. Did not you hear he made an assignment for the benefit of his creditors?—Never.

Q. You have missed one of the guardians' meetings?—Probably I did. Are you aware I only came on the board a few months previous to that?

Q. When did you come on the board?—Three or four months previous.

Q. I don't know the date, Mr. Gibbs, when you did come on the board. Tell me the date?—November, 1904, I think it was.

Q. Very well, then, on February 3rd, 1906, you were on the board?—Yes.

Q. Now, this is a letter from Messrs. Beecroft, Sons, & Nicholson, valuers and accountants, giving the board notice—

(Mr. Robb.) Is that letter addressed to Mr. Gibbs?

(Mr. Grant.) I said it is a letter addressed to the board of guardians. Mr. Gibbs is a guardian. The letter is dated February 3rd of this year. It is marked, "Received Poplar Union, 6th February," and it is endorsed, "Read, board meeting, 7th February, 1906." Do you remember whether you were at that meeting?—No, I cannot.

Q. Let's turn up the minutes?—I may have got in late. I never had any knowledge whatever of it till now. Then, Mr. Grant, that would be later than the tender we are speaking of.

Q. You were asked for the tenders for 1905 and 1906?—Exactly, the tender we are speaking of is 1905.

(Mr. Robb.) I do not think Mr. Watts tendered in 1906?—I think not.

Q. I may be wrong. I don't think he tendered in 1906. I think he only tendered in 1905?—I think you are right, sir.

(Mr. Grant) (referring to a minute book.) These are the minutes of the board of guardians, Wednesday, February 7th, 1906, 6.30 p.m. Present, Gibbs, R. H.?—Probably it would be. I may have got in late.

Q. That is possible. I only call your attention to the fact. Now I am reading the letter:—"Dear Sir,—William Harry Strange Watts (trading as W. H. Watts & Co., 7, Manchester Avenue, E.C.).—I beg to enclose authority for you to pay to me any amounts due by you or accruing due to Messrs. W. H. Watts & Co., of 7, Manchester Avenue, E.C., and I shall be glad if you will kindly note same in your books and forward cheque in due course.—Yours faithfully Wm. NICHOLSON."—You understand what that meant?—It is the first knowledge I have of it.

Q. I did not ask you that. You understand the letter means that Mr. Watts made an assignment for the benefit of his creditors, and Nicholson was the person appointed to collect the debts?—Yes, but you are speaking of a later date.

Q. I gave you the date, 1906?—The question of the £800 is 1905. You are dealing with one later. This incident later no one had any knowledge of. You could not possibly have had.

(Mr. Robb.) The whole point is whether Watts tendered this year.

(Mr. Grant.) That is not the point at all I am making?—The question of the £800 is last year.

Q. Will you be good enough to answer my questions, and credit me with some good reason in putting my questions. You need not argue. If you had notice that the man who has tendered for contracts had made just previous an assignment for the benefit of his creditors, you would not pay much attention to his tender?—Certainly not, but that has not happened in this case.

Q. Again you are arguing. Suppose you had a man tendering to you whom you knew from private information, from your bankers or otherwise, was in difficulties, and had had trouble about raising money, you would not pay much attention to his tender, would you?—It is all according. If the man wanted helping along I should not, because a man was down, take that to account. Why should we not give a tender? Rather help him along.

Q. I am not speaking of the guardians?—You are asking me as a private individual.

Q. As a private individual, in putting out tenders in your own business, if you knew one man was a reputable firm, high standard, always carried out contracts faithfully, and the other man was in difficulties, and was

raising money where he could to carry on his business, would you, if the tenders were anything like equal, prefer the tender of the reputable firm?—I should consider the circumstances of the case, because £800—I should think of it, whether one could be worked with the other properly.

Q. That is exactly what I expected you would say. If the board of guardians take the view that the contractors ought to pay trades union rate of wages, and imposed that term in their contracts, and if any particular firm that tendered had a reputation for sweating, do not you think they would be justified in rejecting that tender?—I should be the first to do so.

Q. Mr. Gibbs, you say you would accept the guardians' vote about trades union rate of wages?—I am a strong upholder of it.

Q. Well, I don't know that. I mean you will tell me at once if a firm notorious for sweating, for breaking their contracts about trades union rate of wages, you would not care what the price was, you would simply say throw that tender aside?—I would.

(Mr. Robb.) If there is a suggestion that Watts has carried sweating on, he ought to have an opportunity of being heard. My information is that Watts is not a person to carry on sweating?—At the time it was not mentioned, that I am positive of.

Q. Not mentioned?—Not at the time.

(Mr. Grant.) Mine was a general question. I did not make any suggestion Watts was a sweater. What I put to you was, if amongst the persons who tendered was a person who had a reputation as a sweater, who previously entered into one of these trades union contracts and did not keep to it, that when that man's tender came before the board, however low it might be, the board would not take that into consideration, compared with a good house, a reputable house. They would throw the tender on one side?—Quite so.

Q. And that is what you yourself have done?—I had no explanation of it that evening.

Q. As a general principal dealing with tenders, that would be the thing you would do. You would approve of the guardians' conduct?—I should approve of it.

Q. Now let me come to one or two of these points you have been mentioning this morning. The dripping—have you any knowledge about it, or are you speaking about it just from hearsay?—I have no knowledge, only hearsay.

Q. When you said the Schools paid for it, it is only what you heard?—I have read it in our schedules.

(The Inspector.) We always in this room suffer from the disability of a little difficulty of hearing. A great many carts go past. May I ask the witnesses if they will bear in mind that the reporters cannot hear.

(Mr. Grant.) If you tell me when you do not hear, I will do my best to speak louder. Now, about this contract. You said you have seen it in the schedule?

(Mr. Robb.) When it is suggested this Inquiry should go on, it may be very useful to put some straw or something else outside, because it is impossible to hear. I am sure the gentlemen of the Press will agree with me.

(Mr. Yeo.) They have just suggested it.

(Mr. Grant.) Then the suggestion comes from them. An intelligent appreciation of forthcoming events. Well, if gentlemen of the Press had made the suggestion earlier, I think the guardians would have taken it. I am sure Mr. Crooks will undertake to see it is carried out with promptitude and efficiency. Now may I get on about this dripping. You said you had seen it in the schedule?—I understood it was at our Schools.

Q. Do you mean one of the tender forms?—No, in the schedule. They did buy dripping.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I am sure Mr. Gibbs does not want to say what is not correct. You understand that in the requisition you have to specify for every article you require, whether you have it from yourself or whether you buy it. Dripping is in the requisitions, but it is provided by the School itself to the School. There has never been a ha'porth of dripping bought at the Schools—certainly ever since it has been in the possession of the Poplar Guardians. If you look on the left-hand column you see the word "Schools," and then dripping to the children, but dripping made from the meat cooked.

Mr. Gibbs.

30 July.

(*The Inspector.*) The children have meat, and the dripping from it is requisitioned, and consumed, by the Schools?

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) That is right. There is never a ha'porth bought. It is to show the consumption.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Perhaps Mr. Lansbury, who knows all about it, will supplement that by telling us what the workhouse dripping is sold for?

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) That I am trying to get. I will tell you any mortal thing about the Schools.

(*Mr. Grant.*) It comes to this, that whatever price was charged for the dripping it is only a matter of account. We want to clear that up. Whether we are charged 2d. or 3d. we have to pay it ourselves, and receive it. That disposes of the dripping?—There must be a tremendous lot at the house.

Q. In regard to the house. We have disposed of the Schools. Do you know what is done with the beef dripping in the house?—Some of it.

Q. What?—Making up pastries, etc., I assume.

Q. You don't know. You assume some of it is used in the house?—It could be.

Q. You are right on this point. Do you also assume that some of it is sold?—I suppose so.

Q. Is some of it sold?—I don't know. It could not be possible to use so large a quantity in the house.

Q. Why?—So much meat is used.

Q. The meat comes in to supply the inmates, and the meat produces a certain amount of dripping. The inmates consume the meat, why should they not consume the dripping?—So they ought to.

Q. Your position is this, that you don't know anything about it. You only assume that so much dripping was produced and that some of it was sold?—Undoubtedly from the quantity made.

Q. You assume that some was sold, and sold to Griffiths outside?—I have heard so.

Q. And you have heard that Griffiths paid 2d. a lb. for it?—No, I don't say so.

Q. You were asked about the value of good beef dripping, and you said it was worth 2s. a stone. You were asked if any were sold to Griffiths, and at 2d. per lb. He is a dealer outside the workhouse?—You said have I heard. It is not what I said.

Q. You have heard that it was sold to Griffiths at 2d. per lb.?—Yes, I have heard so.

Q. Who did you hear it from?—A tradesman in the neighbourhood.

Q. Who is he?—He keeps a fried fish shop, and he said that if any were sold he could do with a cwt. He consumes a great amount.

Q. What is his name?—Selby. He keeps a little fish shop near, and he was very cross because he could not have some of the dripping at the same price.

Q. And Mr. Selby had heard that Mr. Griffiths, a neighbouring tradesman, was buying the workhouse dripping at 2d. per lb., and he wanted to be in it?—A vast quantity.

Q. And Selby himself told you this?—He did.

Q. When was that?—Quite recently.

Q. How long ago?—A couple of months.

Q. Have you made any enquiry about it since?—I have not. It was one of the matters I intended doing.

Q. Well, then, let me ask you have you ever been approached by any contractor. Let me put it more widely: have you ever been approached by anyone to give information about the guardians' affairs?—Probably I have.

Q. Was it very long ago?—Yes.

Q. How long ago?—A long time ago. Within three or four years or since I became a member of the board.

Q. You were approached before and since you were a member of the board?—Yes.

Q. Let us take the cases first of all where you were approached before you became a member of the board?—It was years previous. When I went into other matters.

Q. Just tell me what those matters were?—With regard to what questions?

Q. You must trust me. I think Mr. Davy will allow me to go on.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I object to matters being gone into which do not arise out of either the examination or the cross-examination. What happened to the witness after he became a Poplar Guardian I have not the slightest objection to being gone into, but what happened to him before he became a guardian cannot have any relation to this Inquiry. If we are to go into these things the Inquiry will be interminable.

(*Mr. Grant.*) This is the first serious cross-examination I have conducted except in one case.

(*The Inspector.*) He was not a member of the board of guardians at the time.

(*Mr. Grant.*) The man was approached, so he says, and apparently it was put to him that it was worth while being a guardian. (*To witness.*) Just tell us now who these people were who approached you before you became a guardian?—I don't know.

Q. I am afraid you will have to tell me, because everything is coming out at this Inquiry?—It was on a general matter.

Q. What was the first time that you had a suspicion that you were being approached?—It was some nine or ten years when I was at Rotherhithe; when I ran for the vestry at Rotherhithe.

Q. There was some reason for that?—Probably.

Q. Who was it approached you?—A man named Hudson.

Q. What did he say or do?—If such and such a thing came off.

Q. As you being elected?—Yes. It was worth my while to pull in with others with whom I was associated, and endeavour to get him the contract.

Q. To stand in and try to get Hudson the contract?—Yes.

Q. Did he suggest how it was to be worth your while?—A hundred or two pounds.

Q. And where did this take place, Mr. Gibbs?—At Rotherhithe.

Q. Where in Rotherhithe?—In Plough Road.

Q. Plough Road?—Yes.

Q. It was an interview in the open road?—I was living there about 20 years.

Q. He came to your house?—He served me.

Q. He was a tradesman?—He was one of my tradesmen.

Q. What did he serve you with?—Milk.

Q. Now see how Mr. Hudson came to think of you. Here is a customer of mine with whom I am on very good terms. He is trying to get on the vestry, and if he gets there he may be able to get me the contract, and he said, "If you get me the contract it is worth £100 or £200 to you." Is that all that took place between you and Mr. Hudson?—Yes.

Q. It was all?—Yes.

Q. And you, I suppose—I judge from what I see of you in the box—you are a man of experience; you held your tongue?—I did at that time. I simply laughed at him.

Q. You did not take Mr. Hudson by the back of his neck and kick him down the street?—No.

Q. When was the next time you were approached?—I have not been approached since.

Q. Until you got on to the Poplar Board of Guardians?—(*No answer.*)

Q. Now, you told us you were approached both before and after you became a member of the Board. You have given us the one case before you became a Guardian. Then I take it you left Rotherhithe and came to live over here. When?—Eight or nine years ago.

Q. What year did you come to live in Poplar?—1894 or 1895, I think it was.

Q. In 1902 were you thinking of running for a seat on the guardian board?—No.

Q. You did run for the seat?—No.

Q. How did you get elected then?—They invited me to stand, and I was unanimously elected.

Q. At any rate you became a member?—They asked me to join the board and I was elected without opposition.

Q. It was an honour which some of us are anxious to obtain?—I don't think it is much of an honour now.

Q. When was it you were first elected a member of the board?—In the autumn of 1904.

Q. Two years ago?—Yes.

Q. Since you got on you were approached by somebody. Who was it who approached you?—Not after.

(Mr. Robb.) What Mr. Gibbs said was, they were afraid to approach him; he was the wrong sort.

(Mr. Grant.) That is not an answer to you. I think I asked you, Mr. Gibbs, and my impression is that you told me that you had been approached by some people both before and after you became a member of the Poplar Board?—I said they were afraid to approach a man like me.

(Mr. Turner.) The reply was—he was approached before he was a guardian and after.

(Mr. Grant.) That is an incorrect answer to my question. Perhaps I misled you in my question. You have not been approached by anyone since you became a guardian?—Certainly not, by anyone. They would be afraid to come to me, because I think they know my reputation.

Q. No doubt. No doubt Mr. Hudson told you that after you got into the vestry, and did not give him the contract, you did not behave as a friend to him. Now, we have got all the facts of that interview in the *Evening Standard*. Was that the interview to which you were referring?—Yes.

Q. You know the *Evening Standard* interviewed you, and you said something about being bribed?—That was misconstrued.

Q. Newspapers often do that. We all bear it like angels. It comes to all of us in turn. Now, except in this one case at Rotherhithe, where you were approached with regard to a contract, have you ever in any way been approached in anything of the kind in the Poplar Union?—No.

Q. Nothing at all?—No.

Q. The case you have given us is the case that occurred at Rotherhithe?—Yes.

Q. It looked a little fishy, did it not, when you found tradesmen supplying milk at the door were willing to pay £100 to get a contract?—Yes.

Q. You have been a guardian for some years, and I suppose people talk in Poplar more than they do, or as much as they do, anywhere else?—Just a little more.

Q. The men or the women?—Both.

Q. But the women are not worse than the men?—Oh, no.

Q. You see, I am defending the ladies' character. Do you suggest that the children talked in Poplar about things?—Both men and women did their share in Poplar.

Q. I think I have succeeded in defending the ladies' character. Then with regard to the character of the guardians, the character of the officials, and the character of the contractors: you have heard no suggestion made against these three classes?—Only gossip.

Q. Yes?—I have heard things in gossip.

Q. What did you hear?—Many things.

Q. What?—For instance, when I joined the board of guardians a man met me in the High Street and told me that I was going to make £300 a year. Others said, "You have a job worth £300 a year." That is gossip, and I have not heard it once, but many times.

Q. Do you know, Mr. Gibbs, a man came to me in the lobby of the House of Commons last night, and asked me whether I was got up as a Christy minstrel because I was wearing a white hat. Do you think that was serious, or friendly chaff?—Serious, very serious.

Q. I treated it differently. Now, when your friend said to you in Poplar High Street that you had found a job worth £300 a year, did you treat it seriously or as chaff?—More as chaff, because I knew where it came from.

Q. Who was it?—One of our dock men. He clapped me on the back and said, "Now you have got a job worth £300 a year. You are landed for life." That is gossip.

Q. There is a very prevalent impression that Members of Parliament are paid for serving on Committees. Did you know that?—No.

Q. I was constantly told that I was serving on Committees and getting quite a lot of money out of it. Don't you think that was said in the same way as you were getting £300, and that your friend was talking chaff?—Yes.

Q. Like the Christy Minstrels. Have you heard any serious statement that there is anything which ought not to be with regard to the Poplar Guardians, their officials, or their contractors?—Anything serious? In my business capacity I get about from shop to shop and hear things. Very serious indeed. You would hardly believe some of them.

Q. Serious: What do you mean?—They believe we are all making a lot of money.

Q. Mr. Gibbs, this is not peculiar to Poplar, is it?—I should say it refers to all London just as much.

Q. You always do find people who believe no one is in public life except for his own benefit?—Yes, and a large class of people.

Q. And that class of men either can't get into public life themselves. No one pretends that there is no corruption in public life, but we all hope there is not very much. But as far as your experience goes, Mr. Gibbs, and you have been a guardian for three years, have you ever seen anything which suggests to you that there is any corruption on the Poplar Board of Guardians?—No, I have not.

Q. Only one other point. You have told me that when the guardians are accepting tradesmen they take well-known tradesmen?—Yes, that would be so.

Q. And was there, did you find, a bias in the minds of the guardians in favour of local tradesmen?—Probably no.

Q. Well, Mr. Pyle is a local tradesman, and Mr. Whitlock is a local tradesman. You see the Museum Dairy Company is up west somewhere, and Mr. Whitlock is quite close by. If the milk is wrong, you would want it put right at once?—The same thing would happen with regard to the Museum Dairy Company. They would put it right in a very few minutes.

Q. The Museum Dairy Company is up in Bloomsbury?—That is their head depot, I believe.

Q. My point is this. That where you have a constant daily supply from tradesmen, it is to your advantage to pay a trifle more to local tradesmen, because you can constantly get at them, if you want to make a complaint or send things back, or want a special supply?—Certainly; I deal with them myself.

(Mr. Robb.) I should like to ask Mr. Gibbs at this moment if that is the reason why the meat is obtained from Kensington?

(Mr. Grant.) As Mr. Robb has put it, I will ask about Kensington in a moment. Let me finish with the milk.

(Mr. Robb.) That is the largest contract of all—the meat contract.

(Mr. Grant.) You see, Mr. Gibbs, I was not here when you were examined, and I was told you are in business in a large way as a caterer?—One of the largest outside companies. I have built it up all myself. I have run as many as twenty houses, and at present am running a dozen.

Q. You have had large experience, and you say that you would prefer to deal with local tradesmen?—Many I do, and milk most certainly.

Q. Even if you had to pay a trifle more?—Undoubtedly so, and the same with vegetables, barring potatoes.

Q. Now, about the meat. Mr. Robb is very anxious to know about it. The meat contractor at the time this matter was raised was Mr. Blott, of Kensington?—Yes.

Q. He had a very first-class trade among the large houses at Kensington?—I could not say.

Q. It is a matter of common knowledge that at Kensington?—It is not within mine.

Q. Would you not, for instance, find more saddles of mutton than legs bought at Kensington than in Poplar?—Perhaps.

Q. And if a man does a large trade in prime joints he can afford to sell the cheaper joints at a lower figure?—He could.

Mr. Gibbs.

10 July.

Mr. Gibbs.

10 July.

Q. Then that suggests to you the reason why Mr. Blott, of Kensington, should be able to secure the meat contract?—No.

Q. Does that not strike you as being the reason?—No.

Q. Could he not put in the other parts of the animal at low prices?—He could.

Q. If you had a shop somewhere where you sold a lot of saddles you could afford to sell the other parts at a lower price, and, therefore, if the price was very low that may be an explanation why Mr. Blott got the contract, and why he had to tender?

(Mr. Robb.) Do you have legs here?—But that would not apply to Poplar, because he would go to the market and buy there all he wanted for Poplar.

(Mr. Grant.) Let me put it to you. Suppose I have got a hundred houses in West Kensington who are taking prime joints from me, and it amounts to a consumption of 20 sheep a day. I want 200 saddles. If I go into the meat market in the morning I could buy 200 saddles without any difficulty?—That is so.

Q. But if I have a contract to supply legs and other parts to boar's of guardians I can afford to buy the whole animal instead of buying only saddles. I get the saddles for my West End trade, and the remainder of the animal for my Poplar trade, and I put in a price for Poplar which no other man in the trade could afford to do unless he has a West End trade to get his profit from?—That may be, but I don't think Mr. Blott has that trade.

Q. I find Mr. Blott is at West Kensington, and therefore I assume that he has a West End trade?—He may. I think I know Kensington well.

Q. I know it too. Now, I will go back to yesterday. I want to understand if what you said is accurately represented, when you said that meat was supplied to the Guardians under contract which was not English meat, but defrosted meat, coming from Canada or America?—That was what I saw and what I found in the relief stores on more than one occasion.

Q. Does that apply to the meat supplied to the workhouse?—I don't know.

Q. You don't know?—I don't know. I went into the workhouse on one occasion, not to find anything, but to learn the methods of distribution. That was what I went there for. The master came in about a quarter of an hour after I arrived and the meat was being delivered. The house meat was unloaded, and the out-relief meat was left in the van and passed on here.

Q. Let me get one point clear. Your complaint about the meat was that it was Canadian or American meat which had been defrosted—I think meat which had been frozen and afterwards thawed. Your complaint about the defrosted meat does not apply to the meat that went into the workhouse?—No.

Q. It was the meat supplied for what is called out-door relief?—Yes. It went to North Street.

Q. Meat which used to be given away under the orders of the relieving officers?—Yes.

Q. How often did you see this defrosted meat there?—Probably 50 times before I made complaint.

Q. And probably 500 times?—It went on so bad that I had to put my foot down.

Q. I want to know what happened when you first observed that defrosted meat was being supplied to the out-relief distributors. When did you observe it?—Soon after I joined the board.

Q. In 1904?—Yes. And when I had leisure I began to take an interest.

Q. And you sent down there, and, of course, being a judge of meat and observing what was going on, you saw that the meat was not according to that specified in the contract?—Quite so.

Q. What course did you adopt then?—I spoke friendly to Mr. Phillips, because I did not want to get the man into any bother. It went on for a little time, and then I called in Mr. McCarthy, Mr. Crooks, the chief clerk, and, I think, Mr. Diamond.

Q. Was that somewhere about the beginning of last year?—It would probably be then I should think.

Q. What date?—Probably about that. I could not be exact about the date. I did not make an entry of it. It

should be on the minutes, Mr. McCarthy brought it up in committee.

Q. Are you right there?—Mr. McCarthy or Mr. Anderson.

Q. According to my copy of the minutes it was you yourself who brought it up?—Someone else brought it up and we continued the discussion.

Q. This is the first entry, I am told; I have not looked through the minutes myself. At the meeting of the general purposes committee, held on March 29th, 1905, Mr. Gibbs reported that he had seen in the out-relief store 40 stones of the roughest meat you can find. He could buy it on the market at 1s. a stone. Was that when you first called attention to it?—That would be about the time.

Q. What did the committee do with it?—Mr. McCarthy, I think, I am not quite sure—someone took action on it.

Q. May I tell you. Let us just see. That was on the 29th March, and the committee called for a report from the out-relief distributor. That was Mr. Phillips, was it not?—Yes.

Q. That was the 29th of March. Your complaint was that the meat was the roughest meat you could find in the market?—Very low grade.

Q. On the 31st of March Mr. Lough wrote to Mr. Phillips:—"At the last meeting of the general purposes committee it was reported that on the 28th and 29th instant you had in your store a considerable quantity of beef received from the contractor which was not of the description contracted for by the guardians. I am to request that you will furnish a full report upon the matter for the information of the committee.—Yours faithfully, G. Herbert Lough." Well, now, on the 3rd of April, three days after, Mr. Phillips replied to that letter as follows:—"G. H. Lough, Esq.—Dear Sir,—In reply to your letter of the 31st ult., I have to report on the dates named a rather larger quantity than usual of meat not strictly according to the terms of the contract, as to specified parts, though of equally good quality. On each occasion I followed my general practice, viz., returning the same to the contractor, who sent fresh meat on the succeeding day to replace the quantity returned.—Yours faithfully, J. F. Phillips."

(Mr. Robb.) Can we have a copy of these letters?

(Mr. Grant.) I am reading them so that they may appear on the shorthand note. Then there was a meeting of the general purposes committee on the 12th of April. Were you present at that. Turn to the minutes?—I can say at once that I was there.

Q. I want to know, because what I am going to read now does not show whether you were there or not. I think you probably were?—My blood was up.

Q. I hope the guardians' blood is always up when they think there is anything wrong?—Certainly.

Q. Then follows the following report, which was submitted:—"Phillips attended, and stated that all meat not in accordance with the contract was returned: part of the meat seen by Mr. Gibbs. He said that during the pressure the contractor had sent down large pieces unboned, and that his men had boned it, and took away what was not for the guardians. The committee ordered that a letter be sent to the contractor objecting to his bringing any meat not in accordance with the contract. The committee were satisfied that the meat was generally of good quality, and in accordance with the contract. The contract with Mr. Blott was that he should supply boned meat, was it not?—That is so.

Q. And Phillips said that the contractor, instead of sending down boned meat, sent it down with the bones in, and the men took and boned it, and afterwards sent the boned meat to Phillips and took away the rest. The committee ordered that a letter be sent to the contractor objecting to his bringing in meat not in accordance with the contract?—Yes.

Q. The committee were satisfied that the meat generally was of good quality and in accordance with the contract?—Have you got the names of the committee there?

Q. I am going to give them. At the meeting of the general purposes committee, Mr. Bellsham in the chair. Present: Mr. Anderson, Mr. Bacon, Mr. Bundock, Mrs. Cordery, Mr. Diamond, Mr. Ford, Mr. Gibbs, Mr. Jungblut, Mr. Lansbury, Mr. Lindsay, Mr. Peckham, Mr. A. Smith, Mr. Watts, and Mrs. Wilson?—You have got something later than that.

Mr. Gibbs.

10 July.

Q. I am coming to it. In accordance with the resolution of the committee, Mr. Lough, then, on the 12th of April, wrote to Mr. Blott:—"Dear Sir,—I am directed to inform you that at the inspection of the out-relief stores, on the 29th ult., the committee were surprised to find a considerable quantity of beef which was waiting to be returned to you as not being the parts contracted for by the guardians. And on enquiring into the matter, the guardians were informed that it had been a frequent practice for your carmen to bring the meat from the market and cut off parts from it in the out-relief stores. I am to state that the guardians consider such practice to be open to serious objection, and they have given instructions to their officers that under no circumstances must it be permitted in future. I am to request that you will give instructions to your assistants that no meat which does not come strictly within the terms of your contract must be taken into the out-relief stores at Poplar.—Yours faithfully, G. H. Lough." Mr. Blott replies on the 10th of May:—"6, Church Street, Kensington. Dear Sir,—In reply to your letter, in which you state that the guardians object to my sending meat direct from the market and taking the bone out at the out-relief store, I have made arrangements to have it done at the market. It only occurred when we had a large order and ran short at home. I quite see the practice is objectionable, and it shall not occur again.—I am, dear sir, your obedient servant, Thomas W. Blott." I said West Kensington, and you now see it is Church Street, the best part of the West End. It is against Barker's, and other fine shops. Let me deal with this letter. If Mr. Blott had only done this because he ran short at home, and had to go to the market, does it not suggest to you the fact that he could find a market for the other parts?—But you have to take it with a grain of salt.

Q. A grain?—I know the position exactly.

Q. If there is anything you know and I do not, will you name it?—I think then that I should have credit for my action.

Q. I agree with you. I am giving you credit?—I don't think I got it off the board.

Q. That is the burden public men have to bear. You never get credit for good deeds; you get credit for things you have never done, and constantly blamed for things you are not responsible for?—Yes.

Q. Now, Mr. Gibbs, in fairness to you I will put a question which I have not yet done. That is: at the examination of Mr. Walton, on the 21st June, I asked Mr. Walton who were the guardians he had seen drinking with the master. The note runs:—"Q. Who were the guardians you have seen drinking with the master?—I have seen several times the master and the guardians. Q. I want the names of each of the guardians?—I might name the whole board for that matter. Q. I am not asking you to make a general charge, but the names of the individual guardians whom you say you have seen in the cellar drinking with the master. Tell me the names one after the other?—Must I tell you the names? Q. Certainly. That is what you are here for—to tell the truth?—Mr. McCarthy. Q. Yes. Give me a list of the guardians. I may say I shall want a list of the old guardians who have gone out of office as well as those in office. I take the present list of the guardians. I come to Mr. Crooks. Have you seen Mr. Crooks drinking beer with the master?—No. Q. Never?—No. Q. Mr. Jungblut—did you ever see him drinking beer with the master?—Yes. Q. How often?—I could not say how often. Q. A number of times—once or twice?—I have been there a number of years, and I have seen him there on a number of occasions. Q. Mr. Anderson—have you seen there?—Yes. On many occasions?—I could not say how many. Q. On more than one or two?—More than one or two. Q. Mr. McCarthy. You have mentioned him already?—Yes. Q. Mr. Ford?—Yes. Q. Mr. Gibbs?—Yes. Now, Mr. Gibbs, is it true that you were drinking in the cellar with the master?—I have.

Q. How often?—Not more than three times during my connection with the board. I think on the first occasion I could not discover the master. I was told where he was, and I had to find my way to the cellar, and he was there.

Q. You found him there?—Yes, and very probably one or two other names you mentioned.

Q. Did he offer you a glass of beer?—He did.

Q. And you took it?—Yes.

Q. Did you know he had a cask at the time?—I had no knowledge.

Q. At the time you had a glass of beer you did not know who gave it?—No.

It might have been beer belonging to the ratepayers?—It might have been; and I thought to invite me to the cellar was beneath my dignity. I should have expected to have been treated far differently than being invited into a cellar with seats on barrels.

Q. No one ever suggested sitting on barrels except the *Daily Mirror* and *Punch*?—It is ridiculous.

Q. That was the first occasion. When was the next occasion?—Our friends were there. They were there when I went there.

Q. And you had some beer then?—Well, I think we had earned it.

Q. Did you have more than one glass?—No, I think one glass is my limit.

Q. Was there any other occasion?—The same thing would happen again, but there would be a long break in between.

Q. Take it altogether?—I swear I have not been in the cellar more than three times, and to the master's house once only. It was in the morning, and he invited me to have a cup of tea.

Q. Surely you never had a cup of tea with the master?—I did; one morning when I went early.

Q. You must be as bad as Mr. McCarthy?—Not quite.

Q. Going there early in the morning and having a cup of tea with the master. Now you have heard the phrase used often, and you have used it, of going down into the cellar. How many steps were there?—Not any.

Q. What. Then why do you keep on saying "going down into the cellar"?—It was not me. You asked me.

Q. Will you take the trouble to look through the short-hand notes. I think you used that phrase about the cellar?—No, it is on the ground floor. You go along a lot of corridors to get at the place. It backs on to the street.

Q. Then what is called the beer cellar is simply a room on the ground floor—one of a series of rooms in which stores are kept?—Yes.

Q. Anybody who hears that the guardians were going into the beer cellar would suppose that they are going down a lot of steps to carouse?—Quite so.

Q. But as a matter of fact they were going along a corridor, which would lead to half a dozen different rooms. And the person who said they were going down to the beer cellar would either be ignorant of the construction of the house or saying that which was deliberately misleading?—Not only that, but it is a silly statement altogether.

Q. When the *Daily Mirror* draws the guardians asking for another beer barrel to be brought in, you think the *Daily Mirror* was silly?—Absolutely silly, altogether nonsense.

Q. You are not liable for slander in replying to a question here?—I would call it a catchpenny.

Q. Catch halfpenny?—Catch halfpenny, yes.

Q. There is one other point about the dripping, Mr. Gibbs. Do you know how often in the week roast beef is served to the inmates?—I think it was twice. But that does not account for all the dripping.

(Mr. Lansbury.) One day.

(Mr. Grant.) We will take it one or two. There is not a daily production of dripping?—It does not account for all the dripping.

Q. There is only a weekly production of dripping, but there is a daily consumption of it. They use it in all sorts of ways?—They might do.

Q. If Mr. Walton says in this note, that no dripping is ever sold and none is ever bought you would not say he is wrong?—I would not say so.

Q. Mr. Walton must know about it?—He ought to.

Q. And would probably know more about it than these tradesmen who are anxious to get cheap dripping?—But others can confirm the statement that dripping goes to people.

Mr. Gibbs.

10 July.

Q. Now, the dietary tables, Mr. Gibbs, I am told provide that roast beef shall only be served on Sundays?—*(No answer.)*

Q. That does not answer for the whole of the dripping?—It accounts for a great deal.

Q. Now, Mr. Gibbs, you know the tender form for the meat, it provides that the guardians shall be supplied with good English roast beef, fresh killed, consisting of thick flanks, buttocks, middle ribs, rounds, and leg of mutton pieces as ordered. What does that mean?—Beef cuts known as leg of mutton pieces.

Q. Like the copper pans we heard of made of tin?—Not exactly the same, but this is a positive fact.

Q. The other was just as positive. There is a joint which is cut up and is known as leg of mutton?—Any good housewife would know it.

Q. I will tell my wife. The whole to be entirely free from bone, and also including such joints as may be ordered for the officers?—I cannot gather why officers should have different meat to the others—English ox beef freshly killed.

Q. I mean, if you were specifying really good meat to be supplied to anybody that tender form would be a proper specification?—It would.

Q. Now tell me, because I know, what is the cheapest joint of an ox?—According to what you want it for.

Q. For the purpose of nutrition.—A nice little bit of rump.

Q. That is exactly what the manager of Spiers & Pond told me. He said rump steak at 1s. 4d. per lb., because it is all solid meat.

(Mr. Robb.) If I had said what a manager of any establishment told me it would have been pointed out that I had been giving evidence second-hand.

(The Inspector.) He is only putting it.

(Mr. Robb.) That sort of thing has occurred over and over again, and is simply a waste of time.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Oxley said that he was told they did so and so.

(The Inspector.) But he had the tender forms.

(Mr. Grant.) I am sorry to keep you so long.

(Mr. Robb.) I have one short witness. He comes from Millwall Docks, and he has to get back.

(Mr. Grant.) I am very sorry. Something has been said about shanks.

(The Inspector.) I find that heads and shanks have been omitted from the tender forms for a great many years?—Foreign meat is sent in with the head and shanks. English meat is dressed.

(Mr. Grant.) You understand meat?—I understand. It comes in with the shanks on.

(The Inspector.) I notice that they have been omitted a long time.

(Mr. Grant.) Long before these gentlemen came on to the board?—Even in the provinces they have a different way of dressing meat. The carcasses that come to London from the Midlands are different altogether.

(Mr. Robb.) The guardians have deprived themselves of the only evidence they can have to tell whether the meat is home or foreign?—They have done so.

Mr. E. SEEDSMAN; sworn and examined.

Mr. Seedman.

10 July.

(Mr. Robb.) What is your name?—Edwin Seedman.

Q. And you are employed in the service of the Mill-wall Dock Company?—Yes.

Q. What is your position?—Clerk and foreman in the grain department.

Q. Did you have in the years 1904 and 1905 working in the grain department a man named Carey?—Yes.

Q. Did he live in Barchester Street?—No, 70, I believe.

Q. Did it come to your notice that in November, 1905, a Mrs. Carey attended a demonstration of the unemployed people to Mr. Balfour at Whitehall?—Yes.

Q. Did you see the *Daily Mail* of November 7th?—Yes.

Q. I will read it to you. It describes Mr. Balfour and the hungry women. Mrs. Carey, of 70, Barchester Street, in addressing Mr. Balfour, said: "My husband is out of work. I have five children and have to keep my mother, who is 76. Last Friday someone kindly gave me 3d. I got a meal. I bought a pennyworth of bacon bones, 1d. of cabbage, 1d. of potatoes, and a pennyworth of coal. I had no breakfast to-day." Is the lady described the wife of the man who is working for you?—I understand so.

Q. The address is the same?—Yes.

Q. Was the man Carey working for you at this time?—He was at work on the Saturday previous.

Q. How much did he draw in wages on the Saturday previous?—Well, they draw their money each day. For the week ending November 4th his money was £2 5s. 3d., I believe.

Q. Let us be quite certain. Take it out per day, to be quite sure. Start at October 31st: what did he get?—The 31st of October the gang in which he was working, a gang of seven men, earned £3 10s. 6d. between them, 10s. 1d. per man.

Q. The gang of seven men shared out £3 10s. 6d.?

(Mr. Grant.) Carey was one of them?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) 10s. 1d. apiece.—On November 1st the gang of seven men cleared out £4 15s. 10d.

Q. Is that 13s. 8d. each man?—Yes. On the 2nd, the same gang of seven men had £5 5s. 4d.

Q. That is about 15s.—On the 3rd of the 11th, the gang of seven men received £2 12s. 11d. On the 4th of the 11th the gang of eleven men had £2 18s. 11d.

Q. That is 8s. 11d.?—That makes over £2 a head.

Q. I think it is £2 15s. 3d. for six days' work. This man Carey had £2 15s. 3d. That was the week preceding the deputation?—Quite so.

Q. Friday would be the 3rd of November, would it not?—Yes.

Q. That is the last Friday Mrs. Carey referred to in her speech to Mr. Balfour. "Last Friday someone kindly gave me 3d." What did Carey earn that Friday?—Something like 9s.

Q. 7s. 7d. Now, what would Carey's average earnings be per week for the two years 1904-5?—£1 17s. 8d.

Q. For the two years?—Yes.

Q. Per week?—Yes.

Q. Was he employed before and after the time when his wife made this speech?—Yes, and he is still employed in the same gang at the same work.

Q. Was it a true statement for her to make to Mr. Balfour that her husband was unemployed?—Certainly not.

Q. I suppose you sometimes have to stand him off for a few days?—Exactly; no work, no pay.

Q. And that has happened?—Yes.

Q. Whereas this speech was made on the 6th November, during the week ending the 4th November he had earned £2 15s. 3d.?—Yes.

Q. Which was good money for a working man?—Yes.

Q. And his average earnings for the whole of the two years 1904-5 was £1 17s. 8d. per week?—Quite correct, yes.

Q. After this speech, was Carey's attention drawn to it by his fellow working-men?—I believe so. I don't mix with the men, but I believe so.

Q. His attention was drawn to his wife's remarks. Following Mr. Corrie Grant's remarks, I ask you if you heard some gossip about it?—Exactly; there must be gossip.

Q. What did you hear?—Nothing much, hardly worth while.

Q. Was that statement made in the *Daily Mail*, which I read to you, a true and correct statement?—I should say not, according to this book.

Q. And this woman took part in a demonstration which I understand was organised by Mr. Crooks?—I do not say that. I did not trouble about the matter.

Q. By Mrs. Crooks?

(The Inspector.) Are you going to show that this lady was in receipt of relief?

(Mr. Robb.) No, sir. I am showing what was the nature of the statements made by the alleged unemployed when they went to Mr. Balfour. I put in the *Daily Mail*.

(Mr. Grant.) May I dispose of this. Any one of our guardians will tell you that Mrs. Carey has never had relief at all.

(The Inspector.) What she said was evidently not true.

(Mr. Robb.) And this is the demonstration organised in Poplar. They got a bill out calling it. I now put in the bill.

(Mr. Grant.) Let us have it then.

(Mr. Lansbury.) The question is this. How far any Poplar Guardian acting as a member of the whole board can be said to be responsible for the statements which were made at that deputation. Was this woman Carey a well-known woman?—I do not know.

(Mr. Grant.) Her husband is a good workman?—Yes.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I only want to tell you.

(Mr. Grant.) Has this woman ever had relief from the Poplar Guardians?

(Mr. Lansbury.) No.

(Mr. Robb.) I never suggested it.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, with regard to this deputation to Mr. Balfour. Did you ascertain who these people were who made complaints, and did you get their names and addresses and supply them to the Church Army and ask them to investigate them?

(Mr. Lansbury.) I did. You know that thing was arranged within a fortnight. This woman was brought as a typical woman out of Bromley, and I had to rely on other people's information. Colin Campbell, of the Church Army, said that if I gave him names he would investigate their cases. I want to explain this to explain my *bona fides* in the matter.

(The Inspector.) Just let me ask one question. Did you, at the time this woman was making this statement, know that what she was saying was not true?

(Mr. Lansbury.) Certainly I did not. I was so impressed with her that I provided her with a pair of boots.

(Mr. Grant.) May I clear up one point. It is my fault entirely that I make statements without books. I find this Ernest Carey, of 70, Barchester Street, in the week ending Saturday, January 6th, 1906, had relief in kind to the amount of 5s. 6d.; this was repeated for the week ending January 20th; and on the 27th he had 6s. 6d.; February 3rd, 5s. 8d.; and the total was £1 2s. 9d. Perhaps, Mr. Seedsman, you can look at your book and tell whether on January 6th, 1906, or February 3rd, Carey was earning?—For the week ending January 4th, the gang earned £2 15s. per head. The following week they earned something under £1, as things were slack. The week after they earned about £5 19s. 9d.

Q. Now January 27th?—The week ending January 25th, £10 11s. 8d. between seven men.

Q. The week ending February 3rd?—Our week ends on Thursday. £6 17s. 4d. between seven men. The

average for the last six months ending January 28th, 1906, for this gang was £1 15s. 8d. Mr. Seedsman.

Q. It is quite clear that Mr. Carey obtaining relief from the guardians was committing fraud?—If her husband was not at work, he should have been.

(Mr. Crooks.) The victim in this case happens to be me. Mrs. Carey received through me to help her, 10s. It was not the ratepayers' money.

(The Inspector.) You gave on charitable grounds?

(Mr. Crooks.) I asked at the meeting whether there was any person who could supply me with information that we were being defrauded, and I received a letter from some person at Millwall Docks, and immediately it was stopped. From information we have obtained, I hope we shall prosecute this man for obtaining relief under false pretences.

(The Inspector.) I remember the woman quite well and heard her make the statement.

(Mr. Robb.) The position is that Mr. Seedsman says that this man who in January last was obtaining outdoor relief from the Poplar Guardians was earning at that time £1 15s. per week?—Perhaps not at that time, but for the six months.

(Mr. Grant.) He has, since the beginning of the present year up to the present time, earned an average of £1 5s. per week, and for the two years, £1 17s. 8d.

(Mr. Robb.) That is the kind of case which Mr. Lansbury calls typical.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Please.

(Mr. Robb.) If I misunderstood Mr. Lansbury I am sorry. She was taken up to Mr. Balfour as a typical case. Perhaps Mr. Lansbury meant that it was put forward as a typical case. The word "typical" was certainly used.

(Mr. Grant.) Was Carey always working in the same gang; that is, during the whole of this period?—If he was not, he should have been. He was a member of the gang, and has been so for the last few years. The work was there for him.

Q. Will you tell me what is the name of the ganger?—Torry.

Q. And would you, as a favour, give Mr. Ford any information you can about the matter?

(The Inspector.) Find out, please, if in any one week he did no work.

(Mr. Grant.) May I have the number of the gang?—No. 4.

Q. In the grain department at the Docks?—Grain department, Millwall Docks.

Q. Do you take any receipts from the men whom the ganger pays the money to?—No, he does not sign. We pay them on contract form, and he does not sign.

Q. Have you any means of knowing whether he shares the money?—He shares the money.

Q. Suppose there were seven men, and the earnings for the week were £7, you don't know that each man would receive £1?—Oh, yes I do. I know they all share it together. They share it fairly.

Q. How does the gang know what has been earned?—They know—they know. They don't want any telling.

Q. Have the gangers to pay money to trimmers out of their money?—No.

(The Inspector.) Will you have a talk with Mr. Ford?

(Mr. Robb.) Will you take Mr. Greaves next, sir. I think he is here.

Mr. T. W. GREAVES; sworn and examined.

(Mr. Robb.) What is your name, your Christian name?—Thomas William. I take it, before I give evidence, Mr. Inspector, that whatever evidence I give I am protected afterwards?

(The Inspector.) Oh, yes?—Only the very first witness to tell the truth Mr. Crooks wanted to lock up.

Q. You shall not be locked up?—Mr. Crooks suggested it.

(Mr. Robb.) You attend under a summons from the Local Government Board?—Yes, I do.

Q. What is your business?—An electrical supply agent. Mr. Greaves.

Q. And where do you carry on that business?—In the City at present; previously in Poplar.

Q. What place?—38, St. Leonard's Road.

Q. That is in Poplar?—Yes, previously.

Q. That is where you formerly carried on business. Where do you carry it on now?—Leadenhall Street.

Q. The number, please.—73.

Q. Did you ever hold a contract under the Poplar Board of Guardians?—Yes, two.

10 July.

Mr. Greaves.

10 July.

Q. When was that?—1903 and 1904.

Q. What was that contract for?—Electric light supplies.

Q. Did anything out of the ordinary course happen with regard to the contract you held in 1904?—Well, in what respect. I had some difficulty in deliveries, if that is what you refer to.

Q. Yes, did anything happen in respect to them?—Well, after receiving one or two letters regarding the slowness of delivery, Mr. Madeley wrote to me to meet Mr. McCarthy at the house one evening at 6.30.

Q. When was that?—I should think in June or July, 1904, as near as I can say.

Q. You met Mr. McCarthy at the house at 6.30?—Yes.

Q. Did you meet Mr. McCarthy?—Yes.

Q. Where?—In Mr. Madeley's office.

Q. What took place?—Mr. McCarthy put it before me what a serious matter it was for me to deliver things so slowly. I endeavoured to point out that it was almost impossible to deliver some of the things, and I invited both Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Madeley to bring the matter before the board.

Q. You asked them?—Yes.

Q. What happened then?—Mr. McCarthy said that, as he could not deal with me he would leave Mr. Madeley to deal with me.

Q. Did Mr. McCarthy leave the room?—Yes.

Q. What did Mr. Madeley say?—He said he would get me £10 if I would surrender the contract.

Q. Who was he to get it from?—Is it necessary for me to say?

Q. You must tell us?—I would rather not mention the name.

Q. Do you know?—That is only my inference if I say yes.

Q. You are sworn to tell the whole truth. I think if you know the source from which the £10 was to come you should tell us?—The only source which I know was they told me it was practically the same source as the person who was going to supply the goods I did not supply, and who did so.

Q. Who was it supplied them?—Mr. Pyle.

Q. And they told you the money was coming from the same source?—Mr. Madeley said that.

Q. Did you accept the £10 to cancel the contract?—No, I did not.

Q. Did Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Madeley ever bring the matter before the board in response to your invitation?—No.

Q. Did you ever hear any more about it?—No.

Q. Was there any reasonable or just cause of complaint with regard to your deliveries?—Naturally, I should say no.

Q. Was it a matter under your control or not?—Most of the instances were quite beyond my control.

Q. Would any other contractor have been in the same position?—I should think so.

Q. What was the special article?—In this particular instance it was a certain kind of electric lamp, and I have correspondence showing that there were no such lamps in Great Britain at the time, which I can produce if necessary, although they were apparently delivered the next day by another contractor.

(The Inspector.) If there were no lamps in Great Britain, why tender for them?—They were not on the tender form. They were out of contract. Besides, it was only owing to pressure of business they were not here. They were not in the contract.

(Mr. Robb.) In those two years what was the total amount of your deliveries against the estimates in the tenders?—As near as I can say, I think my tender was for something less than one hundred pounds, and my deliveries several hundreds. I can't give you the exact figures.

Q. For electric lighting supplies?—Yes.

Q. The tender would be less than one hundred; and the delivery?—Several hundreds—two or three hundreds—quite that; probably four hundred. Getting on that way, anyhow.

Q. You are speaking approximately, I take it?—Yes.

Q. Of course, it might have been an advantage to someone else if you had surrendered the contract?—Possibly.

Q. Mr. Greaves, I am going to ask this. I do not know whether, as a manufacturer and agent, you will tell me. When you are obtaining tenders for electrical supplies, and you want £400 worth, do you get the best manufacturers to tender by specifying only £70 or £80?—You don't get the best terms.

Q. The best terms. If any institution knew that its requirement in a certain year was 400, do you think it would be a wise thing to specify 80 or 100 only?—Certainly not; no business man would do it.

Q. Would you get the best terms?—Not on a small tender.

Q. Would you get the best firms in competition under those conditions?—I don't think a large firm would tender for a small item like that.

Q. Will you kindly look at yours. I want the lowest tender you put in. I think that was rejected?—Yes.

Q. When was that?—March, 1905, last year.

Q. Now, I want you to look at your tender, and then tell us. I should like you to have Mr. Pyle's before you and take the two. Could not we have those, Mr. Lough. (To witness.) Have you the two before you?—Only one, 1904-5.

Q. Is that your own?—Yes. 1905 you asked me for, didn't you?

Q. Yes. (To the Inspector.) This is rather important, sir. I want to compare Mr. Pyle's accepted tender in 1905 with Mr. Greaves' rejected tender. I want him to have the two before him. I want just to analyse them. Have you the two there?

(Mr. Grant.) Just give me the dates of those documents. I want them?—1905, March.

Q. Mr. Pyle's accepted tender for 1905?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) And your own rejected one?—I have not got that yet.

(Mr. Grant.) Haven't you a copy?—No, I haven't.

(Mr. Robb.) It was here yesterday.

(Mr. Grant.) I sent some papers away to have the figures worked out. It may be among those. I don't know.

(Mr. Robb.) What is the first item?—Glow lamps.

Q. Just read any item out?—Sixteen dozen glow lamps, 16 dozen Ediswan, 18s.; sixteen dozen Electra and B.T.H.

Q. What do you say to the prices. Are they fair and proper prices?—The Ediswan is a very good price.

Q. What was the normal price for Ediswan's at that time on the market?—About 14s. I should charge.

Q. And the other lamps?—There is one at 11s. 6d., about 7s. 6d.

Q. Electra. What is the next item?—B.T.H. Priced at 12s. 6d. They cost 8s. 6d.

Q. Yes; and the next item?—Dynamo brushes; they are all really about the same price—3s. 6d., 4s., and 4s. per dozen.

Q. All the dynamo brushes?—Yes.

Q. A dozen?—Yes.

Q. What is the lowest they range from?—One item in my tender, they cost 4s. 9d., but here they are 4s. a dozen.

Q. One item in your tender they cost 4s. 9d. each. Which item is that, please?—I could not give you the definite one, but those are all about the same prices.

Q. You will get it from your own tender?—Yes.

Q. And they were quoted by Pyle at?—3s. or 4s. a dozen.

Q. Was it possible for him to execute the contract at that price?—Oh, no.

Q. Without making a severe loss?—He could not.

Q. What do you say as to the prices of the dynamo brushes: are they fair prices?—Some of them are.

Q. Which?—Well, I don't think you would understand. 1 and 2, and 1 and 2 again, they are all fair prices with the exception of one number, which I will point out presently.

Q. What is the difference between the one number and the other?—One is a proprietary article and comes from a special maker.

Q. Now, the effect would be to reduce the gross amount of the tender?—It would reduce it by about £40 or £50.

Q. And you get an estimate of under £100 when the estimate is low. A reduction like that materially affects the situation?—Most certainly.

Q. It would not be so serious if the full requirement of 300 or 400 was specified?—That is so.

Q. But this reduction has the greater effect on the low amount of the estimate given?—Yes, that is right.

Q. Of course, you do not know whether or not any brushes were called for?—I don't know.

Q. Or any deliveries?—I don't know.

Q. I think we had that from Mr. Oxley. I suppose you would not be surprised to hear there were no deliveries?—What I expected.

Q. That was what you expected?—Yes.

Q. Do I describe the position fairly if I say this. That for lamps which were certain to be delivered a high price is charged, and for dynamo brushes which were never called for, in one instance a ridiculous price is quoted?—Yes.

Q. A price per dozen which it would cost for one item?—Yes. There are two items of brushes. Pyle's tender for brushes is £4 10s. My tender is £61 4s., and I put a small profit on it.

Q. Mr. Pyle's is what?—£4 10s.

Q. These two special items, Nos. 4 and 5. Pyle's price is £4 10s.?—Yes.

Q. And yours?—£61 4s.

Q. Which was the fair and proper price—yours or Mr. Pyle's?—I put about 10 per cent. profit on my price.

Q. If Mr. Pyle had been called upon to deliver a quantity of these brushes he would have lost £60. Of course, with his usual luck, we hear he was not called upon. What is the next item of brushes?—The other items of ours are very similar, practically the same prices.

Q. Is there anything calling for special comment?—No.

Q. Now, was that last year you tendered?—Except in the case of the lamps, the prices I quoted from memory are about correct. B.T.H. 10s., 14s. 6d. Royal Ediswan; they are 18s. on Pyle's tender; 11s. 6d. Electra on Pyle's, and 7s. 6d. on mine.

Q. Your price is for the articles which were in fact called for and delivered?—I was about 30 or 40 per cent. lower than Pyle's.

Q. So that, although the guardians accepted a tender which was superficially much lower than yours, in practice it would have worked out that they would have saved 30 or 40 per cent. by accepting yours?—That is so.

Q. Because they never took from Mr. Pyle the low-priced article and did take the high-priced article?—That is so.

Q. Mr. Pyle described his system to us yesterday. Do you know anything about systems of tendering?—Well, I know if I had had a system of finessing I should have got an order for the other priced article.

Q. Is that what it is termed, finessing?—I think so.

Q. Is that an expression of art, or a technical term, or an expression of artfulness?—A little bit of each, I think.

Q. Finessing?—Yes.

Q. Seriously, is that a term well understood among contractors?—I don't think so.

Q. Is it well understood in Poplar?—I think it is generally done, anyhow.

Q. Would you think it had been done in this instance, looking at the tenders?—I don't think you need to ask me that.

Q. And I don't think so. Have you tendered since then?—No.

Q. Why not?—I did not think it was any use.

Q. Did not think it any use. Why?—I don't suppose I should have got it, and it is no use wasting time and energy.

Q. What led you to suppose you would not get it?—After the experience of the previous year, when I see a tender put in like that. I knew all about it.

Q. Was there any other reason which led you to suppose it was no use you tendering?—No, I think not.

Q. Are you quite sure, Mr. Greaves. Had you been approached in any way?—I had been, but not in connection with this particular tender.

Q. Have you been approached at any time in connection with any tenders?—Yes.

Q. By whom?—By a guardian and an ex-guardian.

Q. What were their names?—Smith and Peacock.

Q. What did they approach you about?—They asked me for a fixed amount of money to pass a contract—to pass an appointment.

Q. They asked you for a fixed amount of money to pass a contract?—Yes.

Q. What contract was that. What was the fixed amount of money?—Twenty pounds.

Q. Where did this conversation take place?—On two or three occasions at various places.

Q. This particular request. Where did it take place, and on what date?—There were several occasions. There was no particular request. It happened on several occasions.

Q. You must be a little more definite. You are making a serious charge against a guardian. When was it. How long ago?—Oh, how long ago? March, 1904.

Q. And where were you. Where did you see these people when they asked?—I was frequently in their company.

Q. Where?—I was frequently in their company.

Q. At what place?—Sometimes in the street, sometimes in a pub.

Q. Was it in a pub this took place?—On one occasion.

Q. What was the contract that they were to pass?—It was not exactly a contract. It was the appointment of a tradesman to the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum.

Q. Appointment of tradesman?—Yes.

Q. For the supply of what. I thought you were speaking of contracts for the board of guardians?—Not this particular one.

Q. I understood that at the start. At any rate, I am afraid we must go on with it. What had these guardians to do with the Sick Asylum?—They were managers.

(The Inspector.) Of course, we are not investigating the matters of the Sick Asylum.

(Mr. Grant.) But these are guardians, and I think this ought to be raked to the very bottom.

(Mr. Robb.) What did you say to that request for £20?—First, I refused to give it. I said I was sorry I could not give it.

Q. Were they both together when they made the request, or did you see them separately?—Afterwards, when the thing was given away I saw them both together, and they told me I had myself to blame for losing it. I had had it for eighteen months or two years.

(The Inspector.) What was the contract for?—Telephonic electrical work.

(Mr. Robb.) And do you mean to say you lost it because you would not pay £20?—I lost it at that time.

Q. When are the tenders taken for that work?—Every six months—March and September.

Q. Was it in September, 1904, you lost it?—March, 1904.

Q. After this occurrence?—Yes.

Q. Prior to the tenders going in they saw you separately, and afterwards they saw you both together?—That is right.

Q. And told you you had only yourself to blame?—That is so.

Q. Is that all about that question?—Yes, I think so.

Q. Have you ever been approached on any other occasion by any guardian?—No; I don't think so.

Q. Or by any official?—No.

Q. Have you ever made any payment to anyone, directly or indirectly?—No.

Mr. Greaves.
10 July.

Mr. Greaves

10 July.

Q. Were you living in Poplar at that time?—Oh, yes.

Q. Were you on familiar terms with the guardians?—A few, yes.

Did you ever treat them?—Well, not from a treating point of view. I don't say I haven't had a drink with a friend. You are naturally friendly with people in the same district.

Q. Who paid?—Both, I should say.

Q. Who are the guardians you used to meet when you were in Poplar carrying out the contracts—those you were particularly familiar with. You ought to tell us, in justice to the rest?—Yes, but on the other hand, I was acquainted with a large number of guardians, I may tell you. The large majority of them ought not to have their names brought into this mire. They are very decent people, and I don't think you should ask that, Mr. Robb.

Q. That is the very thing we want to get at?—There are a few gentlemen on the board.

Q. If the majority ought not to have their names in the mire, it is all the more important you should specify those whom you met in public-houses and drank with them?—If I did, it was not for any wrong.

Q. Give us the names?—I don't see any benefit accruing from it.

Q. If I do not ask you for it, Mr. Grant will at the proper time. Did you meet the two guardians you have named in that way?—I have done, yes.

Q. Where did you meet them?—In several places.

Q. Gives us the names?—If you give me a directory of all the pubs in Poplar we might go through it.

Q. Do you seriously suggest that you met them at all the public-houses in Poplar?—A large number.

Q. Who else besides; Mr. Peacock and Mr. Smith, I think you named?—That is so.

(Mr. Smith.) Mr. Davy, that is false, sir; I repudiate the statement as a diabolical lie.

(The Inspector.) Yes. Is that Mr. Smith?

(Mr. Smith.) I have never approached him or anybody else from any point of view.

(Mr. Robb.) You hear, Mr. Greaves, what Mr. Smith says. Did you meet him?—Certainly.

Q. Frequently?—But I don't think there is anything in that.

Q. What did you meet for?—We met very often, but not for any particular purpose.

Q. Did you discuss tenders and contracts at those meetings?—I have done at times.

Q. Who were the guardians you met in that fashion?—Seeing that there was no one else, I should say, that I have ever approached, or have ever approached me, I don't think you ought to bring their names in.

Q. I want to know. You see you were a contractor holding contracts. I want to know who of your employers at that time were in the habit of meeting you at public-houses, discussing matters of business with you?—I have had a drink with quite six or seven different guardians without anything wrong accruing from it.

Q. What were their names, please. Perhaps the best way would be to go through the list. Was Mr. Crooks one?—No.

Q. Mr. Jungblut?—Yes, I have had a drink with Mr. Jungblut.

(Mr. Jungblut.) Who paid for it?—I think we paid for one each.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Anderson?—No, I don't think so.

Q. Mr. McCarthy?—Once, I think; a long time ago.

Q. Mr. Ford?—No.

Q. Mr. R. H. Gibbs?—Oh, yes; a particular friend of mine.

Q. Mr. Poole?—Yes, I have had a drink with Mr. Poole.

Q. Mr. Finden?—Yes, I think so.

Q. Mr. Peckham?—No.

Q. Mr. Webster?—I don't think so, no.

Q. Are you sure?—Yes, sure.

Q. Mr. Phillips?—I don't know him.

Q. Mr. Sumner?—No.

Q. Mr. Beaumont?—No.

Q. Mr. Bellsham?—No.

Q. Mr. Yeo?—No.

Q. Mr. Lindsay?—No.

Q. Mr. Smith?—Which Mr. Smith?

(Mr. Smith.) Yes, he has had a drink with me.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. S. Bacon?—No.

Q. Mr. Lansbury?—No.

Q. Mr. Watts?—No.

Q. Mr. Bundock?—No.

Q. Mr. Diamond?—No; I think you have the lot.

(Mr. Grant.) We will have the names over. Jungblut, McCarthy, Gibbs, Finden, Smith, and Poole. Was Mr. Poole one?—Mr. Poole is a publican, so—

(Mr. Grant.) Is there any explanation as to the other five. Are they publicans?—No.

(Mr. Gibbs.) In how many public-houses has he seen me, or been with me?—One, I think.

(The Inspector.) It is not whether the witness has been drinking with a pal in a public-house. The question is whether he, as a contractor, has been consorting with guardians in public-houses?—That is what I deny.

(Mr. Robb.) You told me, Mr. Gibbs, that the fact was you were a contractor at the time?—Yes.

Q. And they were guardians?—Yes; and we were pals at the time.

Q. So we get the established fact of guardians and a contractor who were pals meeting and having refreshment together at this time?—Yes, and several others.

Q. You told me just now you used sometimes to discuss tenders and contracts?—Yes.

Q. Do you mean to tell the Inspector that it was not an advantage to a contractor, being a pal of the guardians?—Oh, very possibly.

Q. You know it was, don't you?—I should say it was.

Q. Perhaps when you lost your contract a greater pal came along. There are degrees of friendship, I suppose?—I expect so.

Q. Was Mr. Pyle also a friend of the guardians?—I think you should have asked him when he was here.

Q. I think perhaps I should, and possibly, after what you have said, I shall ask the Inspector to invite Mr. Pyle to come back.

(Mr. Grant.) Surely that is not quite fair. Mr. Pyle has been here.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you drunk with Mr. Pyle?—Yes.

Q. When?—People living in a parish for many years cannot help knowing guardians or tradesmen or anybody else.

Q. Was Mr. Pyle on the same terms with them as you were?—Rather better, I should say.

Q. Have you ever known an instance of a guardian carrying out a contract for the guardians under an assumed name?—I have heard that was so.

Q. Do you know of anything?—I think so.

Q. Tell us what you know?—I know of a building contract carried out in the name of Gibbs.

Q. When was that?—Some year or two back.

Q. Can you give us the exact date?—Not from memory. Not by Mr. Gibbs, I may tell you, but carried out in the name.

Q. Not Mr. Gibbs, the guardian?—No, nothing to do with him at all.

Q. What was the contract for—for the guardians or for Blackwall Branch Asylum?

(The Inspector.) That has to do with Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum.

(Mr. Robb.) Was it a Poplar guardian that you suggest carried it out in the name of Gibbs. Who was the guardian?—Mr. A. Smith.

(Mr. Smith.) That is another diabolical and direct lie, and when the time comes I will prove it.

(The Inspector.) When the time comes.

(Mr. Smith.) I cannot stand here and be shot at.

(Mr. Robb.) What was Gibbs?—I think he was in Mr. Smith's employment. I am not sure.

Q. You realise the gravity of all you say?—Oh, yes; I should not say it if I did not.

Q. Do you say you know that was the case?—I don't know.

Q. I think you ought to give us the date, as nearly as you can, of that circumstance?—During 1904; I think so.

Q. Was this Mr. Gibbs, who you suggest was a fictitious contractor, supposed to die?—I think so.

Q. And afterwards did he come to life again?—I have heard so; I don't know.

Q. Please tell us all you know. It is not fair and right to make a charge and not tell us all you know by way of detail. Is there any further circumstance connected with this matter you can tell the Inspector?—I believe that the work he had undertaken was never finished. I don't know whether he died; he was supposed to have done.

Q. Where was he found after his supposed death?—I can't tell that.

Q. Did you go and find him?—I don't know any more.

Q. Come, sir, didn't you go and see Mrs. Gibbs. Didn't you go and ask where he was—whether he was supposed to be dead?—Me? No.

Q. Do you know who did?—I understand that the managers of the Sick Asylum took the matter up and instructed their solicitors to proceed.

Q. And did a clerk go round there. You know all about this matter. Please tell us?—I believe the solicitors took the matter up, and naturally someone would go there.

Q. Was Gibbs alive or dead, in fact. Do you know that?—Alive.

Q. And where was he at the time he was supposed to be dead?—About Poplar somewhere.

Q. At whose house?—What I know of it, do you mean?

Q. Yes?—I take it you want me to say he was at Smith's?

Q. I don't want you to say anything but what you know?—You appear to have some information that you want me to say something about, and if you put it plain I will answer.

Q. Was he found at Mr. Smith's house after he was supposed to be dead?—He would have been there afterwards, seeing that he worked there.

Q. Do you know of your own knowledge. You have made some enquiry?—No, I did not enquire about it. It came to me from general knowledge. It was almost public knowledge.

Q. That is rather dangerous knowledge?—I am not afraid to stand on what I have said.

Q. You realise the gravity of the charge?—I do.

Q. Against Mr. Smith, and stand by it?—Yes, I do.

Q. With the exception of the two guardians you name have you ever been approached by any other guardian in the same way?—No.

Q. Were you in the habit of meeting the guardians, or any of them, at a club in Poplar?—Not by special arrangement.

Q. No. Were you in the habit of meeting at all at any club?—I have met members of the guardians at several clubs.

Q. Was any statement ever made to you there by any guardian which is germane to this Inquiry?—Lots of statements are made. Let me know what you are driving at. Tell me what you want.

Q. Was any statement ever made in reference to any particular contract, say, for instance, the contract of Cartwright and Company?—No, I cannot say, sir.

Q. You can't recollect?—No.

(Mr. Grant.) I suppose you have made a statement about this to someone before, haven't you?

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, no doubt; but a great deal of Mr. Greaves' evidence is entirely new to me.

(Mr. Grant.) You have made a statement to someone else about this?—How do you mean?

Q. You know what making a statement is, Mr. Greaves?—If you want to know the actual circumstances of the evidence, I will give it.

Q. First answer my question. Have you made a statement to anyone about the evidence you were prepared to give to-day?—Let me answer you in another way. A personal friend of mine supplied the Municipal Alliance with details that I was able to give, and Mr. Robb sent to me to see if I would give it willingly, and if I would not give it willingly he would give me a subpoena. I got the subpoena.

Q. And you made a statement to Mr. Robb as to what your evidence was to be here to-day?—He gleaned a large amount of what he was going to ask me.

(Mr. Robb.) It is not quite fair to say that. It only came to my knowledge a day or two since. I was busy, and sent a clerk, who had a hurried interview with the witness, and made a few notes, and that is why I was somewhat at a loss in examining.

(Mr. Grant.) Will Mr. Robb let me see his notes?

(Mr. Robb.) I have never heard of such a request—to show the opposing counsel proofs of my witness's evidence. I could not listen to such a proposal.

(Mr. Grant.) It is a very common request, when a witness has given a proof.

(Mr. Robb.) He has not given a proof. You must accept my statement, Mr. Grant. My clerk simply took rough notes of one or two matters. There is no proof taken in a detailed way from Mr. Greaves at all.

(Mr. Grant.) I did not say any proof was signed.

(Mr. Robb.) Well, I will not show these notes to you. It is not a fair or proper request. Really, you might be sorry if you got the notes.

(Mr. Grant.) That is what I want to get at. Greaves has been asked in a very adroit way to tell a story about something, and Mr. Greaves has said, "If you tell me what you want to know I will give you the information," and yet Mr. Robb has not told him.

(Mr. Robb.) I know that, but I object to put words into a man's mouth. I prefer to let him tell his own story.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Greaves has made a series of charges against Mr. Smith, and one against Mr. Peacock, and he has given notes to Mr. Robb of matters which he has not repeated in the box to-day.

(Witness.) I have done nothing of the kind.

(Mr. Robb.) No, he has not; that is not a correct statement. Every note that Mr. Greaves gave to my clerk he has confirmed in the box to-day. If you ask me, I will never give you a statement made in confidence by a witness. It is a privileged statement. I have never heard of such a request, that an advocate on one side should hand over to an advocate on the other proofs of his witnesses. I do not suppose you, Mr. Grant, would comply with such a request for a moment, even if I had the audacity to make it.

(Mr. Grant.) I am making the request in all seriousness. You, sir, are here not to play at advocacy. You are here to listen to the whole truth. Mr. Robb, in his cross-examination of Mr. Greaves, has asked him question after question, showing that there was something which he had which Mr. Greaves ought to know about; and Mr. Greaves invited Mr. Robb to tell him what answers he wanted by saying, "If you tell me what you are driving at, I will answer."

(Mr. Robb.) Would it be right, when one knew that charges of a serious character were going to be made, for an advocate to put words into the witness's mouth. Should he not be allowed to tell his own story?

(Mr. Grant.) When Mr. Crosbie was being examined, you put words into his mouth.

(Mr. Robb.) I don't think I did.

(Mr. Grant.) You did. You asked, "Salmon?"—yes "Oysters?"—yes: "Tripe?"—yes.

(The Inspector.) That is a trifling thing.

(Mr. Grant.) But this is not a trifling thing.

(Mr. Robb.) If I had put charges into Crosbie's mouth, I should have considered I was wrong.

(Mr. Grant.) I am not saying Mr. Robb has done it; but we are here to elicit the truth, and as far as the guardians are concerned I have put every document, every paper, letter, every contract, and every tender—every paper we had in our possession—at Mr. Robb's disposal; and you, sir (to the Inspector), had the run of our papers for months. Mr. Robb has had our agenda paper

Mr. Greaves.
10 July

Mr. Greaves,

10 July.

since last year, and if Mr. Robb will not meet me in the same spirit as I have met him, he is not acting in a way fair to the guardians who are charged here. If Mr. Greaves has told the same story in the box as he told to the clerk, there can be no objection to producing the notes. If he has told a different story, the fact should be known to you and all concerned.

(The Inspector.) I cannot ask Mr. Robb to produce the notes.

(Mr. Grant.) Will you look at them. I do not want to look at them.

(The Inspector.) I think you must get at this in another way.

(Mr. Grant.) I will, presently; but I ask you, in fairness to the guardians, to ask Mr. Robb to show you his notes.

(Mr. Robb.) I will show them to you on the understanding that they are not handed to anyone else. (The notes were then handed to the Inspector.) They are very rough and taken in a great hurry.

(The Inspector.) They are hardly notes at all.

(Mr. Robb.) Here are some notes my clerk took at the same time (handing them up). I am reminded, by looking at the notes again, of a point which I will ask permission to put to Mr. Greaves.

(The Inspector.) You have asked all these questions, so far as I can understand them, except the last one.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes. I had omitted that, and I think there is one other on these notes. If you think there is any serious inconsistency—

(The Inspector.) There is no serious inconsistency whatever. They are rough notes dealing mostly with questions already put. One thing is obviously left out. It has written across it "hearsay," and that Mr. Robb does not wish to put.

(Mr. Grant.) In this Inquiry we have not been proceeding on the regular rules of evidence at all. We have been taking hearsay of everybody, and gossip from everywhere, and the only way is to abide by that principle.

(The Inspector.) No, I think not.

(Mr. Robb.) I struck it out because it was hearsay.

(The Inspector.) Besides, it is nothing.

(Mr. Robb.) Another question I purposely omitted because I thought—

(The Inspector.) It is a sort of clap-net—a sort of statement that gets into the papers.

(Mr. Grant.) I wish everything asked. You (the Inspector) told me, with regard to Crosbie, that if I called him my blood would be upon my own head.

(Mr. Robb.) No, I did.

(Mr. Grant.) We had a statement from Crosbie, which is condemned. Nobody believes the charges against Mr. McCarthy and the matron.

(Mr. Robb.) You must not say that. If we go into that—

(The Inspector.) I will not go into that.

(Mr. Robb.) I have plenty of evidence.

(Mr. Grant.) I invited you to call evidence.

(Mr. Robb.) If Mr. Grant is going into that—

(Mr. Grant.) We are certainly going into that.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Greaves, I forgot to ask you. Some two or three years since, did the board advertise for electrical engineers for the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. Were you one of the applicants for one of the positions?—Yes.

Q. Can you tell us the date when the applications were entertained?—No.

Q. About?—About four or five years ago, I should say.

Q. Before the applications had been dealt with by the board, were you told by anyone whether or not candidates had been selected?—Yes.

Q. Who told you this?—One or two guardians.

Q. Their names, please?—Mr. Peacock and Mr. Chivers told me that candidates had practically been decided upon.

Q. Did they give you three names?—Yes.

Q. Before the meeting day?—The day the positions were advertised.

Q. The board subsequently met?—Two or three weeks afterwards.

Q. Were candidates then selected?—Yes.

Q. Did the names of the candidates selected agree with those that had been mentioned to you three weeks before?—Yes.

Q. Did the guardians have the candidates up?—Yes, before a committee. About 60 or 70 were brought from all parts of Great Britain, although the positions were decided upon. One poor fellow left his ship to attend.

Q. You say the positions had already been decided upon?—That is so.

(Mr. Grant.) Let us have a little more detail. How long have you lived in Poplar?—About thirteen years.

Q. That would be 1893?—Rather more than that; I forget my age; about 22 years.

Q. That would bring you here in 1884. When you came here then what were you?—A baby.

Q. You came with your father and mother in 1884. I don't think I am doing you an injustice when I say you are more than 22, Mr. Greaves?—I was five years old; a child, I should say.

Q. Have you been living in Poplar ever since?—Yes.

Q. And are living there now?—No, not now; I have had enough of it.

Q. And where have you moved to now?—Salubrious Ilford.

Q. When did you first know a member of the board of guardians?—About five or six years ago; I could not say definitely.

Q. Roughly, about 1900 or 1901?—Yes.

Q. Were you apprenticed to an electrical engineer?—I did not serve an apprenticeship, but worked for some years with an electrical firm.

Q. In Poplar?—No, in the city.

Q. The name?—The Electrical Accessories Company, of Charing Cross Road.

Q. Did you work as a clerk or as an engineer?—In the workshop.

Q. You never had an apprenticeship?—No.

Q. After having been there for a time, what was the next thing you did?—I went to another firm, and started on my own account.

Q. When was that?—1897 or 1898.

Q. And did you start in Poplar?—Yes.

Q. You had been in business here two or three years before you got to know any of the guardians at all?—Oh, yes; some time.

Q. Who was the first guardian you got to know?—Mr. Peacock, I think, being a neighbour.

Q. He lived near you?—He did at that time.

Q. Same street?—Same road.

Q. What was the road?—The East India Dock Road.

Q. And you met him first of all casually as a neighbour?—Yes.

Q. And who next did you get to know?—Another gentleman through business sources; but he is not a guardian now.

Q. You had better tell us his name? Mr. Chivers. I made his acquaintance as a customer.

Q. And between 1897 and 1900 were you in the habit of meeting Mr. Chivers at a public-house?—No. I have never been in a public-house with Mr. Chivers.

Q. With Mr. Peacock you have been?—Yes, but not in the years you said.

Q. You did not begin to go to public-houses till later on?—No.

Q. So that in 1900 you knew Mr. Peacock and Mr. Chivers only?—That is right.

Q. When did it first strike you you would like to get work from the guardians?—As soon as I knew there was something to be got.

Q. What was that?—About the same period as I made Mr. Peacock's acquaintance was when I first tendered. About the same year, I think. No, I made Mr. Peacock's

acquaintance through going to ask about the position of engineer. Being a neighbour I asked him about the appointment. He told me it was filled.

Q. Was that the time the position was advertised?—That was the day it was advertised.

Q. He told you it was no good putting in because it was filled?—Yes.

Q. Did he say who had it?—He gave me three names—Giles, Cunningham, and Brown.

Q. Do you know what the day was it was advertised?—I could not tell you that. It was either Tuesday or Friday.

Q. At the time the advertisement appeared, on the same day Mr. Peacock told you the offices were going to be filled by those three men?—That is so.

Q. There was only one appointed?—Three, first, two and three.

Q. And these three men would have them in that order?—Yes.

Q. That was how you came to know Mr. Peacock?—Yes.

Q. And you knew Mr. Chivers from business relations with him?—Yes.

Q. When was it you began drinking with Mr. Peacock in a public-house?—About twelve months after that.

Q. That would be in 1901?—I cannot say exactly.

Q. I won't pin you to that. Who was the next guardian you got to know?—Mr. A. Smith was the next.

Q. That was the gentlemen sitting here?—Yes.

Q. When was anything said about your tendering for guardians' contracts?—About 1902.

Q. Who made the suggestion.—I saw them advertised and told them I was going to tender.

Q. Told Peacock and Smith?—Yes.

Q. Were they often together. Where was it they were all together?—Sometimes in Mr. Peacock's shop.

Q. Sometimes a refreshment room, wasn't it. What name?—Dock House.

Q. Did you first open out the matter about the tenders, or did they. You said about putting in?—I did.

Q. What did they say about that?—They told me I had a chance of getting it.

Q. Who said that?—I could not tell you definitely.

Q. Were the two in your judgment acting together in the matter?—Oh, yes, they were friends.

Q. When you say they were merely talking, did they each take part in these discussions?—Yes.

Q. And one of them said—perhaps you won't remember much—if you put in a tender for goods you stood a chance of getting it?—That is so.

Q. Did you tell them what price?—No.

Q. What you were going in for?—Yes. Electrical goods.

Q. Nothing more definite?—No.

Q. What is the next step when they told you you had a chance of getting it?—The next step I got it.

Q. No; the next step was you put in your tender?—Yes, if you go into details.

Q. Did you think it advisable to see any other guardian about it?—No.

Q. Did you speak to any other guardian?—No.

Q. About your having tendered or wanting to get the contract?—No.

Q. Or to any official?—No, no one else.

Q. Did you speak to Peacock and Smith about it?—Yes.

Q. You told them you put in a tender?—Yes.

Q. Did you tell them your price?—No.

Q. Did you ask them to help you to get it?—Yes.

Q. Both of them?—Yes.

Q. What did they say?—They would do their best.

Q. Did they both say the same thing?—Yes.

Q. Both Peacock and Smith said they would do their best?—Yes.

Q. And you did get it?—Yes.

Q. Who did you hear from first that you had got it?—On that occasion I had a letter from the clerk accepting it.

Q. Telling you it had been accepted?—Yes.

Q. Neither Peacock or Smith came to tell you you had got it?—No.

Q. Although if they were on the committee or the board when the tenders were accepted they would know long before the clerk's letter reached you?—Yes.

Q. Neither of them brought you the "tip," as they call it, that you had got the tender?—No.

Q. You first heard from Mr. Lough in the ordinary way. Did you see anything of them about Mr. Lough's letter?—Yes, I told them I had it.

Q. What did you say?—I told them.

Q. Where did this take place?—At Mr. Peacock's—in his shop—and I met Mr. Smith and thanked him.

Q. What did Mr. Peacock say?—He did not say very much—nothing.

Q. So far as your recollection goes I want to know. What did Mr. Peacock say?—I don't see what you are driving at.

Q. Never mind what I am driving at. I want you to tell me. You remember quite well after getting the contract you went to Mr. Peacock's shop and thanked him. What did you say to him?—As a matter of fact, I gave him an order for a suit.

(The Inspector.) I could not hear?—I gave him an order for a suit.

(Mr. Grant.) A suit of clothes?—Yes.

Q. We shall get on better if you will give everything in detail. You went into his shop and said, "I have the contract"?—That is so.

Q. Obligated for what you have done?—Yes.

Q. Something like that?—Yes.

Q. And you said, "I want a new suit of clothes"?—Yes.

Q. Did you ask the price?—No.

Q. Ordered him to send it home?—Yes.

Q. He sent it, of course?—Yes.

Q. What is the price of it?—55s., if I remember rightly.

Q. For the whole suit?—Yes.

Q. Did he say something about future suits?—Future suits?

Q. Or future contracts?—No, nothing about future contracts.

Q. What was said about future suits?—Nothing definite. I wondered what you meant. I cannot understand you as representing the guardians; you are bringing out things I am not anxious to tell you.

Q. Mr. Greaves, every man to his trade. You are an electrical engineer, I am an advocate. If I choose to do business, don't try to prevent me from making a fool of myself. Let me conduct my case in my own way, and ask questions in my own way. Then we shall be satisfied. Did Mr. Peacock say anything about future suits?—He did not say anything about future suits, but I had them there.

Q. Had you another tailor before that?—Yes.

Q. And transferred to Mr. Peacock?—Yes.

Q. Deal with him still?—No.

Q. When did you stop ordering clothes from Mr. Peacock?—When?

Q. When you lost getting the contract?—It might coincide with that date. I should say it did.

Q. They did coincide?—I think so.

Q. You ought to know?—I don't quite remember.

Q. Within a month or two they coincided?—Yes.

Q. Altogether, how much did you pay Mr. Peacock for the clothes?—In how long?

Q. During the time you began to the time you left off?—£30 or £40.

Q. Now, Mr. Greaves, having been to Mr. Peacock, you went to Mr. Smith and thanked him. Did you tell him you were glad?—I didn't go to Mr. Smith. I met him afterwards.

Mr. Greaves.

10 July.

Q. Where did you meet him?—In the "Beehive."

Q. "Beehive," Mr. Greaves, I suppose, is—?

(Mr. Smith.) It's a cookshop.

(Mr. Grant.) I was going to ask that. It is not a public-house?—It is a beerhouse.

Q. You buy liquor there?—Yes.

Q. You had been having a glass together?—Yes.

Q. You paid?—I think we paid for one each.

Q. Do you remember what you drank?—Bitter ale, I should think.

(Mr. Smith.) Mr. Davy, I must contradict that statement. I don't drink beer.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Smith, sit down. Mr. Greaves, have you ever had any beer with Mr. Smith?—Yes.

Q. Beer?—Yes.

Q. More than once?—Yes.

Q. Several times?—Yes.

Q. Now, when you met Mr. Smith in the "Beehive," how soon after getting the contract was it?—In the evening probably.

Q. In the evening when you met him?—Yes.

Q. And you thanked him for helping you to get the contract?—Yes.

Q. What did he say?—I don't remember the details of conversations two years ago.

Q. Put your mind to it?—I should not remember then.

Q. Make an effort. Tell me all you can remember?—I don't remember the details of conversations two years ago. It is no use pressing me on the matter.

Q. Was there any transaction of the nature of ordering a suit?—What, with Mr. Smith? Do you make wooden suits? How can I order a suit from Mr. Smith?

Q. You are not doing yourself justice. First of all, you don't pay attention to my question?—There is nothing I don't want to answer; but ask me proper questions.

Q. Was there anything in the nature of—having thanked Mr. Peacock, you ordered a suit; having thanked Mr. Smith, what did you do for him?—Nothing.

Q. Nothing at all?—No.

Q. Then or any time?—No.

Q. Never at all, or on any occasion, have you done anything for Mr. Smith which would be of benefit to him?—No, I don't think so.

Q. Just put your mind to that for a moment?—Nothing of any consequence.

Q. Let us have the trifles, then. What are the trifles?—Well, nothing. I have done nothing at all.

Q. Have you taken him on excursions?—Not at my expense.

Q. Treated him to dinners, or anything of that kind?—No.

Q. Mr. Smith did help you to get the work?—I think so.

Q. Did you make any return to him for the help he gave?—No.

Q. None whatever?—No.

Q. This was the first contract you did?—Yes.

Q. You had others, hadn't you?—One other.

Q. The tenders come out every year, don't they?—Yes.

Q. And your first tender was 1904?—Yes, I think so. No, 1903.

Q. 1903. This was the one you spoke of. When the tenders for 1904 were asked for, did you speak to Mr. Peacock again about it?—Mr. Peacock was not a guardian then.

Q. Did you speak to Mr. Smith about it?—Yes.

Q. What did you tell him?—I asked him to give me his vote.

Q. What did he say?—He would.

Q. He said he would?—Yes.

Q. Did you speak to any other guardian?—No, I don't think so.

Q. Just clear your memory. It is not so far back. This is 1905?—I don't think I asked anybody else.

Q. If I read the list of guardians, will it help you?—No, it won't help me.

Q. Let us try?—No, I won't remember.

Q. You are sure you didn't ask any other guardian to help you to get the contract?—I don't remember having done so.

Q. You did get the contract again?—In 1904?

Q. Yes?—In 1904, that was the rejected year.

Q. I understand from you?—Yes, I got it that year. That is right.

Q. Let us get it clear. I ask you step by step. 1903 was the first tender you got?—Yes.

Q. First contract you got?—Yes.

Q. In 1904 you put in, and your tender was rejected?—1904 I got it.

Q. In 1905 you put in, and your tender was rejected. In 1906 you didn't put in?—That is so.

Q. As to 1904-5-6, you have told us about the first. When you put in for the second, did you ask anyone except Mr. Smith?—I think I asked Mr. Peacock. He was on at that time, I think.

Q. Mr. Peacock was on at that time, and spoke to you?—Yes.

Q. Did he say he would do his best for you?—Yes.

Q. And you got it?—Yes.

Q. Did you do any more than order your suit?—No.

Q. As far as Mr. Peacock was concerned, your transactions with him were comprised within the suits you told us ran to £30 or £40. With that exception you have done nothing for him, directly or indirectly, to acknowledge his services to you?—That is so.

Q. Directly or indirectly. You know what I mean by indirectly?—I think so.

Q. If you gave his wife a ring or his child an expensive toy—that is what I mean by indirectly. I want you to see what I mean. Directly or indirectly, have you done anything for Mr. Smith since he was a guardian?—No.

Q. Nothing at all?—No.

Q. Whether in consequence of what he had done for you or not?—That is so.

Q. You were telling me about other guardians?—I was going to tell you.

Q. I want to ask you—give me the names of any other guardians you approached?—I have approached no other guardians.

Q. No other guardians at all?—No.

Q. Mr. Peacock and Mr. Smith were not only guardians, but also managers of the Sick Asylum?—That is so.

Q. Did you put in tenders for the Sick Asylum?—Applications for appointments—yes.

Q. Appointment?—Appointments didn't come under the head of tenders—appointment of tradesmen.

Q. Oh, I see, and you applied for them?—Yes.

Q. Who suggested you should apply?—In the first instance, Mr. Peacock.

Q. Peacock; and did you speak to anyone else about it?—As a matter of fact, I got it the first time without applying.

Q. Without applying: how was that?—I don't know. I got a letter saying I had got it. I didn't know anything about it, but I was pleased to get it.

Q. That was some unknown friend who intervened on your behalf. Who was that unknown friend?—Mr. Peacock.

Q. What was the acknowledgment for that unsolicited, secret service: what did you do for Mr. Peacock?—No more than I have already told you.

Q. You did not do anything more?—No.

Q. What was that appointment as tradesman worth to you: what profit did you make out of it?—About 30s. a week, I suppose—£1 or 30s.

Q. For a year?—Six months.

Q. When that ran out, did you try again?—Yes. I got it three or four times successively.

Q. Mr. Peacock helped you all the time?—Yes.

Q. Any other person helping you?—I think, having carried it out six months, it was satisfactory, and I freely had the confidence of the board.

Q. Was there any other member of the board whom you approached about it?—No, not from the point of approaching.

Q. Was there any member you happened to come in contact with and speak about it?—No, not to speak definitely about any particular appointment. Having tendered so many times I got to know people, and stopped and spoke to them, but never approached them in regard to the appointment.

Q. You were in touch with them?—Yes.

Q. And they knew you were the tradesman employed?—Yes.

Q. And you made friends, as a man does in those circumstances?—Yes.

Q. To anyone but Mr. Peacock did you give?—I never said I gave him anything.

Q. You ordered suits which you would not have given if you hadn't got the contract?—If you put it that way.

Q. Was there no one else to give a similar thing in a similar way?—No.

Q. Mr. Peacock was the only one who was fortunate enough to get anything out of you?—That is so.

Q. Others served you for nothing?—I don't know they served me. They served their own interest.

Q. Now the matter of £20. Who was it suggested you should go in for the contract?—Which?

Q. The £20 you told us about just now?—Who suggested I should go in for the contract?

Q. Yes?—It was simply a re-appointment again of the contract you are talking about.

Q. Re-appointment to what?—The last one you finished talking about?

Q. What?—Tradesman to the Sick Asylum.

Q. Were you called the electrical engineer?—No, appointment of tradesman to carry out electrical repairs.

Q. I see. You were appointed for six months to carry out any electrical repairs at the Sick Asylum?—Yes.

Q. Having held the appointment for some time one of these two men suggested you should apply for it again?—There was no suggestion, only in the natural course.

Q. How did the £20 come to be mentioned?—I was told another contractor was offering £20, and if I didn't find the same amount I should not get it again. I didn't find the £20, and I didn't get it again.

Q. Who was the other contractor?—The name given to me and the name of the successful contractor was Palmer, of Burdett Road.

Q. He found £20 for someone?—That is the way it was put to me. I don't say Palmer found £20.

Q. Who put it to you Palmer was finding £20?—Mr. Peacock.

Q. Who was he to pay it to?—To himself.

Q. To Mr. Peacock?—It was to be shared, I understood, between these people.

Q. Who else?—Albert Smith and another Smith on the board. That is what they told me.

Q. Quite so. All I am asking you is to tell me what you were told. No one will complain if you tell me. Mr. Peacock told you Palmer was finding £20 in order to secure the appointment?—Yes.

Q. The £20 to be shared between Peacock, Albert Smith, and another Mr. Smith?—That is so.

Q. You can tell me what Smith it was—the initials?—I forget the initials. There was no other Smith on the board.

Q. Where was it Peacock told you about the £20?—The actual place?

Q. Yes?—In his own shop.

Q. Can you fix the date at all?—No, not definitely.

Q. What year was it?—Last year, March.

Q. March last year?—Yes.

Q. That is enough for me. Did he open the subject to you first of all?—Yes.

Q. Did it come to this. He told you unless you paid him £20 you would not get the job?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) I think the witness told me it was March, 1904.

(The Inspector.) Which was it?

(Mr. Grant.) This is 1906?—It would be last year, 1905. You were talking about the other contract.

Q. If you said 1904 it was a mistake?—It was 1905.

Q. You are sure it was March, 1905?—Yes.

Q. You went to Mr. Peacock's shop, and he opened to you, and said, "If you want to get that contract, you will have to pay £20"?—Yes.

Q. What did you say?—I was a little bit surprised to hear him say it. I took the matter a little heated. I was rather hot over the matter.

Q. What?

(The Inspector.) He was angry?—I was angry.

(Mr. Grant.) You were angry with Mr. Peacock?—Yes.

What did you say to him?—As a matter of fact I scarcely took it as serious for the moment, but I found later in the day he was serious.

Q. What did you say?—I refused to give it.

(The Inspector.) When did you say it?—Later in the day. I didn't take it seriously. Later in the day I got heated about it.

(Mr. Grant.) Did you call him any names?—Very probably.

Q. I hope you did, because there are occasions when a man is justified in using strong language?—I am the sort of man that would.

Q. I should call that an attempt to corrupt an honest man. What did you say to Mr. Peacock you thought he was?—I considered it scoundrelism, seeing we had been fast friends for a long time.

Q. That is what you said?—Yes; I probably called him a scamp.

Q. You said it was scoundrelism for him to propose to you you should give £20 after you had been pals for a long time?—Yes.

Q. What did Mr. Peacock say?—He couldn't help it. Those were the circumstances, which I found were true.

Q. What were the circumstances?—He said they were the circumstances of my getting the contract, to pay the £20.

Q. They were the terms upon which you would get the contract?—Yes.

Q. And you found it was true?—Yes.

Q. How did you find it out?—I lost it, and the man nominated got it. He didn't vote for me, and Mr. Albert Smith didn't vote for me. It is evident what happened.

Q. It may possibly be that a man might be trying to get something out of you knowing how the contract was going from the talk among the guardians. There might be an honest appointment and an attempt to blackmail you?—I don't see that. All the rest of the board were satisfied with the work I carried out and voted for me.

Q. Was it a near thing?—One vote.

Q. One vote turned you out?—Yes.

Q. And Peacock voted for you?—He didn't vote at all.

Q. Smith?—He didn't vote.

Q. The other Smith?—Moved I didn't get it.

Q. One of the men who was to get a share of the £20 voted and turned the contract against you?—Moved the other contract.

Q. I want you to tell me all. What Mr. Robb wants you to tell me, and what Mr. Davy wants you to tell me is all about this business. I have asked everything I can think of, and I hope I have got all the details. If there is anything I haven't asked which ought to be told, please tell me now?—I think I have told you the lot.

Q. I hope you have. I have been very careful. The question of contracts. Did you have prices of these competitive contracts?—Did I price them? Did I get out my own estimates?

Q. Take these three things. The B.T.H., Ediswan, and Electra lamps?—Yes.

Mr. Greaves.

10 July.

Mr. Greaves.

10 July.

Q. Who put in the prices. Stephen Smith and Co. put in a price; Pryke put in a price; and Pyle put in a price?—Yes.

Q. Do you price them up and see what they come to?—I haven't seen them.

Q. These are the prices for the three things taken in the order:—B.T.H. Ediswan—that is the two combined, Edison and Swan—and the Electra. Stephen Smith and Co., B.T.H., 12s.; Pryke, 10s. Ediswan, Stephen Smith and Co., 15s.; Pryke put in Ediswan, 14s. Stephen Smith, Electra, 9s.; and Pryke, 12s. So you see, there is a very considerable difference in the price. Pryke is cheaper for B.T.H. by 2s., and for Ediswan Pryke is cheaper by 1s., and Stephen Smith and Co. cheaper for Electra by 3s. When they come to be priced up, taking the figures from tenders, Stephen Smith and Co., who give prices for the B.T.H. 12s., come to £9 12s. Are these for different years?—My price is 10s.

Q. I only make a note. I am right in the figure. Pryke is below Stephen Smith in the first two items, and Stephen Smith is below Pryke in the third. When you work out the estimated quantities priced up, they give you £28 16s., the same thing. Stephen Smith, B.T.H., £9 12s.; price for Ediswan, £12; price for Electra, £7 4s. Pryke's price for B.T.H. is £8; Ediswan, £11 4s.; and Electra, £9 12s. If you add those totals, you find the price of the two come to £28 16s.—I know I am below the whole lot.

Q. I am not taking your figures. Just the figures of these two?

(Mr. Robb.) Would you give Mr. Greaves' figures?

(Mr. Grant.) Certainly. What is Mr. Pyle's figures?

(Mr. Osley.) £33 12s.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Greaves, in those three items taken alone, the guardians accepted the highest of all, and yours were the lowest, and you didn't get it?—That is so.

Q. As to the difficulties of delivery, you had a number of letters from Mr. Lough complaining of the deliveries?—I don't know I had a number from Mr. Lough. I may have had one or two, perhaps.

Q. Here's one:—"25th August, 1904. Dear Sir,—Order No. 43, 2nd April, 1904, I am directed by the board of guardians to state that it having been reported to them that the order for the goods, 10 c.p. lamps, has not yet been executed, the order for these goods is cancelled herewith.—Yours faithfully, G. HERBERT LOUGH, clerk. Mr. T. W. Greaves, 38, St. Leonards Road, E." Not only delayed, but the order was cancelled?—Yes.

Q. You asked, I think, to be allowed to go before the house committee?—Oh, no. Quite a distinct matter. The question of price.

Q. There was a matter of prices upon which you were not satisfied, and asked to go before the house committee?—Yes.

Q. And went before them?—Yes.

Q. In September, 1904?—Yes.

Q. Was the result satisfactory to you?—Oh, yes. They paid what I claimed.

Q. They first of all refused to pay you, and the matter was thrashed out in the house committee, and they paid you?—Yes.

Q. You don't suggest anything wrong about doing that?—Nothing wrong in paying me, no.

Q. Now, I must take you through another matter you have mentioned. It is this matter about the building contract with Mr. Gibbs. What is the date of that?—It ran along for some period.

Q. When did it begin. When did you first hear of it?—The early part of 1904 or the latter part of 1903.

Q. Latter part of 1903 or beginning of 1904?—Yes.

Q. What did you hear first?—Well, I knew there was a position or appointment of outdoor tradesman to do sanitary repairs—builder's repairs.

Q. To whom?—To the person named Gibbs.

Q. What job. Was it the Sick Asylum?—Yes. You want these details?

Q. Yes, certainly, please?—The person named Gibbs was appointed to carry out the work; he had various orders, executed some work, didn't complete others. That person of the name of Gibbs lives in Brunswick Road, and collected the cheque from the Sick Asylum,

and all Mr. Smith's utensils were on the work being carried out. I don't think there are any further details. If there are, if you give me time, I will get them.

Q. What Gibbs was this you are speaking about. What initials?—I could not give them. It is no connection of Mr. Gibbs, the guardian. It was simply a fictitious name adopted by Mr. Smith to carry out the work.

Q. That is what has been put to you?—Not been put to me. I know it. I have said something serious if it is not true.

Q. I have no complaint to make. I only want you to tell me these things, that we might get to the bottom. Now, how did you come to know about it?—It seemed to be a common topic of conversation.

Q. Rumour has a hundred tongues, but one of them has spoken to you?—Yes.

Q. Can you carry your memory back to tell me who it was who said anything to you about it?—I think the whole thing came from Mr. Smith and Mr. Peacock's foolishness in chipping one another about how much they made.

Q. That does happen sometimes. There is an old proverb, "When rogues fall out, honest men come by their own." When did this chipping take place?—I cannot give you the exact details.

Q. I daresay it was in a public-house?—More likely.

Q. And someone of the party had too much to drink?—No. I heard the rumour when they have both been sober.

Q. The first time you talked about it one was more excited than he ought to have been?—I don't say so.

Q. What was it—one of the two men—Smith and Peacock—one chipped the other about the profits they made?—Yes.

Q. Did they say what profit?—What, the amount, or the source whence it came?

Q. Tell me what the amount was, and where it was made from?—No amount mentioned.

Q. What was the contract made on?—In regard to this Gibbs' business.

Q. Then Peacock and Smith knew it was Gibbs' business?—Yes.

Q. And one—I suppose it was Smith—who made the profit?—Supposed to have done.

Q. And Peacock chipped Smith about the profits he made?—I think so.

Q. What did Peacock suggest: that Gibbs hauled in a pile?—That is it.

Q. And Mr. Smith, I suppose, said it was not as much as Peacock thought it was?—Very possibly, but I don't see the drift of all this.

Q. You heard it?—I heard all kinds of things.

Q. You heard this about chipping?—Yes.

Q. Did you take any part in it?—Very possibly.

Q. I mean it was a surprise to find anybody was making a lot of money like this?—I don't know that I studied the matter at all. I don't see what good service you are doing to ask all these silly questions.

Q. The position was this: that Mr. Smith had made a lot of money?—I don't know whether he did.

Q. Peacock was saying he had, and you heard him?—Yes.

Q. Was it Peacock said the contract had been done by Smith under Gibbs' name?—Yes.

Q. And Smith didn't deny it?—No.

Q. Did Peacock say Smith's utensils had been used?—I saw them.

Q. You saw them on the job?—Yes.

Q. How often was this talked of between the three of you?—Dozens of times.

Q. Sometimes in Peacock's house?—I was only in his house once.

Q. Where was it it was mostly talked about?—You suggested at the start it was probably in a public-house, so we will keep to it.

Q. I want to know where you were usually to be found?—I presume we have met there.

Q. That may be possible. I have no recollection of it. At any rate, you and Mr. Smith and Mr. Peacock were meeting in public-houses and discussing fortunes or ill-fortunes in regard to the contracts?

(Mr. Smith.) I have repudiated this charge.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Peacock knew all about it?—That is it.

(Mr. Robb.) I don't know whether Mr. Grant wants to ask anything further about the engagement of electrician?

(The Inspector.) I have three or four questions. I understand three men were appointed in the order in which it was said, and it does not occur to me there was any further—

(Mr. Robb.) It was my last point. That was so.

(The Inspector.) When you first tendered to the Poplar Guardians had you a shop or stall of any kind?—Oh, yes.

Q. So you had material in hand?—Oh, yes.

Q. To supply?—Yes.

Q. What had been your training as an engineer. You worked in the shop for some time?—At my own workshops, attended scores of lectures and schools.

Q. When you were appointed tradesman by the Sick Asylum were you allowed to charge what prices you liked?—Within reason, yes.

Q. Did you make any tender for any specific charge?—No, not under £50.

Q. Did you make an estimate?—Not under £50.

Q. Anything under £50 you just ordered it?—Well, if it was passed by the committee.

Q. From whom did you get the order?—From the clerk.

Q. And then did the work and sent in the bill in the ordinary way?—That is so.

Q. Did that give you an opportunity of charging exceptional charges?—I could have done it if I liked.

Q. Did you share your profit with anyone else?—No.

Q. Was it worth your while paying £50 for the job for any year, or £20, or whatever it was?—I could make £20 profit.

Q. Because you think that system of ordering enables the tradesman to do very well for himself?—Yes.

Q. Looking at the tender for lamps alone, your tender for the three descriptions of lamps on estimated quantity amounts to £25 12s. 2d.?—Yes.

Q. Whereas Mr. Pyle's amount was £33 12s. 2d.?—Yes.

Q. But the quantity delivered at one time was much larger than the estimated quantity?—Yes.

Q. In one case where 16 dozen were estimated 36 dozen were supplied?—Yes, that was usual.

Q. That was usual?—Yes.

Q. Then in the next item, 16 dozen estimated, and 108 dozen delivered?—Yes.

Q. And so on. If you take the brushes shown below you find that your tender for brushes amounts to £70 12s. 2d.?—Yes.

Q. Whereas Mr. Pyle's is £8 12s. 6d.?—Yes.

Q. And no brushes were delivered?—That is so.

Q. So that on the estimated quantities your tender amounted to £96 4s. 2d., whereas Pyle's tender was £43 6s. 6d.?—Yes.

Q. But on the actual deliveries Pyle's was £119 14s., whereas you would have been only paid £96 6s.?—Yes.

Q. That is, a number of brushes was required in excess of the estimated quantity?—Yes.

Q. If you had known that you would have been able to do it?—Yes. I practically knew all these brushes would not be required, but I was afraid to put 2d. or 3d. each, because I would have got the order right away.

Q. How do you know?—I know that, without doubt.

Q. These big tenders. Did you know at the time the sixteen dozen estimated would be 108 dozen when it came to actual delivery?—I didn't know it, but guessed so.

Q. You may have guessed that from your knowledge of the half-year before?—Yes.

Q. It is possible by your judgment to make sort of estimate without actual knowledge?—I had had the contract, so I knew so.

Q. Having had the contract, you knew what they were forward, and that enabled you to make a better estimate than men who hadn't had contracts?—Yes, when these things are four times as much as are contracted for in these institutions. I don't think they are in others.

Q. You would have known from your past experience, which enabled you to judge what amounts would be actually required, either less or more than the estimated quantity, which information would not be in the possession of a stranger?—Yes, a stranger.

Q. So, actual information from the officers or some other party apart, the existing contractor has a great pull?—Yes, I should say so.

Q. Will you tell me, knowing as you did that these brushes would not be asked for, why you put in, I suppose, £75, which was a fair price, and your opponent putting in only £8 12s. You put in £70 12s. 2d.?—I don't know positively what I thought there would be.

Q. Didn't you know you were giving away your tender by not making use of your information?—I explained I was not on particularly good terms with the engineer, and, had I put them in at 2d. or 3d. each, I should have got an order for a gross right away.

Q. If you had been on good terms with the engineer you could risk it?—I would risk it.

Q. That is technical knowledge. An ordinary guardian would not know about carbon brushes, etc.?—He has to trust to his officers.

Q. So a guardian may be a good guardian, but some matters, such matters, would be in the hands of technical officers?—Yes, as to quantities required.

(Mr. Grant.) It follows so. A contractor who wanted to get in—it is obvious—who wanted to get in a contract—he is outside, and only the tender forms to go upon, the only chance he has is by putting in such low prices, whether he gains or loses, that the guardians must take his tender?—An outside contractor.

Q. Suppose an outside contractor wants to do business with the guardians, he hasn't the information the old contractor has; his only chance is to state low to get the contract for one year?—He should have the proper information on the tender form.

Q. I agree, but it is not so?—Not to be told they want 36 dozen and they want 300 dozen.

Q. The guardians have to protect themselves or they would have a ring among the contractors?—No, make rings for a £400 job, not £40.

Q. You would not tell the Inspector there has never been a ring among electrical engineers?—Among china contractors.

Q. I want you to bring your mind on that point. Can the information which is given in this tender form, the estimated price—supposing I am a man who wants to get a contract with Poplar Guardians, and you are the man who has contracted for 12 years. You know all about it and know how to price contracts?—Yes.

Q. You put the things they won't have very low?—Yes.

Q. And put the things they are certain to have high?—That depends upon the good terms with those who are ordering.

Q. No doubt if you can get any information from those who are ordering you will?—I should not say I would not.

Q. The outsider, who has not all these advantages, if he is determined to get the contract, he has to put in prices under you—put in a tender that cannot fail?—Is it likely an outside tenderer would tender £8 for goods worth £60 or £70?

Q. I put it to you it is not only probable but actually done. Have you heard of leather aprons being put in at a farthing apiece?—When none were required.

Q. The man wanted to get the contract?—He would.

Q. He would get the information next year to enable him to put in for a tender on which he could make a decent living?—I suppose he would.

(Mr. Robb.) The whole of that theory proceeds upon the assumption that the lowest tender would be accepted?—Oh, yes. That is provided the lowest tender—

Q. We know that is not the case in Poplar?—That is so.

Mr. Greaves.

10 July.

Mr. Greaves,
10 July.

Q. For instance, Pryke, Palmer & Co.'s outside contracts were much lower than Mr. Pyle's?—Yes.

Q. And yet they were not accepted. They were tendering without all this interesting information?—Yes.

Q. And although Mr. Pyle had held the contract for ten years, Pryke & Palmer were able to tender lower than he did?—Yes.

Q. And yet didn't get it?—Yes.

Q. Doesn't that rather destroy Mr. Grant's theory?—Certainly it does.

Q. Mr. Grant's theory proceeds on the assumption you deal with contracts on their merits. The Inspector rather suggested to you that the special position of a contractor who held a contract sometimes would enable him to put in tenders in the way we have heard described, but would not you want something beyond that to ensure safety—good understanding with someone?—You dare not do that unless you are on the best of terms with those who had the ordering.

Q. Dare not?—No.

Q. Could Mr. Pyle have possibly put in his tenders on the strength of his previous knowledge?—I am not to say that.

Q. Do you think it is conceivable you would have done it?—It is not for me to answer.

(Mr. Grant.) I did not catch it myself, but I am told you put to Mr. Greaves his price was £70.

(The Inspector.) I added it up.

(Mr. Oxley.) Including arc carbons.

(Mr. Grant.) Makes £70, including arc carbons. I am told Pryke's figures for the same thing are £23 4s. 8d., and Stephen Smith & Co.'s figures for the same thing £19 13s. 1d., against £70?—That is because they didn't know what they had to supply.

(Mr. Smith.) Before you close the Court may I go into the box and deny that statement on oath?

(The Inspector.) I advise you not.

(Mr. Smith.) I am prepared to say every word he has uttered is a diabolical lie.

(The Inspector.) Just wait 24 hours.

(Mr. Smith.) I don't want to wait. I know who did the job.

TWELFTH DAY.

Wednesday, July 11th, 1906.

(The Inspector.) I understand that Mr. Robb is delayed this morning, but there is some evidence we can proceed with without him.

(Mr. Grant.) Do you not intend to call an Inspector of the Local Government Board?

(The Inspector.) I did not intend to, but I will if you like. I will not be long.

(Mr. Grant.) I want to clear up the question of the workhouse meat, and I am told that the Inspectors have seen the meat at times and expressed a high opinion of it, and if I can take it from one of the Inspectors I shall be satisfied.

Mr. W. G. MARTLEY; sworn and examined.*

Mr. Martley,
11 July.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Martley, you have lived in Poplar many years, I believe?—Since 1891.

Q. And you are Secretary of the Charity Organisation Society?—I am the paid secretary of the local branch.

Q. I do not call you as a secretary of the Charity Organisation Society, but as a man who has been for many years interested in the social conditions of Poplar. And you have been good enough to attend here to give me such evidence as you can. That is so, is it not?—Well, sir, to some extent I represent the Charity Organisation Society to-day. I propose to put in some documents—correspondence with the board.

Q. As I understand, of recent years there has been a change in the nature of the population—that is to say, Poplar is ceasing to be a shipbuilding place and is becoming an industrial centre?—Yes.

Q. Can you give us some illustrations of that?—I have some evidence I gave before the Committee on Casual Labour. Might it be taken. Is it necessary to ask me for this evidence again?

Q. I should like to put it shortly, because that is not exactly what I want. The ironworks and shipbuilding works have decreased, have they not?—Shipbuilding has.

Q. And there has been a considerable growth of factories?—In other trades—yes.

Q. Matchmaking, and so on?—Yes.

Q. Is the dock work as important as it used to be?—It does not employ so much labour.

Q. Is there a decreasing demand?—Yes.

Q. Can you tell me whether the transfer of the shipbuilding and other industries was due to any change in trade, any general change in trade, or due to some local conditions?—I understand there is a great change in shipbuilding. It cannot be carried on unless it is on a large scale. In London it is organised on a comparatively small scale, and fails to compete with larger industries on the Tyne and the Clyde.

Q. So that you would not say that the transfer was due to the increase of rates entirely?—Certainly not.

Q. I understand there has been no systematic inquiry into the comparative poverty of the London unions since Mr. Charles Booth undertook it?—Not that I know of.

Q. But you are cognisant of what has been going on in your immediate neighbourhood?—Yes.

Q. I suppose from the point of view of Poor Law and relief the casual labourer is the most difficult person with whom we have to deal, is he not?—Yes.

Q. Now, do you find that the difficulty with casual dock labour is greater or less than it used to be?—Less, I should say.

Q. That is to say, the casual dock labourer comes for relief less than he used to do?—I cannot isolate the casual dock labourer—the casual labourer generally—and I say the casual labourer gets more work in a normal way now than he did 15 years ago.

Q. Has his condition in other respects improved, do you think. Do you find that the unemployable class is less rather than it was?—I find the unemployable class is decreasing.

Q. Now, there is another form of casual labourer. Are there any women who are employed in these factories who do not work full time?—Yes.

Q. Are there a great many of that class in Poplar?—A great many.

Q. That is to say, people who are paid by the day for work they do in their own homes or the factories?—Yes.

Q. Do you think that there are any indications that certain employers prefer casual labour of that description to permanent hands?—I think some trades are organised on a basis of casual labour.

Q. Actually organised on a basis?—Yes.

* See also Appendix, page 400.

Mr. Martley.

11 July.

Q. That is to say, the casual labourer would be a sort of reservoir in which the employer could dip for labour when he wished?—Yes, probably.

Q. He would be less responsible, would he not, for casual labourers than for permanent employees?—Yes.

Q. Now, I understand that in some trades the wages paid for that sort of casual labour are very low?—Yes.

Q. Can you give me an illustration?—I cannot give you any figures.

Q. But it is a bare subsistence?—In very many cases.

Q. And it is an uncertain subsistence?—Very often.

Q. That is to say, a labourer—a woman, say, working in one of these factories does not know at the beginning of the work how many days' work she will get?—Very often.

Q. Would those cases be often subsidised by the Poor Law?—I am hardly in a position to say. Some would, no doubt.

Q. And you think that the system of casual labour is made possible by the free grant of out-relief?—I should say that the free grant of out-relief tends to perpetuate the system.

Q. Might it not be that some employers, though they suffer from the high rates, yet get something back in the way of cheap and convenient labour subsidised by the Poor Law?—They might think so.

Q. But you would hold that they were in the long run mistaken?—I would.

Q. But it is a plausible sort of thing, is it not?—I can imagine some employers are quite content to go on with the casual system, and leave their employees to fall back on the guardians. Might I say I have a short table here showing the relative employment of women, from the census, in the riverside boroughs.

Q. I should be glad to have it; will you read it?—The proportion of women's earnings in the riverside boroughs—this is a comparison of two columns in the census, (1) engaged, (2) total 10 years and upwards. Stepney, 40 out of 110 (leaving out the thousands), 40 out of 110, that is 36 per cent.; Southwark, 28 out of 79, 35 per cent.; Bermondsey, 16 out of 49, 32 per cent.; Lambeth, 42 out of 128, 32 per cent.; Poplar, 19 out of 63, 30 per cent.; Deptford, 12 out of 44, 27 per cent. I account for the lowness in the percentage in Poplar and Deptford by the fact that they are a long way from the City.

Q. As I said just now, there has been no really systematic account of the industrial conditions of East End unions published since the one published by Mr. Charles Booth. But, speaking from your own knowledge, you will, I suppose, agree that Poplar is a very poor district?—It is a poor district.

Q. Is the poverty homogeneous, so to speak, spread over the whole district, or are there poor patches?—Poor patches—not homogeneous.

Q. Would you say the poor patches were as poor as Canning Town?—Yes, some of them.

Q. And the other parts of Poplar?—Are much better.

Q. The comparative poverty of different unions must be very largely a matter of opinion, I think?—I do not believe that Poplar is the poorest part of East London.

Q. Are you speaking of the poorest parts of Poplar, or of Poplar as a whole?—Poplar as a whole.

Q. I think the rateable value of Poplar is nearly the lowest per head, is it not. For instance, assessable value in the London County Council return, No. 16, shows that Poplar and Bethnal Green are the two lowest in London, and that Bethnal Green, £4 1s. per head, is lower than Poplar at £4 8s.?—I was not aware of that, sir.

Q. That is the return from the county council, but that is not conclusive, is it. I mean to say, the assessable value might be derived from docks, and so on, in Poplar?—A part comes from large dock property and a part from large railway property, and partly from factories.

Q. Do you suggest that that sort of property bears a greater relation to the whole than in Bethnal Green?—I cannot say.

Q. I should say it did?—The guardians publish the figures of the different classes of rateable value, and I have them here.

Q. Have you the census returns?—No, sir.

Q. Would you consider that the proportion of the population who live in one room is a considerable test of poverty?—Yes.

Q. The last census return shows that while in Poplar 17 per cent. of the population lived in two rooms or less, the percentage so living in Bermondsey was 25, in the Borough of Stepney it was 33, and in Bethnal Green it was 36. So that that test would show that Poplar was not the poorest union in London, would it not?—Yes, but we must take overcrowding in connection with this matter, and overcrowding exists in a very small degree here. It exists in a higher degree in Bethnal Green, and in a higher in Bermondsey.

Q. That would to a great extent depend on the vigilance of the sanitary authority?—It obtains much more nearer the centre of London.

Q. So that, by itself, would not be a conclusive test?—I am afraid not, sir.

Q. But it would be evidence?—It would be evidence.

Q. Have you got the census returns as to the "occupied" portion of the population?—Is it not in your memorandum?

Q. Yes. The census returns show 43 per cent. in Poplar, 46 in Bethnal Green, and 44 in Bermondsey?—Of what?

Q. The occupied portion to total population?—May I have the figures again?

Q. They are pretty uniform: 43 Poplar, 46 Bethnal Green, and 44 Bermondsey. Then, according to your own memorandum, there is another piece of evidence in answer 5, which is also taken from the census. In Lambeth 21,982 of the employed males, 23 per cent. of the whole, belong to these groups: Southwark, 31 per cent.; Deptford, 33 per cent.; Stepney, 33 per cent.; Poplar, 38 per cent.; and Bermondsey, 40 per cent. That shows a very large proportion of unskilled labour in Poplar?—It does.

Q. But it is not the highest?—No.

Q. Should you say, from your knowledge of the districts, that the dock-side labour was concentrated in Poplar, or are there other districts that also have a large proportion of that form of labour?—The dock labour is scattered up and down the riverside, both sides; it is not confined to Poplar.

Q. It is not absolutely centred in Poplar?—No.

Q. So that any pauperism that results from that form of casual labour would affect other unions as well as Poplar?—Yes.

Q. Would they affect them in an equal degree?—In Stepney and Bermondsey, yes; West Ham also.

Q. I understand that some unions near here, as for instance, Bethnal Green, have a large alien population?—Yes.

Q. Have you any alien population in Poplar?—It is small.

Q. I am also informed that the alien population—certainly the Jewish part of it—do not come on the Poor Law, but are separately provided for?—I have no evidence of it. There is, however, a body called the Jewish Board of Guardians.

Q. Have they anything to do with Poplar?—They would deal with Jewish applicants from Poplar, certainly.

Q. They do not relieve the Poplar rates to the same extent that the rates are relieved in Whitechapel?—No, not to that extent. The immigrant does not come to Poplar first. When he gets on in the world he comes to Poplar, and stands for the board of guardians.

Q. Do you mean the Jewish Board of Guardians?—No, the Poplar Board of Guardians.

Q. There has been a considerable change, has there not, in Poplar since Mr. Booth's memorandum was published?—Yes.

Q. In that memorandum there is classification, is there not, of the poor?—In Mr. Booth's book, yes, sir.

Q. One class (a) being loafers and semi-criminals, and another (b) casual earning, very poor?—Yes.

Q. In both those classes from which paupers might spring, Poplar is by no means the worst of the London unions?—I cannot find the page in the book for the moment.

Mr. Martley.

11 July.

Q. The returns show that while Poplar is very poor, it is not the poorest?—True.

Q. That is to say, Stepney, St. George's-in-the-East, and Bethnal Green, all come out worse than Poplar?—Yes, and Whitechapel has the largest percentage of class (a).

Q. Now, to summarise, as far as we have got, the conditions here are a very poor union with a large percentage of unskilled labour?—But I think the figures have changed. I do not think they are correct to-day.

Q. No, I have said they have changed. You have now the condition of a very poor union, but not the poorest; with a large proportion of unskilled labour, but not the largest proportion; with a large proportion of casual labour, but, again, not the largest proportion, to be dealt with by the board of guardians and yourselves—I mean to say and the charitable agencies?—Yes.

Q. You have had, in the course of your work, a great deal to do with the board of guardians, have you not?—Yes, it has been my duty to cultivate friendly relations with them.

Q. I think you will agree that some of the guardians have taken the utmost interest in these social questions, and have devoted a very large proportion of their time to them?—They have.

Q. That is to say, the leading guardians?—Yes.

Q. Can you say whether the Act of 1894 led to any great change either in the personnel or in the policy of the Poplar Board of Guardians?—I have prepared a general statement, sir, of my view of the situation, which I could read to you if you wished.

Q. I think it might save time.

(Mr. Grant.) Are you referring to the copy of the statement by Mr. Martley? If so, as far as I am concerned, I shall be delighted if Mr. Martley would read it through.

(The Inspector.) Have I seen it?—No, it was only prepared this morning.

(Mr. Grant.) I have not finished reading it, but so far as I have gone I am quite contented. I will hand my copy to the gentlemen of the press in a moment.

(The Inspector.) Perhaps it will strain your voice to read it, Mr. Martley, I will read it. Is this what you wrote:—"I remember well the days before 1894 when, if I am not mistaken, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Lansbury, and Mr. Kay, of the Dockers' Union, were the only labour guardians. In those days, so far as I could gather, the board had no policy at all, good or bad, the guardians did pretty much what the officers told them to do, and their guiding principles seemed to be the saving of the rates and avoidance of trouble to themselves. Those were the days which followed on the great strike, and there was severe economic distress in the borough, but no serious effort was made by the guardians at any time to think out or to apply remedies. There was then as there is now much suffering among honest poor people; many were thrown out of work, then as now, by causes over which they had no control; preventable sickness and preventable accidents reduced many from comfort to want, but of these things the guardians took no account. They did not seem to acknowledge that such problems in any way concerned them; they were in some cases unconscious of their magnitude, and in any case they made no attempt to solve them. And if they thus failed entirely to grasp and deal with the wider social issues presented to them, they were quite as unsuccessful as administrators. The state of the workhouse was bad, and the supervision of the board's officers poor."

"A new era commenced in 1894, when the conditions of election were altered. Guardians of a new type were then chosen, and gradually a new policy was formed and developed, the credit of which rests mainly with Mr. Crooks and Mr. Lansbury. And to this policy the board has on the whole consistently adhered from then till now. Of very few boards can it be said that they have a definite policy, and whether that of the Poplar Board is wise or unwise, the guardians are to be congratulated on having clear aims and on the persistence with which they have worked towards them. They have made, they are making grave mistakes, but they have already corrected some and they will correct others."

"The first principle of the Poplar policy, as I understand it, is that society has a duty towards its weaker members, which is not fulfilled by throwing them back on themselves, but requires social action to be taken on their behalf. And the second is that those who seek or

"need relief are neither better nor worse than men and women in general, and are to be regarded for the most part as victims of an unfair social system, and only in a minority of cases as the authors of their own misfortunes. These principles represent a reaction from the Benthamism of the Poor Law reformers, and such a reaction may be carried too far, and when so carried will do social mischief. But in Poplar it has been necessary to reassert them, and I for one am thankful that they have been reasserted. For I am sure that the mere refusal of relief will never abolish pauperism so long as the industrial and social causes which produce it remain untouched. It may shift the incidence of the burden, but the burden will remain to be borne by somebody. The guardians, it may be, have not been as much interested as they should be in that great abstraction 'pauperism'; but they have been and are deeply concerned for the men, women, and children, the living, suffering, people who go to compose it. They have always striven and they are striving now to redress social industries and to restore to society those who, either through their own fault or otherwise, have lost their places in it. One result of this policy has been that revolutionary anarchism is now non-existent in Poplar, and that the sense of citizenship has reached and is daily more and more pervading the lowest strata of the people. Whatever may be its economic drawbacks (and it must be conceded that there are some) it may be said that the guardians' policy has had a large amount of social success. It is true that its success has been grievously diminished by mistakes in method which have had the effect of substituting new abuses for old ones, and the guardians have endangered the continuance of their policy by their undue reliance on out-door relief, and by their refusing to consider suggestions for amendment which have been made to them in good faith. But, if their methods have been and are seriously wrong, their aims have been right, and their policy is one of which they have no reason to be ashamed. Nay, more, they have some reason to be proud of it. For the problem with which they have had to cope has been one of great difficulty, and they have been left alone to solve it. It is not the fault of the labour party that it has neither administrative tradition nor experience, but the want of them has made a difficult task more difficult for it. The natural leaders of the borough, the commercial magnates, I mean, who draw their wealth from it, have for years past withdrawn from all participation in its affairs; they have repudiated all responsibility for them, and with very few exceptions they take not the slightest interest in them. We only hear of them when at intervals they band themselves together to protest against the cost of work which they leave others to accomplish. The administrative problems of the borough would never be solved if their solution depended upon them. And yet from birth, training and experience, such persons are in a better position to serve their fellow citizens than the members of the present board can hope to be. Unfortunately, their civic sense is undeveloped so far as Poplar is concerned."

"Nor is it only locally that co-operation has been wanting. The Local Government Board has failed to help as it should have done. It exists to direct and control local inexperience, but in recent years it has for the most part assumed an oracular attitude, followed the line of least resistance, and tacitly sanctioned what on its own principles it should have condemned. Its action with reference to the Poplar resolution of November, 1904, is an illustration of what I mean. It has had no continuous policy, and its interference has been spasmodic and ineffectual. Consequently, if mistakes have been and are being made, part at any rate of the blame rests with the large ratepayers who ought to help in local administration but do not, and part with the authorities in Whitehall. The recent enormous rise in the pauperism of Poplar is mainly due to the resolution of the board mentioned above, and the Local Government Board could have prevented it by declaring the resolution *ultra vires*. They did not do so, and now in common justice they must share with the board the responsibility for the evil, if evil it be, which has resulted."

"It should be remembered, too, that some good has come of the resolution, for it no doubt helped to convince the late Government of the reality of the unemployed problem, and made possible the passing of the Unemployed Workmen Act. Sir William Chace has said that this Act is a Poplar Act from first to last. If he is right, the action of the board has wrought, beside some passing evil, much lasting good."

Mr. Martley.

11 July.

"I do not believe that the position of Poplar is so far exceptional that there are not worse districts in London and elsewhere; but its evils are quite bad enough and call for serious efforts to remove them. Where Poplar really is unique is in its determination to mend its position, and its resolve to put the saving of its men and women before the saving of its money. It has again and again pointed out that it is an integral part of London, and with the resources far below the average it has to deal with needs far above the average. Without its fair share of London's resources it has to support more than its fair share of London poor. It calls out for a complete equalisation of rates, and is prepared to submit to the increased central control which must accompany it. Mr. Lansbury has definitely said so. Meanwhile it has to impose a high rate where more favoured unions only require a low one, and even so, in proportion to the work done, it draws less from the ratepayers than some more favoured unions.

"The board is now on its trial, and in so far as these larger issues are in question, I believe that public opinion will not only not condemn but will warmly approve what has been done by the guardians. On certain questions, too, of administration it will heartily commend the policy which they have adopted. All they have done for the children in the last 12 years entitle them to the gratitude of all good citizens, and the provision of new schools at Shenfield to supersede the present unsuitable ones at Forest Gate seems thoroughly reasonable. It may be that some unnecessary expense has been incurred, and if so I hope attention will be called to the matter. But the removal of the schools from Forest Gate seems a proper proceeding and cannot be effected without a considerable outlay of money. Again, the provision of extra comforts for the old people in the workhouse seems right in principle, and nobody can blame the guardians for providing them. Again, the opening of a country workhouse at Laindon for able-bodied men is a good thing, and, subject to certain criticisms contained in a letter to Mr. Lansbury, I approve of the effort which the guardians are making to turn these failures into useful men. I believe, farther, that the guardians have done right in abolishing 'task work' in the workhouse and in the casual ward.

"So far I am heartily with the guardians. Their aims seem right and they are in earnest in trying to carry them out. I wish I could say as much of their methods, but I cannot honestly do so.

"1. There has been a certain arrogance of tone on the part of the board in dealing with outside bodies. The guardians have been courteous to me personally, but they have not been so to the body which I represent. Again, in dealing with such a body as the Poplar Municipal Alliance (I am not in any way connected with it) they seem to have strangely forgotten that the right to combine is not limited to workmen. It is shared by ratepayers, and if a number of these choose to unite and to approach the board, it is extremely unwise of the board to refuse to acknowledge them.

"The guardians, it seems to me, are far too much afraid of public criticism. They ought to welcome it, but they do not. I am sorry to see that Mr. Crooks has said that the Local Government Board is trying to down the labour party. He must know that the Local Government Board is really doing it and Poplar a good service.

"2. Again, the attitude of the board towards its officers for some years past has been distinctly unfair. I hold that it is wrong for the relieving officers to control (as in some unions they do) the giving of relief, but I hold equally that the guardians ought not to ignore their recommendations, as the Poplar Board sometimes does. Rather they should weigh carefully the evidence they produce, should invite them to offer suggestions, should give them a patient hearing, and should leave them the full discretion which the law allows.

"A still more serious abuse (or what appears to be one) is the practice which has gradually grown up whereby individual guardians send messages more or less peremptory in tone to relieving officers, directing them to give immediate relief to persons of whose real circumstances the senders often know nothing. No board, the members of which habitually treat its relieving officers in this way, can hope to attract a good class of men, or to retain such good men as it appoints.

"3. Lastly, I must speak very seriously of the way in which out-door relief is given. Dissociating myself alike from those who think such relief always wrong and from those who are ready to give it for the asking, I consider that as St. George's-in-the-East errs on the one side so Poplar errs on the other. Both errors are no

"doubt equally well-intentioned, but both I am convinced are errors. I hold that out-door relief ought sometimes to be given, and I also hold that it ought only to be given in the last resort. If there are circumstances which show either—(1) that the family can help; or (2) that a bad use will be made of the relief, then I am clear that it ought not to be given. And I am convinced that there are many cases now on the permanent relief list here which ought never to have been put on it.

"It is extremely painful to me to make these criticisms, but I am here to speak the whole truth. As I have said above, the policy of the board is endangered by its mistakes in method, and it is a matter of extreme urgency that they should be corrected. I confidently expect that men like my friends Mr. Crooks, Mr. Lansbury, and Mr. Yeo will agree with me here, and that agreeing, they will take strong action. If such action is not taken now, the opportunity for taking it may not recur. At the next election the party in sympathy with labour may be displaced from the board, and worse still, be permanently discredited. I do not want to see such a result, for in spite of its mistakes, I believe that this party realises the needs of Poplar better than any other, and is more in earnest than any other in its efforts to get them met.

"As regards the present Inquiry, I believe that it will entirely vindicate the good faith of the board in its general policy, and that it will have a salutary effect in bringing the administration more in accord with this. If it helps the board to correct the mistakes which it has made and to adopt better methods, it will in the end do good, not only to Poplar, but to London."

Q. That represents your view of the policy of the Poplar Board of Guardians?—Yes, my personal views.

Q. That view is merely personal to yourself?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) I think we might have it clear that Mr. Martley has prepared that without instructions from anybody; that, as a matter of fact, he only handed it in this morning, and that no one read it through before it was read out by you?—That is correct, sir.

(The Inspector.) I should like to ask you one or two questions before I continue my examination. You blamed the larger ratepayers for not going on to the Poplar Board of Guardians?—Yes.

Q. Do you believe that any one of the ratepayers would have had the slightest chance of being elected by the Poplar electorate?—I do.

Q. If they had stood, and come forward?—I do.

Q. You also speak of the enormous increase in Poplar pauperism in the year 1904?—Yes, sir.

Q. I put it to you that the increase does not date from 1904, but from 1899?—The increase certainly dates from 1899, but the enormous increase dates from later.

Q. But the pauperism of the borough had grown immensely, and commenced to grow, after a period of a little change, about half way through the year 1899?—That is true.

Q. And if you take the expenditure—the rate of the growth of the cost of relief, it is even anterior to that?—Yes.

Q. In fact, it begins in 1888?—Yes.

Q. So that that particular resolution of the guardians was not passed at the period when the Poplar relief expenditure began to go up in a marked way?—Not entirely; the expenditure was going up before that time, because we were passing through a very great depression, and before that depression began, I have mentioned mistaken reliance on out-door relief; and those mistaken methods, and that mistaken reliance were no doubt responsible for part of the expenditure.

Q. What have you to say to the increase of cost, not only of total cost, but in the direction, say, of the cost of food inside the workhouse. That, I suppose, you would not know technically?—No.

Q. But you recognise that the increase has been most marked?—Yes.

Q. And that the Poplar in-door poor cost a great deal more than the in-door poor elsewhere?—Yes.

Q. Should you suggest that in other workhouses the food is not sufficiently good?—I really know nothing about it.

Q. Do you know whether there are indications that the Poplar Workhouse is ceasing to be deterrent?—I think to some extent it is ceasing to be deterrent.

Mr. Martley.

11 July.

Q. If the Poplar Workhouse is administered so as not to be deterrent, what becomes of the workhouse test?—I should say it does not operate as it did.

Q. What should you say was the effect of the heavy grants of out-relief on the question of the migration of labour—put it mobility of labour?—It is very difficult to correlate the two. After all, one would expect it would attract people to the union, but against that the population of the union is stationary.

Q. The rateable value is also stationary, is it not?—I am not sure.

Q. It is practically. Is it your view that a very high rate has very disastrous results on trade and on individuals?—It handicaps trade, certainly.

Q. Do you think that a rate of 12s. in the £—6s., I think, is what the guardians are responsible for—6s. 5d.?

(Mr. Lansbury.) 3s. 6d.

(The Inspector.) The total rate is 12s.

(Mr. Crooks.) 8s. 6d. we have no control over.

(The Inspector.) The high rate presses very hardly on tradesmen, small property owners, and so on?—I think it does press hardly on the smaller people. I do not think it affects the larger people so seriously.

Q. It must affect the larger people, must it not?—To some extent. You yourself suggested that they get their labour more cheaply.

Q. Some of them, but that would not be the case with a ship-building firm?—Oh, but you must consider the local advantages of the riverside. You must take the good and the evil together.

Q. Still, the effect of a high rate must be to make the business of a small tradesman unremunerative?—It is very hard on the small tradesmen and small householders.

Q. Would it be too much to say that it reduces the position of some small traders almost to the position of the recipient of out-relief?—I should not like to say so.

Q. Have you known instances where people who were formerly comfortably off had to pawn things to live?—Yes.

Q. To a man in that position the heavy rate must come as a great injustice, must it not?—You mean the small shopkeeper?

Q. Yes?—I daresay it does.

Q. Is there any hope for him if the rates are to increase?—I should say, sir, that we all hope for the equalisation of the rates.

Q. But you, I think, admit that some of the rates are not at all wisely expended?—Of course, the guardians make some mistakes. They would not be human if they did not.

Q. On January 1st, 1895, the total pauperism of Poplar was 28 per 1,000, being slightly higher than that of the Metropolis. I am reading from the Local Government Board figures. The total pauperism of Poplar on January 1st, 1905, was 67 per 1,000, the total of the Metropolis being 26. So that while the pauperism of the Metropolis had slightly increased the pauperism of Poplar had more than doubled. Do not you think that is a very serious misfortune?—I do.

Q. Do you think the growth of pauperism would have a serious effect on the moral condition of the people?—I think it has a bad effect. I think that the reliance on out-relief has a bad effect on any district.

Q. And the high rate would have a bad effect on trade. Now, have you observed what, I suppose, every economist would expect—that the high rate leads to a reduction in rents, and to a decrease in rateable value?—I have not observed that, sir.

Q. I think you can see, as a matter of fact, that must be the result economically?—Yes, I should expect it to be.

Q. But hitherto you have not observed that in Poplar?—No. I am told that rents are going down in Canning Town. I have not got a similar statement with regard to Poplar.

Q. You have said that all the people in Poplar wish for an equalisation of the rates?—I do not know that all do; I do myself.

Q. Do you think that the policy of the guardians has been to some extent influenced by the hope of getting an equalisation of the rates?—I think they have tried to do

their duty according to their lights, and they have seen no alternative to their position except to give relief. I think there were other alternatives they might have adopted, but have not adopted.

Q. I mean, if the rates became so high that it would appear that Poplar must be assisted, it would be one step towards getting that assistance, would it not?—It brings home, I think, to people the injustice of the present system.

Q. You have told us that you think the magnates, we will call them, might have been elected on the guardians had they stood. Do you think the fact that about 80 per cent., according to the London County Council statistics, of the voters in Poplar are compounding householders would affect that?—I feel confident such men would have been elected, had they come forward.

Q. Do you think the rise in rates appeals to the compound householder to any great extent?—I do not think he understands it, sir.

Q. He would not know for some time whether the rates were 5s. or 10s.?—A great many would not know.

Q. And therefore he would not be very much influenced in voting for guardians who promised economy, as he would if he were aware of what his rates were?—No.

Q. So that, in fact, the electorate is controlled by electors who do not feel the direct pressure of the rates?—They do not understand the question as they should. It is very important that an individual voter should understand how rates affect him, and he does not at present.

Q. Now, you have told us that the date of the very startling increase in outdoor pauperism generally dates from the resolution of the guardians in October, 1904?—I have the statement here, sir, if you would like it, of what took place at the meeting. I was present by the courtesy of the guardians, and have supplied them with a copy of the statement.

Q. Before you come to the statement, I will turn to the table at the end. It gives a summary of inquiries made in twelve streets in each of the parishes of Poplar, Bromley and Bow, relating to the unemployed. You will see from the table that the number of unemployed was 1,624 in those streets, being a percentage of unemployed to wage earners of 24·12?—Yes, sir.

Q. And that the number dependent on the unemployed, exclusive of wage earners, was 2,578?—Yes, sir.

Q. Now, does not that represent a rather extreme state of distress?—It does.

Q. Times were bad?—It was the very deepest point in the depression.

Q. Was that the worst depression of which you have had experience?—No.

Q. What was the worst depression of which you have had experience?—1893–1894.

Q. Then, I think, matters were complicated by a heavy frost?—The frost was in 1895.

Q. Before the frost that was, then?—A year before the frost.

Q. What happened in Poplar then. Was there anything like the same increase in out-relief that happened in 1904?—No.

Q. Can you explain why the worst depression was not followed by the same increase in pauperism as the lesser depression ten years later?—The guardians followed a different policy.

Q. And that policy resulted in this enormously increased expenditure?—Yes.

Q. Are you aware that now there has been a great drop in the number on out-relief?—Yes.

Q. Is there anything in the state of trade this year, compared with the state of trade last year, which would account for that drop?—Trade is improving.

Q. Is it improving to such an extent as to make it likely that some thousands would be knocked off the relief list?—No, I should say probably not.

Q. You are aware that within the neighbouring unions there is no fall comparable to that which is taking place in Poplar?—Yes.

Q. You are aware that you can account for nearly all the decrease in London pauperism by the decrease of pauperism in Poplar?—Yes.

Mr. Martley.

11 July.

Q. Taking your last two answers, is it too much to suggest that the rise in pauperism was due to the policy of the guardians, or to the action of the guardians in 1904. I mean the extraordinary rise?—Yes, I think it was.

Q. And that the fall in pauperism during the last six months has also been due to the action of the guardians?—Yes, I suppose so.

Q. So that the guardians add to the pauperism and decrease the pauperism as a matter of administration. We do not go into the reason, but you think that both the rise and the fall is entirely due to good motives?—Yes.

Q. In October, 1904, I believe there was an organised effort to influence the out-door relief of the guardians, on the part of the Trade and Labour Council?—Yes, sir; but practically they are the guardians—practically the same body.

Q. Do you mean to say that the Poplar Trade and Labour Council are practically the same body as the Poplar Board of Guardians?—Very nearly.

Q. Is there on the board of guardians any considerable number who represent the other section of Poplar society?—There are representatives of other sections, but to a large extent they are in sympathy with the Labour Council, even though they do not belong to it.

Q. Well, the Trade and Labour Council apparently engaged a Mr. Salmon to organise the unemployed?—Yes.

Q. What did he do?—He held out-door meetings of the unemployed.

Q. What did he tell them?—I have a statement here of what he said on that historic occasion.

Q. Is it the same statement that I have. Well, then, I will put it in evidence. He apparently made various proposals, as for instance, that the borough council acquire and pull down certain slums and carry out paving and lighting undertakings. He made certain proposals for finding work for the unemployed by the borough council, did he not?—Yes.

Q. You have put that letter in, have you not. Well, what I want to get at particularly is what the organized unemployed did in respect to the board of guardians. Two or three hundred men came as a deputation, did they not?—Yes.

Q. And were they admitted to the board?—No. They were downstairs in the hall.

Q. I suppose the guardians discussed what they should do with them?—Yes, sir.

Q. And you have a *resumé* of what the guardians said?—Yes.

Q. I think you will agree it is fair that should be read?—I am prepared to read the whole thing, sir.

Q. Will you read from "Mr. Watts moved that the board"?—Yes. "Mr. Watts moved that the board should take steps to acquire 150 acres of land (the maximum allowed) to be used as a farm colony, and asked in the meantime that adequate outdoor relief should be given.

"Mr. Lansbury pointed out that acquiring land would take a long time, and referred to the action of the Local Government Board ten years ago, when the guardians had tried to acquire land. He said a very thoughtful man, whose name he would not give, had made him a suggestion which he thought a good one, namely, that the guardians should hire Gore Farm from the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and send men there under the modified workhouse test order. He suggested that the guardians should give the Metropolitan Asylums Board an undertaking to accept men from other unions if there were room.

"Then discussing the general question, he argued strongly against borough councils dealing with the unemployed. There was no reason why boards of guardians should not cope with unemployment satisfactorily, if the disfranchisement clause could once be got rid of. He objected to giving outdoor relief under Article 10 as very demoralising. The men relieved should in every case be made to work. A manly straightforward speech.

"Several guardians suggested that money should be voted by the board to the borough council, so that it might employ the men without disfranchising them.

"Mr. Crooks said that such a voting of money would be *ultra vires*. He also expressed the opinion that the

"work would still be relief, and would be held to disfranchise.

"It was agreed:—

"That a deputation should wait on the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and that a special meeting of that body should be convened through Mr. Crooks at as early a date as possible.

"As a second string, that the Local Government Board should be asked to sanction the acquirement of land by the board.

"Then followed a discussion on what should be done immediately.

"Mr. Bellaham moved that all out of work applicants be sent by the relieving officer to the doctor and given medical relief, which would not disfranchise.

"Mr. Watts said the proposal was dishonest, and this was evidently the general view.

"Mr. Crooks read Article 10, and it was resolved that—

"1. Relief be given under it to all applicants, except those whom the board's committee think fit to exclude as habituals;

"2. Separate books be kept;

"3. Cases be reported fortnightly to the Local Government Board;

"4. Also, that relieving officers give interim relief in every case, and that the power of offering the house be taken from them and reserved to the committees.

"The proceedings were orderly and business-like throughout, and the speeches short and to the point.

"I enclose a copy of the unemployed census, taken by the board.—Yours truly, W. G. MARTLEY."

(Mr. Johnston.) Might I have the date?—17th November, 1904.

(The Inspector.) The effect of that was large numbers of able-bodied men went at once on the rates?—Yes.

Q. You can take it 34 books were filled up at once with their names?—Yes.

Q. And they were relieved in kind?—Yes.

Q. From week to week?—Yes.

Q. Are you aware these cases were not reported to the board; the Local Government Board said that cases should be reported, and the guardians reported none?—So I hear.

Q. From your knowledge of Poplar, should you say that numbers of people were getting relief at that time who would not have any chance of getting relief in any other union?—Probably.

Q. Those men, as I understand, have now, after one and a half years, ceased to be chargeable?—Yes.

Q. Do you know what has become of these men whose relief has now stopped?—No.

Q. Are they starving?—I do not know, sir. I do not believe it.

Q. If they required assistance, you, as a secretary of the Charity Organisation Society, would hear of it, would you not?—I am not sure, sir.

Q. If there was widespread distress and want among these men, you would certainly know it?—Oh, yes, we should hear it, not frequently from those, but from other sources.

Q. Have you had applications for help from any one of these men?—Yes, sir, we have had some.

Q. How many?—Not very many.

Q. So that they went off the relief books, and presumably found work elsewhere?—Or are still without work.

Q. If they are without work and without relief, how do they live?—I suppose they exist on the kindness of their friends.

Q. You believe there are a large number of cases in Poplar at the present time like that?—I am sure there are. The distress committee brought out a return a fortnight ago showing a large number at present registered still out of work.

Q. Not receiving relief or charity, or organised charity?—I am not sure how many are receiving relief, I cannot say.

Q. I suggest most—a large proportion of these men out of relief—are keeping themselves?—After a fashion, no doubt. I believe there are many men out of work to-day in Poplar.

Mr. Martley.

11 July.

Q. Work is still hard to get?—Very difficult to get still for the casual labourer.

Q. You are not suggesting they should be put on the out-door relief lists again?—No.

Q. You are not suggesting they should be put on the out-door relief lists again, without any dispute or disparity, are you?—No. May I say I think the guardians are in a difficult position; I do not believe in out-door relief and they do; but they are nearer these men than I am, and they could not—as they feel, rightly or wrongly—leave them to starve.

Q. You suppose they would have starved?—I think some might. They would suffer.

Q. You have many starvation cases in the East End now?—Not very many—technical ones.

Q. A good deal of poverty?—Great suffering.

Q. You have told us that you believe in equalization of rates?—I do.

Q. Desire it. Do you believe—do you desire the equalisation of rates in Poplar without some further check on extravagance?—I believe in central control.

Q. Central control to what extent?—Very considerable extent. Financial control, I mean.

Q. You do not approve of a system which allows one board of guardians to spend twice as much on the maintenance of in-door poor as another board?—No, that would disappear with central control.

Q. You think, if there is equalization of rates, it should be accompanied with some guarantee for certain uniformity in Poor Law relief?—Under some central controlling body to go along with it.

Q. I put it to you, already there is a large equalization of rates in the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund and in the London County Council grant?—Yes.

Q. Do you think that the existence of that central fund makes it now desirable there should be uniformity of administration in the metropolis?—I do.

Q. Would you extend that uniformity of administration to out-door relief?—Yes, I think I should, but I have not a proper scheme, sir, for central control.

Q. I only ask you generally. For instance, if you were to put out-door relief on the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund without any central control what do you think would be the result?—Very bad.

Q. Why very bad?—Because it would be administered unequally in different parts of London. You say without central control.

Q. Yes, without central control. I have a statement which shows that if out-door relief were put upon the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, out of £500 spent in Poplar, only £10 would be locally raised in Poplar. Do you think that would be a good thing?—I am afraid I am not an expert in these financial matters. I like to think them over.

Q. Do you think?—I think London is one.

Q. But you say if you have equalisation of rates, you should have more central control, both for in-door and out-door relief?—Yes.

Q. You have not thought out any plan whereby the greater control of out-door relief can be given?—I take it the central body would have a veto on the local body in regard to finance.

Q. Do you think that if the Poplar Guardians had the whole Metropolis to draw upon for out-door relief they would have given any more than they did after that fatal day in November, 1904?—I could not say, I am sure.

Q. Do you think they exhausted the possibilities of giving out-door relief?—No.

Q. Do you think anybody else could have got relief who did not. I am talking about possibilities?—(No answer).

(The Inspector.) I am much obliged, Mr. Martley. Would Mr. Robb like to ask any questions?

(Mr. Robb.) I should like an opportunity of considering this evidence. I do not know whether it would be convenient after lunch?—Yes.

Q. If it will be convenient I will put a few questions to you after lunch?—Certainly.

(Mr. Grant.) I have a good deal to ask Mr. Martley.

(The Inspector.) Now?

(Mr. Grant.) I would sooner Mr. Robb went first. I do not know if Mr. Robb will let me ask afterwards. Now, Mr. Martley, first of all, I think you are a secretary of the Charity Organisation Society?—Yes.

Q. I have in my hand a document. It is called "Minutes of Evidence," printed by the Charity Organisation Society, and dated "Friday, October 20th, 1905"?—Yes.

Q. It is evidence taken by a Special Committee of the Charity Organisation Society on unskilled labour?—Yes.

Q. And I see that the members of the Committee were Sir E. W. Brabrook, C.B. He was, I believe, the Registrar of Friendly Societies?—Yes.

Q. Until he retired. Mr. Cecil M. Chapman, he is one of our best known police magistrates?—Yes.

Q. Mr. John Currie?—A member of Donald Currie & Co.

Q. Mr. J. Parsons?—He is secretary to the White-chapel Committee.

Q. Mr. H. R. Maynard?—He is secretary of the Unemployed Central Body.

Q. Mr. D. M. Watson?—I think he is a shipowner, but I am not sure.

Q. Mr. E. Aves is one of the chief assistants of Sir Charles Booth?—Yes.

Q. And worked with him through the preparation of his book?—Yes.

Q. And sometime sub-warden of Toynbee Hall. Mr. C. S. Loch is secretary of the Charity Organisation Society?—Yes.

Q. And what Mr. Loch does not know about this subject cannot be found in Blue Books. Mr. W. H. Beveridge. He is now, I think, sub-warden of Toynbee Hall?—Mr. Beveridge is still at Toynbee Hall.

Q. Still sub-warden?—I do not think so now.

Q. I am wrong. Mr. Loch and Mr. Beveridge were secretaries. It is a Committee inquiring into the problem of unskilled labour all over London?—Yes.

Q. And you were called before it to give evidence, first of all as a resident in Poplar for 15 years?—Yes.

Q. And during the whole of those 15 years you had been at the Charity Organisation Society?—Yes.

Q. I mean?—I have been in charge here for 15 years.

Q. That is to say, Mr. Martley, for 15 years within the Borough of Poplar you have been devoting yourself to the study of the social and economic questions which come within the purview of the Charity Organisation Society?—Yes.

Q. And besides that you are a member of the committee locally formed for carrying out the provisions of the Unemployed Act?—Yes.

Q. I do not think that is the correct title, but whatever it is, I should ask, sir, if I may—I shall hand this to Mr. Robb—

(Mr. Robb.) I have a copy.

(Mr. Grant.) I do not want to take Mr. Martley all through it. It is most important evidence. I ask that it may be put on the notes as it stands. Is there anything in it that you wish to correct?—On page 10, sir, answer 91, I would like to insert the word "home" between "women's" and "labour."

(Mr. Grant.) (reading): "Do you think that women's work tends to settle in Poplar and similar districts because of the supply of men's labour?" Answer: "I think that women's home labour and men's casual labour certainly seem to go together." Are the two things which are almost worst under the social problem the men's casual labour and the women's home labour?—Yes, two of the worst things.

Q. Two of the worst things. Is there anything else Mr. Martley?—No, nothing else I want to alter.

Q. I ask we might have this put on the shorthand notes as it stands?

(The Inspector.) You would not mind my printing this in the appendix. (See Appendix.)

(Witness.) I propose to put in four documents, of which this is one.

(Mr. Grant.) I am going to ask—

(*The Inspector.*) Mr. Martley has three other documents.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I am going to put to him some of the others. I have a letter here, Mr. Martley, written by you, and a table at the end, dated November 17th, 1904?—Yes.

Q. Was that one of the documents you wanted to put in?—Yes.

Q. May I just read it, the whole of it:—"Borough of Poplar Committee, Charity Organization Society, 143, High Street, Poplar, E. Dear Mr. Loch"—Mr. Long's Committee?—It was technically Mr. Long's Committee.

Q. You called it a joint committee?—Yes.

Q. The distress at Poplar at this time was overwhelming. You had a joint committee specially appointed to deliberate, of which Mr. Loch had command, and which he sanctioned?—Yes.

Q. "The joint committee met four times last week, and sat about three hours each time. This week and until further notice it is sitting (by rota)"—by rota you mean certain members were arranged to attend?—Yes.

Q. "Five days a week, and yesterday there have been two separate meetings—one of the rota and one of the main committee. Up to date 1,472 men have registered themselves as unemployed, three hundred have been interviewed, one hundred and seventy-five have been selected, seventy men have been put on work, and eighty more will start next Thursday (road work and painting). Many of the chronic class." Do you mean the unemployable or the unemployed who have not regular employment?—I mean the people described as class B in my memorandum.

Q. Does class B mean a casual labourer who is inefficient?—Yes, the men more often out of work than in.

Q. And gets work when it comes, or the class of men who do not want to work and have to be forced to work?—The men more often at work than not.

Q. Is willing to work if he can get it, but by reason of his inefficiency is the last chosen when the work is given out?—Yes.

Q. That is the chronic class?—Yes.

Q. You meant to turn out the chronic class—this habitual parish case?—Yes.

Q. On the previous Monday?—Yes.

Q. Monday would be November 14th?—About that.

Q. "Many of the chronic class are registering, and the joint committee have definitely refused to weed out habitual parish cases. Very few cases are rejected. Of those not included in the 175 above, nearly all have been passed for admission to a farm colony as soon as one is available. Since Monday a new development has taken place. The Poplar Trade and Labour Council have engaged a Mr. William Salmon, or Selmon, to organise the unemployed. He has held open-air meetings yesterday and the previous day. The police say that these must not be continued, and I understand that the council"—The council, I suppose the borough council?—Yes.

Q. "And I understand that the council will be asked to grant the unemployed the use of Poplar Town Hall and Bow Baths for places of meeting. Salmon is a very capable, clear-headed man, and, on the whole, very moderate in his statements. He headed a deputation to the rota"—Rota, that was to your committee?—Yes.

Q. "On Tuesday, to the joint committee yesterday afternoon, and to the board of guardians in the evening. I heard him on all three occasions. He and others have made the following suggestions:—1. That all local employers be asked to abolish overtime." Was there a great deal of overtime being worked, even at that time?—No; certain firms, no doubt.

Q. "2. That the borough council acquire and pull down certain slums. 3. That further pressure be brought to bear on the Local Government Board and Parliament. 4. That a census of the unemployed be taken for the whole borough. 5. That trees be planted in the main thoroughfares. 6. That a tramway be made from Poplar to Bow"—was that very much wanted?—Not very much, no.

Q. "7. That more paving and lighting be undertaken. 8. That the streets be cleaned more frequently. 9. That non-residents be not taken on to do borough work. 10. That the window sashes of all houses be surveyed, as many are rotten, and a source of danger to tenants cleaning windows. He estimated that 7 per cent. of trade union men were out of work, and suggested that the figure should be multiplied by three to obtain the total number out. He further made the point (quite a good one, I think), that it is only the pick and shovel men who are registering, not the trade union men, or men of definite trades. Such men do not care to undertake road work, and I know that the committee has nothing else to offer at present. The deputations have been most orderly, and the change from the early 90's is quite marvellous. The meeting of the Board of Guardians yesterday evening was a full one, although some members were absent. The only visitors were the Mayor." Who was the Mayor at that time?—Mr. Yeo.

Q. "Colonel Lamb"—Colonel Lamb, another resident?—No, an official of the Salvation Army.

Q. "And myself. Between two and three hundred men came as a deputation, and were seated in the large waiting hall downstairs." That is the hall where the persons apply for relief?—Yes.

Q. "The board and we went downstairs to see them, and afterwards returned to the board-room, to which the men were not admitted. The following is a report of what took place in the board-room; it is public property, as the reporters were present all the time." While I was out of the room the whole of the notes have been read?

(*The Inspector.*) Yes.

(*Mr. Grant.*) And you say: "I enclose a copy of the unemployed census taken by the board," and afterwards, at the end, a "summary of inquiries made in twelve streets in each of the parishes of Poplar, Bromley and Bow relating to the unemployed."

(*The Inspector.*) We have had that paper already.

(*Witness.*) It was not fully read out.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I shall just read it now. "Prepared by order of the board, 19th October, 1904." It is a table showing the numbers in the parishes of Poplar, Bromley and Bow, and the totals are:—

POPLAR UNION.

Summary of inquiries made in twelve streets in each of the Parishes of Poplar, Bromley and Bow, relating to the Unemployed.

(Prepared by order of the board, 19th October, 1904.)

—	Poplar.	Bromley.	Bow.	Total.
Population of houses canvassed.	7,600	5,709	5,154	18,463
No. of wage-earners ...	2,727	2,118	1,888	6,733
No. of unemployed...	746	569	369	1,624
Percentage of unemployed to wage-earners.	27.35	24.03	19.54	Average per cent. for Union, 24.12.
No. on short time ...	150	61	108	319
No. dependent on unemployed, exclusive of wage-earners.	1,267	750	561	2,578

18,000. That is the highest proportion, Mr. Martley?—Yes.

Q. The ordinary proportion of wage-earners is one to five?—I am not sure.

Q. Here, at any rate, it is less than one in three. One in three is the wage-earner roughly. Three times six is 18. 18,000 to 17,000?—Yes.

Q. To get the total, Mr. Martley, it should be numbered 1,624 unemployed to 2,578?—Yes.

Q. And 319?—That is a short time they were earning something.

Q. So out of a total population of 18,400, 4,200 were unemployed or dependent on unemployed as they occurred?—That is not my return. It is a return of the board of guardians.

Q. I am commenting upon it to see what it says. It says, out of a population of 18,000, 4,000 were out of work and had persons dependent upon them who could only live on the wages of those out of work?—Yes.

Mr. Martley.

11 July.

Mr. Martley.

11 July.

Q. Will you tell me what the other documents are you want to put in?—I propose to put in a letter to Mr. Lansbury about Laindon.

Q. Oh, yes, I have got it here. May I just say this letter I have just read was at that time a confidential document sent to Mr. Loch in the course of report on what you were doing. There was no idea of it being read at this Inquiry?—Absolutely none.

Q. Now, in July, 1905—what is your other document, Mr. Martley. Take them in order?—July, 1905, letter to Mr. Lansbury.

Q. You said you had three documents. What is the other?—I have four altogether. The last one is "Minutes of Evidence." We have already had that. Then there is the letter to Mr. Loch and the one to Mr. Lansbury, and there is some correspondence I had with the board in my official capacity in 1901.

Q. Correspondence as to?—Official letters from me as secretary of the Charity Organisation Society.

Q. I think we shall take that afterwards. This in regard to Laindon—July, 1905. That is in regard to the Farm Colony?—Yes.

Q. And signed by Mr. W. G. Martley and Mr. T. C. Witherby; who is he?—A local clergyman.

Q. A member of the Church of England?—Yes.

Q. Now, Mr. Martley, leading up to this question of Laindon, the Guardians had decided to endeavour to get out of the workhouse the permanent paupers who were there?—The able-bodied men.

Q. And in order to do that what was called the farm colony at Laindon was established?—Yes.

Q. To that was transferred some of the men in the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. Men who had been there some time?—Yes.

Q. Who were a permanent charge on the rates, and who, unless something was done for them, would remain to the end of their days in the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. Of course, they were inefficient?—Yes.

Q. And of course, by reason of the low dietary at the time they were removed from the workhouse, they were unfit?—I do not know that, sir.

Q. I put it to you?—I should doubt it.

Q. You would doubt it?—Yes.

Q. At any rate, Mr. Martley, one of the things you would have to do for these men, if you were to raise them from the level of chronic paupers to wage-earning, decent citizens, would be to see they were physically healthy?—Yes.

Q. We have had some comments made on the meals supplied at Laindon. If you put a man on a decent basis, you must see he is physically fit to begin with?—Yes.

Q. You wrote to Mr. Lansbury: "Dear Mr. Lansbury,—Recently we have paid a visit together to Laindon, and we venture to send you some impressions we have formed about farm colonies in general, and Laindon in particular. We naturally write to you, for we regard you as the founder and inspirer of a movement which is, we believe, destined to have far-reaching results; and which may, we hope, under your guidance, do much to redeem a class which sadly needs redemption, and for which hitherto hardly anything has been attempted." Now, Mr. Martley, let me ask you, this was a private letter to Mr. Lansbury, not intended to be anything more than for his guidance?—I thought it was understood by Mr. Lansbury it was an open letter to him.

Q. Very good: "We believe the colony idea to be a most valuable one, and hope to see a system of colonies gradually established for the various classes of the unemployable." Unemployable: Mr. Martley, you mean, the men who will not work, or cannot work?—Or who have not efficiency.

Q. That is rather a different way of interpreting unemployable to the way it is usually interpreted?—Yes.

Q. "We consider that the notes." What do you mean "the notes"?—The distinguishing characteristics.

Q. I see: "We consider that the notes of these colonies should be:—

- "1. Individual treatment.
- "2. Detention for a fixed period.
- "3. Definite instruction.

"1. To secure the first of these we advocate the formation of voluntary colonies rather than rate-supported ones. They would, of course, be still indirectly rate-supported, for the guardians would pay for their own cases, but the management would be freer than it can be under Local Government Board regulations. We recognise, however, that so far there is little or no indication that voluntary effort is going to supply what is wanted, and while this is so we think that boards of guardians are justified in following the lead which you have given them and founding rate-supported colonies. As a step towards individual treatment in these we suggest that the Local Government Board should be asked to sanction the introduction of a marks system analogous to that which now exists in prisons. Under such a system every colonist would on his discharge be entitled to claim the money equivalent of his marks. We believe that a plan of this kind is already in force in some of the Danish colonies.

"2. As regards detention, we believe that we are but expressing your own views when we say that the time would vary with the man; but the law should, we think, in the first instance fix a rather long period and give discretion to the managers to discharge the colonist at such earlier date as in their judgment it is wise to do so. A man would be encouraged to do his best under such a system, for by doing so he would shorten the period of restraint and hasten the time when he would regain his freedom.

"It has been estimated that it takes three years of continuous training to make a town bred man even fairly competent as an agricultural labourer. In industrial pursuits the time needed would be shorter, and probably a year would suffice to make a man a fairly good baker or carpenter.

"We consider that it is a great mistake to admit men to a colony for short periods. They learn nothing and greatly interfere with the progress of those who are being really though slowly trained.

"3. Again for us—and here we have no doubt that we are in accord with you—there can be no training unless definite instruction is being supplied. It is, we hold, essential to the idea of a colony that it should afford this, and we should cease to be interested in colonies if they failed to become what you, we know, wish them to become, schools of industry. But schools cannot be carried on without teachers. The man who is to be made a farm labourer must be taught as much of the routine of farmwork as it is possible to teach him. The industrial man also needs to be trained in the use of tools, and can only get this training in an adequately equipped workshop under a skilled instructor.

"For the unemployed man proper who is out of work through seasonal depression, or even through the failure of his trade, we considered 'colonial' treatment of this kind quite unsuitable. We are aware that here you will probably disagree with us, and that disagreeing, you will ask us what alternative is possible. We cannot here deal with so large a question, but broadly speaking we should rely on the better organisation of industry, on trade unionism, on insurance, on labour bureaux, on migration, and on emigration. A colony exists, in our view, to form habits of industry in men who have not got them at present, and it chooses agricultural labour and certain simple crafts as the best instruments through which these can be inculcated. But the normal workman does not need this kind of training; he is trained already and his need is to find a new market for his labour. We do not teach the alphabet to those who know it already; we do not detain those who know how to use their freedom.

"We recognise, however, that for short periods, and especially in times of trade depression, it may often be expedient to assist such men, not only in the ways mentioned above but in other ways.

"In times of crisis we approve of the Mansion House plan of offering men test work outside London, and giving allowances to their families. But we are not anxious to see this method made the normal one for dealing with unemployment; we believe that it should be reserved for times of special difficulty. And we altogether deprecate the suggestion that men of normal type should be sent to colonies for long periods to learn either agriculture or the simple crafts which it would be alone possible to teach them in such places.

"The normal workman must, we are convinced, face the fact that the life of a trade is growing shorter every year, and that he must expect to change his occupation from time to time. It is probable that his adaptability has never been so great as it is now, but it is still, we are

"afraid, insufficient. We hold, therefore, that nothing should be done which will make men less able to adapt themselves than they now are. And it seems to us that neither trade unionists nor social reformers are sufficiently alive to this, in our opinion, one of the most pressing needs of the day.

"Coming now to Laindon, we have been greatly pleased (how could we be otherwise) with the aspect of the place and of the men, and if what follows seems to dwell too exclusively on defects it is only because we believe that you will welcome a criticism which does not damn with faint praise, but aims at making what is good in idea equally good in practice. We recognise the immense difficulties you have had to surmount in organising this pioneer colony; we know that it takes time to develop a large scheme, and that everything cannot be arranged at once, and we consider that in such an arduous undertaking not to have altogether failed is really to have achieved no inconsiderable success.

"We suppose that when the colony was formed it was of the unemployable alone that the guardians were thinking, and that, if two-thirds of those who are now there are the unemployed, this is due to the exceptionally bad winter which we have had, and to the very natural wish on the part of the guardians to do something for men who in many cases have lost their work through no fault of their own. We submit, however, that men of this class gain nothing by being sent to colonies, and that, as we have already said, they should be dealt with on quite other lines. Every day that they are kept in a colony seems to us a day lost to that process of re-adaptation to the market which sooner or later they must undergo. And if the old market refuses to absorb them on any terms they should surely be transferred to a new one with as little delay as possible. At Laindon, so far as we can judge, they are only marking time, and except in improved health are gaining nothing.

"Moreover, their presence prevents the colony from being used for its proper purpose, viz., the training of the unemployable. We looked carefully for any evidence of such training, and were much disappointed that we could find none. For to set men in large gangs to break up ground cannot, we maintain, be regarded as training in agriculture. It is a mere labour test, like the breaking of stones. We are disappointed too, we must confess, with the very small material results obtained so far from the labour of so large a body of men (100, we understand, for the first half-year, and 150 for the second). No doubt they have excavated the reservoir and helped to put up some of the buildings, but even when these have been allowed for, the agricultural result seems to us pitifully small. If we are right in saying that barely ten acres are under crop, we consider that there must be something radically wrong in the way in which the labour has been applied that the result of it should turn out to be so insignificant. A cynical public will hardly, we fear, be deterred from ridiculing a system which can do no better than this.

"Let us suppose that the guardians had made up their minds to act in another way and had marked out the land in allotments, giving one to each man, with tools and seeds and manure and a little expert advice from time to time. If they had done this, and had obtained leave from the Local Government Board to pay over to each man (on his leaving with their consent) a percentage of the produce raised by him, it seems to us probable that the labour of the men would have been immensely more productive than it has been, and that they would have incidentally taught themselves and to some extent each other much useful agricultural knowledge. Moreover, after a time it would have been possible to estimate the men by a survey of their plots. Emulation would have been encouraged and each man would have had a direct incentive to do his best. Such an incentive seems to us to be sadly lacking in Laindon as it is to-day.

"But whether a plan of this kind is or is not feasible, we submit that the mere digging for digging's sake, which is quite allowable on winter relief works when a test is wanted, is wholly inadmissible in a colony. We consider that further steps might well have been taken to break the land which remains unbroken, and to clean the land which has been broken, so that instead of 10 acres at least 60 might have been under crop at the present time. With such an area of tillage there would have been surely considerable scope for hand hoeing and

"other processes which would have had an educational value.

"We cannot help thinking, too, that the guardians were badly advised when they increased the number of men at the colony from 100 to 150. One hundred men were already too many for 100 acres, and one hundred and fifty are, of course, far more so. Contrast Laindon with Schaferhof."

Q. Is that a German colony?—Yes.

Q. German or Belgian?—German.

"where a colony of 875 acres is limited to 100 men. And the case is even worse than it appears for, so far, only a part of Laindon has been effectively occupied.

"Of course, if the full area of the farm is to be cultivated the hundred men will have to be spread over it, and it will be no longer possible for them to work in large gangs as at present. We altogether disapprove, and probably you do also, of this gang system, and think that the men should be employed in groups of not more than five or six. This would, of course, need much more supervision than is available now, and we believe that unless adequate supervision by competent men is provided no real training can be given. At Hadleigh we understand that the ratio of staff to colonists is one to five, while at Laindon, if we mistake not, it is one to fifteen. Hadleigh may possibly be over, but Laindon seems decidedly understaffed.

"Until the staff is increased it can hardly become a training school, and until instructors are appointed it can hardly become a school of either agriculture or handicraft. And we shall not be satisfied until it is made both these.

"We are further of opinion (though this, perhaps, is a matter of less importance) that it is a mistake to keep the colony quite full, as it now is. We have no evidence, but it seems to us—

"1. That if ex-colonists again become chargeable, it is very desirable, as things are now, that the guardians should be in a position to send them back to Laindon, but if the colony is kept full we do not see how this can be done.

"2. That the common knowledge that Laindon is full removes what would, in some cases at least, act as a useful test on those seeking relief.

"We suggest, therefore, that when, as we suppose must shortly happen, the unemployed are discharged from the colony and it again becomes possible to restrict it to its proper and most useful purpose—the reclamation of the unemployable—a margin should always be kept.

"Again, as things are now, it must be difficult for the guardians to decide which men they will keep and which they will discharge (if we may use such a word where, as we suppose, the guardians have in law no discretion). For they have no adequate data on which to base an opinion. But, given proper training, reports from the instructors could be considered monthly, and the guardians would have something definite to go by.

"We must confess that we are not very sanguine that farm colonies even when worked most carefully will be able to show a large percentage of ineffective men made effective, but if the percentage were as low as 5 per cent. and we should expect it to be higher than this in a well-worked colony, we should think the method of hope abundantly justified against the old method of despair. We hold, however, that unpleasant facts must be faced, and of these one of the most obvious is that many of the men (and these not necessarily morally vicious) will never be able to support themselves in the open market, and will have, therefore, to be maintained permanently. We hope that in the future home colonies may be founded for this class on the lines of those already existing in Germany (e.g., Schaferhof). We want to see these established, because we believe that the open air conditions of a country life must be better for the incapable than being cooped up within four walls of a London workhouse. But till such homes are established we hold that it is the lesser of two evils to send such men back to the workhouse than to allow them to take up any part of the limited accommodation which is available for the trainable at Laindon and elsewhere. We therefore strongly deprecate the keeping of chronic cases at Laindon, and suggest that all such should be sent back to the workhouse as soon as may be. For it is not only that they take up space that is wanted for the trainable, but they lower the standard of work which can be maintained in

Mr. Martley.

11 July.

Mr. Martley, "the colony; and if this is unduly lowered, more harm is done to the vigorous man than good to the impotent. Under such conditions a colony is bound to degenerate. It will no longer be a city of industry, but will instead become a hive of drones."

11 July.

"We understand that of the hundred men originally sent from the workhouse a year ago, 40 are still at the colony to-day. It is a very serious question what ought now to be done with them, and we hope that the guardians will give it their full consideration."

"We might raise many more points, but this letter is already long enough. We are conscious that it deals with part only of a large question, but we think you will agree with us that the best way of getting the country to adopt reforms is to make them as definite in character as possible. You will perhaps receive criticisms from other sources, which may seem to you better worth considering than ours, but we can assure you that you will receive none the spirit of which is more friendly. You have done so much for the incapable already, that we desire to strengthen your hands in doing yet more, and this is our only motive in now approaching you. And we think that you will agree with us that it is not only the future of Laindon that is in question, but (a much larger thing) the future of the colony movement.—We are, yours sincerely, W. G. MARTLEY, T. C. WITHERBY."

(The Inspector.) Do you think it is essential all these letters should be read in extenso? I would undertake to print them in an appendix to Mr. Martley's evidence.

(Mr. Grant.) The difficulty is, these letters and other documents constitute a great deal of the guardians' case. You have said more than once, and I have felt it strongly, it is not only you who are trying the guardians; we are being tried by the public in the public Press, and I ask you, sir, that I shall be allowed to read these documents and hand them to the Press.

(The Inspector.) Oh, yes. It has occurred to me. Of course, as one has been read all must be read.

(Mr. Grant.) They will not take long.

(The Inspector.) The next one happens to be a criticism of the guardians dealing with out-door relief—a powerful indictment.

(Mr. Grant.) I am only wanting to put in all that is to be said on one side or the other.

(The Inspector.) This carries the historical case of the guardians far.

(Mr. Grant.) The point I want to say—my case will be first of all the charge of personal corruption which has been made over and over again in the public Press, and especially in the disgraceful cartoons in the *Daily Mirror* and *Punch*, which cannot be justified. There is not a word of truth in them. Secondly, there may have been mistakes in administration. There may have been: I do not know yet, because I do not know my whole case. There may have been some laxity of administration, too—mistakes of administration which every board makes, and laxity of administration can be paralleled in every other board in London.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you think—

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Robb has made so many speeches, I may be allowed to explain myself.

(Mr. Robb.) It is hardly fair.

(Mr. Grant.) I have just one thing more to say. The third point is simply this. The board of guardians do appear, as has been said by Mr. Martley—they have acted within the law and within their powers—they have initiated a new system of dealing with paupers. Whether right or wrong is not the question to be tried here—even the broad question of policy—and that policy is to be tried, and ought to be tried, by the Poor Law Commission now sitting. We come here to justify what we have done in regard to pauperism, and to justify the view we have taken of what the Poor Law policy of this country should be.

(The Inspector.) Is that the meaning of these letters, of which two have been read?

(Mr. Grant.) The third one is a long one. What is the fourth one?

(The Inspector.) The fourth is printed minutes.

(Mr. Grant.) I have read three of them, sir. I have not read the "Minutes of Evidence."

(The Inspector.) In reference to the letters, one way to save a great deal of time is by omitting the first pages.

(Mr. Grant.) It is now lunch time, and I shall be able to look through it.

(The Inspector.) You will find you can very well omit the first pages.

(Mr. Grant.) Within ten minutes I shall hand to you what I propose to read. Before I go on, Mr. Lough will clear a point about which there is misrepresentation. The rates in Poplar are 12s. in the £, but the greater part of that is for outside bodies, and I want the amount of the rate for which the guardians are responsible. Mr. Lough will tell you.

(Mr. Robb.) I have statements on that prepared by the borough council, showing in detail the proportion of the rate for which each body is responsible. I wish to hand that in. If Mr. Grant likes, I will hand that in now.

(Mr. Grant.) May I see it? The simple point I want is that the guardians are responsible for 3s. 6d.

(Mr. Robb.) The guardians are responsible for 4s. 1-51d.

(Mr. Grant.) Will you see about that, Mr. Lough?

(Mr. Robb.) They are responsible for 3s. 6d. to be correct. The rest is the sick asylum. I say they are responsible for that.

(Mr. Grant.) That is a disputed point.

(Mr. Robb.) That is another 1s. 1d. The sick asylum and the Metropolitan Asylums Board 7d.

(Mr. Grant.) You cannot make us responsible for that.

(Mr. Robb.) You are responsible for the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum.

(Mr. Grant.) Is that sheet correct, Mr. Lough?

(Mr. Lough.) I should like to examine it.

(Mr. Robb.) It is issued by the Town Clerk of Poplar. I was going to put it in by Mr. Broodbank. If it is agreed—

(The Inspector.) Let us get on.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Lough says it is 3s. 4d. Mr. Martley and I will only take this part. They are handing in some correspondence. It shows the independent attitude of the Charity Organisation Society towards the Poplar Guardians. Correspondence in regard to the case of Joseph and Anne Smith?—A series of cases.

Q. Beginning with one Joseph and Anne Smith; may I just run through. Mr. Berry, Relieving Officer, writes:—

"Correspondence re case 14,768. 1. Letter from Mr. Berry, R.O., 7/10/01, re Joseph and Anne S. Dear Sir,—The above have applied for relief owing to the stoppage of your pension allowance. I am requested by the guardians to ask that you will be good enough to let them have your view of the case. —Yours faithfully, FREDERICK A. BERRY."

Then you wrote to them the letter of the 7th October, 1901:—Letter to Mr. Berry, R.O., "Poplar C.O. Committee, 7/10/01. Dear Mr. Berry,—These old people are respectable and have received an allowance from us since May, 1900. It was not a strong case for a pension, for there were no savings, and Smith was in no club. Moreover, there was a son living in common lodging houses and not helping. We were induced to take it up by the fact that five daughters were willing among them to make up 6s. 6d. a week. To this amount we agreed to add 4s. 6d., and for a time all went well. Then one daughter disappeared and the husband of another fell out of work, and the family contribution fell to 4s. a week. We made good the difference for a considerable time, but on August 21st last decided to discontinue the pension unless the remaining daughters would increase their contributions to 5s. 6d. a week. This they were unwilling to do, and so the pension has come to an end. We think that the family can do what is asked of them, and that they probably will if the guardians refuse assistance. We are quite willing to renew our help if they (the daughters) will do their part."

"This is just one of those cases which can be kept off the rates if the guardians are willing to act in conjunction with the committee." That is your Charity Organisation Committee?—Yes.

Q. "But to ensure a successful result an offer of the workhouse seems to be necessary.—I am, yours truly, W. G. MARTLEY, Secretary.

"On receipt of this letter the guardians ordered relief for two weeks (3s. a week and food), and directed the relieving officer to report further.

"On October 28th Mr. Martley attended the guardians' committee. His letter was again read, and it was decided that, if the relieving officer's inquiries should prove satisfactory, out-door relief should be given. The chairman said that the board could not offer the workhouse to such a respectable couple. Subsequently, out-door relief was given.

"3. Letter to Mr. Berry, R.O., Poplar C.O. Committee, November 2nd, 1901. Dear Mr. Berry.—I am writing a line to say that the offer to reconsider this case made by my committee must now be considered as withdrawn.—I am, yours truly, W. G. MARTLEY, Secretary.

"Mr. Martley also called on the chairman of the guardians' committee, and talked over the whole case with him." You withdrew your offer. Does that end this case?—No, there is one more letter—No. 4.

Q. "Anne S—, widow," is the same case. On the husband's death. April 18th, Mr. Lough writes to you, I think it is?—Yes.

Q. "4. Letter from clerk to guardians, Poplar Union, clerk's office, 18th April, 1902. *Re Anne S—, widow.* Dear Sir,—Application for relief having been made to the guardians by the above, whose husband died in March, I am directed to advert to your letter of the 7th October last, in which you stated that your committee were willing to renew the help they had been giving to the applicant and her husband upon certain conditions. From the information laid before the guardians it appears that the applicant's daughters are now assisting to the extent which your committee considered they should do, although their contributions are not, in the opinion of the guardians, quite sufficient for the maintenance of the applicant. Looking at all the circumstances of the case, the guardians think it one deserving of assistance, but before deciding to put the applicant on the outdoor relief list they will be glad to know whether your committee would be disposed to deal with the case.—Yours faithfully, G. HERBERT LOUGH, clerk to the guardians. To the Secretary C.O.S.

"5. Letter to clerk to guardians, Poplar C.O. committee, 26th April, 1902. *Re Anne S—.* Dear Sir,—The committee have considered your letter of the 18th inst., and desire me to reply to it as follows:—

"Their letter of October 27th, 1901, to which you refer, was to the effect that if the guardians should decide to refuse assistance it seemed probable that the family would accept the offer of the committee, and so the rates would not be burdened with the maintenance of the old people. The guardians, in the exercise of their discretion, preferred to grant relief themselves, and learning that they were doing so the committee wrote on November 2nd withdrawing the offer they had made.

"The case is one typical of many in which charitable people are ready to help if relatives legally and morally liable will do their duty. In unions where the Poor Law is strictly administered the relatives are usually willing to do this, but where, as in Poplar, they have reason to think that they can shift their obligations on to the Poor Law, it is positively their interest to refuse help. Thus the work of charitable people and agencies is largely paralysed. The guardians grant outdoor relief and these evils result.

"1. The ratepayers are unfairly burdened.

"2. Family ties are weakened.

"3. The poor have little inducement to provide for themselves in sickness or old age.

"The committee in the present case in effect asked the guardians to refuse relief and to refer the case back to them. The guardians preferred to deal with it in their own way, and the committee see no reason why they should now take up the case again. They have decided accordingly to leave it in the hands of the board.

"Thanking the guardians for their courtesy in consulting the committee, I am, yours faithfully, W. G. MARTLEY, Secretary. To the clerk to the guardians."

Your criticism in your other letter—in your statement to-day, that the board did not treat outside authorities with respect, did not apply to your committee?—Yes, I think it did.

Q. In this particular case it did not?—No.

Q. Another letter, 12th May, 1902, in which you write about the case of Mr. and Mrs. X. :—

"Letter to clerk to guardians, *Re case 15,417, Poplar C.O. Committee, May 12th, 1902.* Dear Sir,—The committee ask me to write to you about the case of Mr. and Mrs. X., which has been referred to them by a committee of the board as suitable for a pension. The committee have now considered the case, and regard it as one which they would have no hesitation in recommending to a local pension society, if there were such a thing in Poplar. They do not themselves form such a society, and their object is not to provide charitable relief, but to organise it. In many cases applicants have relatives and friends able to help; they have claims upon employers and others; and what is wanted is a plan to organise the relief from these several sources and to make it adequate. Such cases the committee consider it their duty to take up if the old people for whom help is sought are of good character and have made reasonable efforts to provide for the future. Other cases there are in which the elements of character and thrift are present, but in which there are few or no local or other sources from which a pension can be raised. If the committee were to entertain these they might not be influencing local administration at all, but they would certainly be tying their own hands for other work. For they would be accepting a heavy financial obligation which would force them into constantly appealing to persons unconnected with the district. Such a course would hardly advance the ends which they have in view, and as Mr. and Mrs. X. clearly have no insuperable objection to receiving parish relief, the committee have decided to remit their case to the board. If outdoor relief is to be given at all, Mr. and Mrs. X. seem to be suitable for it as 'persons who,' in the words of Mr. Chaplin's Local Government Board circular of 1900, 'have led decent and deserving lives.'

"The committee do not themselves approve of outdoor relief, and would prefer to see all exceptional cases dealt with by organised charity. If the Poplar Guardians were now reducing outdoor relief instead of extending it, the committee's decision in the present case might have been different. But they feel that their proper work in connection with the aged poor lies not so much in appealing to the public for pensions for them as in bringing home to relatives, employers, and others on whom they have claims, the duty of assisting them.

"It is, however, a matter of common knowledge that in unions where Poor Law relief is restricted there is more money available both for other charitable purposes and for pensions."

That is to say, if you refused to deal with these cases of deserving and aged poor by outdoor relief and offered the alternative of the workhouse, the husband and wife were reluctant to take the house, they are able, by charitable agencies, to get the help they want?—Natural sources, sons and daughters, old employers, neighbours, charitable societies.

Q. These come into play when they find the particular people who are forced to go to the workhouse or starve?—When public provision is not made for them; when there is no payment.

Q. "The committee wish me further to say that they would greatly welcome an arrangement by which the guardians should of their own motion take steps to reduce their relief, and if they could see their way to taking such steps, the committee would do their best to help them by organising those cases in which local or other assistance might be forthcoming. But having regard to their main work, namely, the improvement (in the interests of the poor themselves) of local administration, legal and voluntary, they think it undesirable to take up isolated cases like the present.

"The chairman of the board on a recent occasion had spoken as follows":—That was Mr. Crooks?—Yes.

Q. "I am not anxious to see any increase in the present system. To my mind the active assistance of the outside public in preventing fraud is becoming more and more necessary. The real poor are thrust into

Mr. Martley,

11 July.

Mr. Martley.

11 July.

"the background by the importunate, and charity and relief become the prey of the crafty and undeserving."

"These are wise words, and the committee will gladly give the guardians their 'active assistance' in any plans the latter may form for reducing outdoor relief and encouraging the poor to rely more on their own efforts and less on the rates."

"As this letter raises issues which go far beyond the particular case to which it refers, the committee will be glad if you will kindly bring it to the notice of the full board.—I am, yours truly, W. G. MARTLEY, Secretary. To the clerk to the guardians."

Then on the 10th January Mr. Lough writes to you?—This is a new thing.

Q. This is a fresh case. He writes:—

"Dear Sir,—I am directed by the board of guardians to state that they have had under consideration the 29th annual report of your committee, and much regret to observe the statements on pages 7 and 8 respecting the administration of relief in this union."

"I am to state that with a view to further investigation the guardians will be glad if you will furnish them with the names and particulars of any cases relieved by them who were not in need of the relief granted."

And this is your report:—

"Extract from the annual report (1900-1901) of the Poplar Committee of the C.O.S. (pp. 7, 8).—What, then, is the result of our local survey? Are we in matters charitable slipping back, or is real progress being made? On the whole, and with some reserve, we are disposed to take the more hopeful view. We desire once more to state our conviction that society will only get better as its members get better, and that no national or municipal machinery can ever take the place of individual effort, or make up for the want of individual character. As has been truly said: 'It is idle to make institutions without making the qualities by which they must be worked.' Take, for instance, the Poor Law. Meant originally to provide only for the destitute, nowadays it is being so administered at Poplar and elsewhere as more or less to subsidise many who could live without it. People fly to it more and more in all the ills of life, instead of relying on their own exertions, as they would have to do if it were not so ready to help them. The rates go up, and the poorer ratepayers suffer in order that paupers may have luxuries which are denied to themselves. Relief so administered is twice cursed. It injures him that gives and him that takes. And it constantly attracts new applicants. (Mr. Councillor Belsham, at a recent meeting of the borough council, stated that one person in every 25 of those living in the borough was receiving parish relief in some form or other.—*East End News*, 27 Sept., 1901.) How should weak, imperfect men learn the lessons of thrift and self-restraint when they see, both in the workhouse and out of it, so much done for the thoughtless and vicious? We know how hard it is for an elected body to take an unpopular line, but we know also that Englishmen have a high sense of duty. We feel sure that if the Poplar Guardians can once be brought to see that strict administration is in the true interest of the poor, they will not hesitate to introduce it. They have done well for the children under their care, and have been humane in their treatment of the sick. Let them now call to mind that there is a time for withholding as well as for giving, and that they are the truest friends of the poor who show them how to do without public relief."

What is the date of that report, Mr. Martley?—Christmas, 1901.

Q. And on the 10th January, 1902, the guardians asked you to supply them with details of what you have said. You took two months to reply?—I was away ill.

Q. I only wanted to get an explanation. I think the nature of the letter justifies a considerable time in preparation. Perhaps I had better read the cases first?—They are illustrations.

Q. I understand they are illustrative cases?

(The Inspector.) I think you had better continue.

(Mr. Grant.) Very well—

"In reply to your inquiry of January 10th, I am instructed to send you this letter for the information of your board."

"At the outset the committee wish me to say that they decline to narrow the issue to the consideration of

"a few cases only, as suggested in your letter. What they have challenged in their annual report is the general policy of the board, and they still challenge it. They now proceed to illustrate and justify the statements made by them clause by clause."

"Meant originally to provide only for the destitute."

"In proof of this statement the committee quote the following passages:—

"(a) 'The function of the guardians is to relieve destitution actually existing, and not to expend the money of the ratepayers in preventing a person becoming destitute.' Glen's Poor Law Orders, 1883, p. 63."

"(b) 'One of the most recognised principles of our Poor Law is that relief should be given only to the actually destitute.' Mr. Goschen's Minute (Poor Law Board, November 20th, 1869)."

"Is being so administered in Poplar as more or less to subsidise many who could live without it."

"In illustration of this statement the Committee assert:—

"(a) That out-door relief is now being given by the board to widows residing with unmarried sons, whose duty it is to support them and who ought to be left to do so (case 1)."

"(b) That out-door relief is being granted to persons in receipt of pensions, for whom voluntary provision would be preferable and in many cases feasible (case 2)."

"(c) That when wives and children of men in regular employment and earning good wages are admitted to institutions, the payments required of such men are inadequate and are in some cases remitted altogether (case 3)."

"(d) That out-door relief is being granted to persons who have a sufficient income without it; e.g., a couple with a fixed income of 12s. 6d. a week are receiving 4s. a week extra from the board (case 4)."

"In this connection the committee desire respectfully to draw the attention of the guardians to the well-known words of the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834:— 'The fundamental principle with respect to the legal relief of the poor is that the condition of the pauper ought to be on the whole less eligible than that of the independent labourer. The equity and expediency of the principle are equally obvious. Unless the condition of the pauper is on the whole less eligible than that of the independent labourer, the law destroys the strongest motives to good conduct, steady industry, providence, and frugality among the labouring classes, and induces persons by idleness or imposture to throw themselves upon the poor rates for support.'

"It may be asked how in the committee's opinion the foregoing classes of cases should be dealt with. They reply as follows:—

"In (a) and (d) relief ought to be refused."

"In (b) the relieving officers should be instructed not to take applications from such persons, but to refer them to the charity organisation committee."

"In (c) where the head of the family is in work a payment of 1s. a day for a wife and 6d. a day for a child should be nearly always possible; and artisans and others in receipt of high wages ought to be made to pay the full cost."

"People fly to it more and more."

"The number of paupers in receipt of relief in the last week of December during the last three years has been:—

	Indoor.	Outdoor.	Total.
1899	3,003	2,011	5,014
1900	3,178	2,188	5,366
1901	3,271	2,490	5,761

"In the Annual Report of the Local Government Board for 1900 (p. 80), Mr. Lockwood, the Board's Inspector, writing of London as a whole says: 'The year 1900, like its five immediate predecessors, has run its course without any severe cold or trade disturbances—the two chief promoters of exceptional distress. There is consequently nothing to record in respect of the latter. Open weather and good trade have not, however, resulted in any appreciable diminution in pauperism.'

"In Poplar they have actually resulted in a very marked increase. The committee maintain that this

"increase is a most serious matter for the borough, and that it entirely justifies their appeal to the guardians to re-consider their policy.

"In all the ills of life."

"Especially is this true of sickness. The Sick Asylum is now so well equipped that it attracts persons who are not destitute, and for whom provision has hitherto been made in voluntary institutions or else by relatives. And the guardians encourage this tendency, as has been already noticed, by accepting inadequate payments for such patients. Here again the committee appeal to the board to deal more strictly with non-destitute cases than they now do.

"The rates go up in order that paupers may have luxuries."

"They now amount to 9s. in the £ for all purposes, and are among the highest in London. Moreover, as the guardians propose in the near future to incur a large capital expenditure (of which in principle the committee approve) in erecting new schools for the children at Hutton, they are likely to increase still more. It is, therefore, urgent that the guardians should be careful not to expend the ratepayers' money unnecessarily. This, however, does not seem to be the view of the board, who often embark on expenditure which it is difficult to justify. The provision of an organ for the workhouse chapel at a cost of £300 is an instance of the kind of outlay complained of. Another is the payment of additional allowances at Christmas time to those in receipt of outdoor relief, a practice which has provoked a protest from other boards of guardians. With that protest the committee entirely concur.

"The poorer ratepayers suffer."

"The guardians act as if rates are paid only by the rich, to whom their rapid increase is more or less a matter of indifference. They seem to forget that the poor also pay rates, if not directly yet in the form of increased rent. And their policy of lavish expenditure comes to this, that the poor man who struggles to preserve his independence, has his lot made harder by the guardians in order that a pauper may have as an inmate of the workhouse, food and clothing of a kind far superior to those obtainable by his class outside, or as a recipient of outdoor relief an income larger in some instances than that of the man who provides for himself.

"Such relief injures him that gives."

"By the giver is meant not the guardian who spends the rates, but the ratepayer out of whose pocket they come. The expenditure of the guardians is to a very great extent unproductive, and every penny which they draw from the ratepayer lessens his working capital.

"Again, women in receipt of outdoor relief compete unfairly with others not so subsidised and keep down their wages. If some women in Poplar are working for starvation pay to-day, it is partly due to the action of the guardians in supplementing earnings by outdoor relief.

"It injures him that receives."

"The man who is willing to accept help from the board when he might win through his troubles without it if he would but exert himself, is not so good a man as he who preserves his independence at the cost of effort and self-denial. In destitute cases the guardians are of course bound to act, but often there is no question of destitution at all but only of a temporary lessening of the applicant's weekly income. In the opinion of the committee the guardians are too ready to grant relief in such cases. If they held their hands, relatives and friends would often do all that is required.

"Moreover, the granting of out-door relief on the easy terms offered by the board must have a demoralising effect. Among the poor, as in other classes, there are many people of weak character and little self-control. These are, of course, the first to fall into distress, and if all their needs are at once met by the guardians they have no incentive to provide for them beforehand themselves. Men will argue: 'Why should I pay into a sick club when I can get maintenance in sickness for nothing from the guardians? Why should I deny myself in order to provide for old age when the guardians are ready, as I now see them to be, to give out-door relief regardless of high earnings mis-spent in the past?' And it is not only the people of weak character who are affected. There are also the positively idle and vicious. Only a sternly repressive policy can be effective with these, and the committee see no signs that the board is adopting this. Rather, the guardians seem to be intent on increasing the number of

"those who are dependent on the rates as, if paupers were a source of strength to the borough instead of being, as they are, a source of weakness. It is here that we join issue with them. The indefinite extension of the sphere of the Poor Law is a great evil, and the true interests of the borough require that the process should be checked. If the Poor Law is to do good and not harm, it must be administered in the interest of all the citizens and not of the pauper class only. Paupers are too numerous already; they are a source of weakness and danger to the community; and those who foster them even when they act from good motives are enemies to all real progress in the borough.

"How retrograde the policy of the board has been during the last ten years the return recently called for by Mr. Lansbury sufficiently shows. If the year 1901 is compared with the year 1891 there is a marked increase of pauperism. The mean numbers in receipt of relief on January 1st and July 1st in the two years work out as follows:—

	Indoor.	Outdoor	Total.
1891	2,219	2,154	4,373
1901	3,053	3,194	6,247
An increase of	37.5 p.c.	48.2 p.c.	42.8 p.c.

"The mean number of paupers per thousand of the population in the two years is:—

1891	26,204
1901	36,995

"But while the pauper class has in the 10 years increased 42.8 per cent., the population of the borough has increased only 1.2 per cent.

"Finally, the committee wish to point out that the present policy of the guardians discourages and paralyses those voluntary efforts to ameliorate the lot of the poor which are socially so valuable. The Poor Law competes where it ought to co-operate, and instead of welcoming voluntary effort too often seems to ignore it. The committee forward with this letter copy of Mr. Goschen's Minute, which, as they think, sets forth the true policy which the board ought to follow.

"The committee have now put their views before the board and must leave the board to decide what action, if any, they will take upon them. The committee hope that in any case there may be a better mutual understanding between themselves and the Board in future."

Now the cases were:—

"Case 1. A widow aged 70, and past work. She lives with an unmarried son, aged 29, a waterside labourer. Up to September last he supported her without assistance. Since then the guardians have allowed her first 2s. 6d. and now 3s. a week. In the spring of 1901 the guardians had offered the house, but their offer had not been accepted.

"Case 2. A man over 60, and in receipt of a pension of 6s. a week. The guardians allow 3s. The man's wife is in a lunatic asylum.

"Case 3. A married man in receipt of 35s. a week. He has six children, one of whom is in an institution. For some years past the ratepayers have had to pay for this child. The father has not been asked to contribute anything. Of the five children at home two are earning.

"Case 4. An old couple 70 and 66. The man has a pension of 12s. 6d. a week. The guardians allow 4s. a week.

"N.B. The names of the foregoing have been supplied to the chairman of the board.

"The guardians sent no reply to the foregoing letter, but the general purposes committee of the board adopted the following minute on June 25th, 1902. Pursuant to reference, your committee have considered the letter of the Poplar and South Bromley Committee of the C.O.S., dated March 10th last, in reply to a letter which the guardians had addressed to that committee complaining of certain remarks contained in the annual report respecting the administration of relief by the guardians. The committee of the C.O.S. in their reply state that they challenge the general policy of the guardians in regard to the administration of relief, and they endeavour to justify their statements by four specific cases which they allege are typical of many others on the books of the union. They also quote in support of their criticism of the guardians' administration of relief a passage from a

Mr. Martley.

11 July.

"Minute of the Poor Law Board in the year 1869, together with statistics showing that there has been a total increase of the pauperism of the union of 42·8 per cent. in ten years. We are satisfied that with regard to the specific cases quoted by the C.O.S., the action of the guardians can be fully justified, while with regard to the Minute of the Poor Law Board, which is quoted as indicating the policy which ought to determine the administration of relief, it is sufficient to point out that a period of 30 years has elapsed since the date of the Minute, during which a considerable alteration in public feeling in regard to the relief of the poor has taken place, and we think it would have been more to the point to have drawn attention to the well-known Circular of the Local Government Board of August, 1900, in favour of outdoor relief and more generous treatment of the aged and infirm poor. Upon the question of the increase in the total number of paupers, in the first place it can be shown that this is due partly to causes over which the guardians have no control; and secondly, that the increase has taken place in the number of aged and infirm persons and children. But looking at the matter from another point of view, your committee fail to see that a body such as the local committee of a society whose methods of carrying on their own work do not meet with universal approbation, have any clear claim to dictate what the policy of a public elected body should be; and we are, therefore, of opinion that no useful purpose would be served by the guardians in a measure recognising such a claim by farther discussing the subject of the society's communication, to the general tone and intention of which we consider exception might properly be taken. We therefore recommend that the reference be discharged. (Signed) WILLIAM CROOKS, chairman."

"Observations on the above minute (not communicated to the board). From this minute it appears (1) that the guardians are impenitent as regards the cases challenged; and (2) that they consider their action amply covered by the circular issued by Mr. Chaplin as President of the Local Government Board in 1900." Is that your minute?—Yes.

Q. I doubt whether you are quite right in saying they consider their action amply covered. They appeal to the Circular as modifying the previous minute?—Yes.

Q. (Reading.) "It seems, however, very doubtful whether this last contention is borne out by the facts. The Circular was avowedly a levelling-up Circular, and although addressed to all unions, was evidently written more for backward than progressive boards. It can hardly have been intended to encourage boards which were already much in advance of public opinion to go further still. Moreover, it limits its recommendations to 'persons who have led decent and deserving lives,' and such adjectives as 'decent' and 'deserving' have to be sorely strained before they can be made to apply to some of those who are now receiving outdoor relief in Poplar. Moreover, the Local Government Board cannot have intended to recommend that such relief should be given to those who have relatives able to do what is necessary and legally bound to do it. A Circular of the Local Government Board can do much, but it cannot override the Poor Law. The guardians farther defend themselves by saying: 'Upon the question of the increase in the total number of paupers in the first place, it can be shown to be due to causes over which the guardians have no control; and secondly, that the increase has taken place in the number of aged and infirm persons and children.' And they seem to consider that they have disposed of the whole question in these two sentences. Now it is quite true that there are classes of paupers over whom the guardians have no control, e.g., lunatics and fever patients. But when these are allowed for, the pauperism of Poplar has still grown much faster than that of London as a whole. Between the years 1891 and 1901 the mean increase for London was 7,088, and for Poplar 1,569, or considerably more than one-fifth of the whole. On the basis of population the local pauperism should only be one twenty-seventh, though, of course, it is reasonable to expect a larger proportion in a purely industrial district such as Poplar. If this increase is due to automatic causes unconnected with the guardians, it is somewhat strange that these causes do not seem to operate in other industrial districts, where one would expect to find them equally active. One wonders why in Poplar out-door paupers have increased from 1,460 in 1891 to 2,238 in 1900, while in Bethnal Green they have decreased from 1,096 to 867. Can the guardians

"seriously argue that the giving of outdoor relief is a matter in which they have no discretion?"

"There is even less substance in their remaining contention. The increase has taken place, they say, in the number of aged and infirm persons and children. Now as regards the first of these classes their own returns do not bear them out. In the annual report for 1901 (page 47) it is shown that the number of persons on a day count in receipt of out-door relief was more by 61 in 1901 than in the previous year, while an analysis of ages shows that of these 61 no fewer than 32 were under 60 (five men and 27 women). Apart altogether from this, the census returns show that the number of old people in Poplar is below the average for all London, and this is quite what we should expect in an industrial district where the hardships of life and the neglect of hygiene militate against length of days."

"Now let us take the case of the children. The birth rate of the borough is high (34·4 in 1901), but the average for the preceding years was higher still. But if the argument of the guardians is to have any validity, there should have been a marked increase in the birth rate. If the 'devastating torrent' was as serious ten years ago as it is to-day, why were there only 810 (indoor, 732; out-door, 78) children chargeable in 1891, while in 1901 we find 1,041 (indoor, 981; outdoor, 60) children chargeable (Mr. Lansbury's return). Here we have an increase in children admitted to the schools of 34 per cent. Obviously the numbers of old people and children have not increased, but a larger percentage of both has become chargeable to the rates. And the board has made them chargeable. The reasons they give for the increase in pauperism are no reasons at all."

Q. Mr. Martley, will you be here to-morrow?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant) (to the Inspector.) I have a good deal more to ask him, and I believe there is some witness you wanted to call to-day.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Martley is going away on Friday, and I think it would be convenient to him to get away soon.

(Mr. Grant.) There are some points I want to ask him about. I was out of the room during that part of your examination.

(The Inspector.) I do not think the other witness is here.

(Witness.) I am quite prepared to go on, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) I gather that you approached this question with considerable sympathy for the guardians?—Yes.

Q. I mean, if I may say so, the whole tone of your communication discloses considerable sympathy with them in an undoubtedly difficult task?—Yes.

Q. And at the same time you have felt quite open to pass severe strictures upon their policy, particularly with regard to out-door relief?—Yes.

Q. I take it that on most other matters you are in agreement with them on principle?—Yes.

Q. For instance, I observe in principle you approve of the Laindon Farm Colony and of the Hutton Schools?—Yes.

Q. Now you told us quite early in your evidence that there had been great distress and great suffering in Poplar?—Yes.

Q. May I take it that that has not been confined to the class we call paupers in the ordinary sense of the word?—Yes, it has not been so confined.

Q. It has extended, has it not, to the direct ratepayer of the community?—Yes.

Q. I am speaking now of persons who pay rates directly as opposed to those whose rates are compounded for by their landlords, and I ask you, has not the distress at this period been extended to that class?—They are a small class—the small ratepayer who pays his rates directly.

Q. And the small shopkeepers?—There is such a class but it is not a large one.

Q. And yet it is an appreciable class?—(No answer.)

Q. I mean there are a large number of small shopkeepers in Poplar?—Yes, but in a great proportion of small houses here rates are included in the rent.

Q. Still there is an appreciable class of small shopkeepers and others who pay rates direct?—I suppose so.

Q. There are about 3,500 shopkeepers, are there not?
—I do not know, sir. It is given in the guardians' financial statement.

Q. Now, Mr. Martley, you are aware, are you not, that the distress has been felt by that class?—Yes.

Q. As well as by the class you have been speaking of; and that a good deal of the distress experienced by the class of which I am speaking is attributable to the very high rates?—Part of it is.

Q. I mean—you see in your letter, the long letter sent to the guardians—you say, in one paragraph: "The rates go up in order that paupers may have luxuries." That is on page 4?—Yes; I think with regard to the small shopkeeper most particularly, what hits him mostly is not the increase in the rates, but the reduction of the purchasing power of the community.

Q. Through the increase?—Well, I do not think the two things go absolutely together. Depression of trade reduces the purchasing power, whether rates are low or high.

Q. Surely the two things are so bound up together as to be inseparable. When the rates go up, the purchasing power in a given community becomes less?—It goes down—yes; but that is not the only thing which affects a small trader.

Q. Therefore, quite apart from the charitable or sympathetic view, there are economic difficulties in all these questions?—Yes.

Q. Well, now, it is a fact, is it not, that the shop-keeping class has suffered severely from rates such as these?—Yes.

Q. And that in some instances shopkeepers have had to pawn articles in order to subsist or pay their rates?—Very likely.

Q. Have any instances of that kind come under your notice?—I cannot recall any at this moment, sir.

Q. Have you heard, as a fact, that shopkeepers have been driven to the pawnbrokers in order that they might procure food?—No, I have not.

Q. Do you think it is likely that such things existed?—I do, with the smaller type of shopkeeper.

Q. So the suffering has not been confined to one particular class?—No.

Q. Now you know, do you not, that a large number of factories and smaller business premises have been closed down in Poplar during the past few years?—Some.

Q. I am speaking of the Poplar Union—of the united parishes of Bow, Bromley and Poplar?—Yes.

Q. There have been a large number, have there not?—Not very many, I think.

Q. Do you know what the percentage of the irrecoverables to the gross rate has been during the past five years in the borough of Poplar?—No.

Q. My information is there is an increase of over 50 per cent. It has risen from 1.85 in 1901 to 2.83 in 1905-6?—The last year was a bad year. It has been a very trying year.

Q. Do you know personally of factories that have been closed in the union of Poplar?—Yes, Blythe and Pascoe.

Q. In Dewberry Street?—Yes.

Q. Their assessment for the purposes of the poor rate was over £400, was it not?—I do not know.

Q. They had considerable premises?—Yes.

Q. I think in that particular instance the closing of the factory was due to a death?—I do not know.

Q. The death of Mr. Pascoe. That is only one, is it not, out of a large number of factories that have been closed?—I do not think it is a large number, sir.

Q. The Nas Food Company, Millwall Dock?—Yes, that was not a large concern.

Q. £275 rateable value?—Yes, they worked during the war, had contracts, and when the war came to an end they could not get more contracts and it came to an end.

Q. They had other premises. There was a foundry in Alpha Road?—Jones Bros.? I believe there was.

Q. That has been closed down?—Quite lately.

Q. Millwall Metal Works, West Ferry Road?—I do not know?

Q. A large warehouse in Emmett Street, one assessed at £1,611?—I have no knowledge of that.

Q. A wharf in Thames Place, rateable value £510, the Canada Furnishing Company, Bartlett Street, rateable value £265?—I do not know that.

Q. I have a long list here, but I will put it to another witness. I will not trouble you with all these details. But it is an undoubted fact that a large number of business premises, for some reason or other, had to be closed?—It has been a time of great commercial depression everywhere.

Q. Do you think that the large increase of rates on top of the depression might be the last straw?—In some cases, yes.

Q. So that the very great increase of the rates has operated also to increase the pauperism of the district?—It may, yes.

Q. And it is probable that the practice of economy on the part of the guardians and other local spending bodies might tend to decrease the pauperism by a reverse process?—Yes.

Q. I mean given economy and given a revival of trade, and a re-occupation of these premises, you would expect to find better labour conditions?—Yes.

Q. And a consequent decrease in pauperism in this union?—Yes.

Q. I think you said this morning there were more casual labourers than any other class in Poplar?—I said the proportion of casual labour in Poplar was high.

Q. The casual labourer applies less for outdoor relief than he used to do?—No, I do not think I said that. I said he had greater opportunities for employment in a normal year.

(The Inspector.) When conditions improve?—Yes, and he is a better man all round.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, and you said the condition of casual labour had very much improved?—Yes.

Q. Well, if that is so, how do you account for the alarming increase in outdoor pauperism in Poplar. If in the predominant class, casual labour, the condition is improved, how do you account for the increase in outdoor pauperism?—Partly by the commercial depression in the last four and five years, partly by the policy of the guardians in, as I should call, marginal cases. They draw their margin at a different point from where I should draw it.

Q. I take it you do not approve of organised applications for relief?—I am not sure, sir. I think that the unemployed men have a perfect right to appoint a spokesman to put their views before the guardians?

Q. No doubt, but do you approve of having paid or other spokesmen leading men in large numbers to the relief offices. Do not you see what occurs is this: When individuals come there is more time to inquire, a quieter atmosphere in investigating the case, whereas if you get a crowd and a demonstration there is not the same opportunity for investigation?—It makes it difficult.

Q. Do not you think that on that score alone there is objection to organisation, not for the purpose of ventilating their grievances, but for the purpose of applying in a body for relief?—I cannot say. If these people choose to come in that way, and organise themselves in this way, they are doing nothing illegal.

Q. No, possibly not; but do you think it desirable they should be indirectly organised by the very body that is charged with the giving of the relief?—That is a difficult question to answer, sir.

Q. Do you think it desirable that a guardian acting first of all as a member of the Trades and Labour Council, should organise this kind of thing, and then act in his other capacity as a guardian, and hear the application of the men he has organised?—I think the arrangement should be perfectly public. Where it is public I do not think I should object to it.

Q. You can conceive there might be serious objection to that course?—Yes, I should say the electors might turn that guardian out.

Q. Surely, on the other hand, you can see some electors might have an interest in returning that guardian.—Naturally.

Q. You spoke, Mr. Martley, of female labour?—Yes.

Q. And said there was a great deal of female labour, and that some manufacturers preferred it. Now, is that labour of the casual class?—A good deal of it is.

Mr. Martley.

11 July.

Q. Are you aware of the reason for that, why female labour is largely of the casual class?—I suppose there are many reasons.

Q. What do you attribute it mainly to?—One reason is that when the earnings are insufficient, the female members of the family have to go out, sometimes for a short period, sometimes longer, to contribute to the family's income.

Q. You are aware, are you not, that the supply of female labour is intermittent?—Yes.

Q. There is a difficulty in securing regular attendance, in fact, particularly married women?—Married women, of course.

Q. And others too?—Not so much single women.

Q. No, obviously. Do you know, since the policy of the guardians with regard to out-door relief became so marked, some manufacturers had difficulty in securing the attendance of women more than two days a week, although they were willing to give them work throughout the week?—I have had that statement made to me by one person.

Q. May I ask who that was?—The foreman of a clothing factory.

Q. Was he a responsible person?—I think so.

Q. He told you as soon as out-door relief had been granted in that way, women would only come to work one or two days a week. They could not secure a regular attendance?—Substantially that.

Q. Do you know that in many cases when there were one or two days' earnings they have been represented to the guardians as an average week of the women's earnings?—That I cannot say.

Q. And have been supplemented on that score by out-door relief?—I cannot say. The guardians know as much about the possible earnings of women as I do.

Q. But they would not know what opportunities the women had?—No, that would depend on the inquiries of their officers.

Q. They could not possibly know whether a woman having the opportunity of six days' work only availed herself of two?—They would know if they went to her employer.

Q. You must have heard in the course of this Inquiry that the investigations of the guardians were not always full?—Yes.

Q. If a woman had an opportunity of securing six days' work, and of her own free will chose only to do two days' work and supplement it by outdoor relief. What would be your view of that?—I should say it would be very mischievous.

Q. A very mischievous system?—Yes.

Q. That women should go and earn, for example, enough to pay the rent, and then remain idle for the rest of the week, relying upon being subsidised by the guardians—that would be a very mischievous system?—Yes.

Q. Do you know that to a smaller extent there are similar cases with regard to the men?—I know it is very difficult to gauge the amount of work the casual labourer does.

Q. Are you aware whether the guardians have ever, in their corporate capacity, approached the employers of labour with a view to information on such a point as that?—By circular do you mean?

Q. Yes?—I am not aware, no.

Q. Do you know whether, when they have a large number of able-bodied men in the workhouse, they have ever drawn the attention of local manufacturers to what they thought would be deserving cases, and sought work for them?—I do not know that they have.

(Mr. Grant.) Or that they have not?—Or that they have not.

(Mr. Robb.) Do not you think that would be a useful thing for the guardians to do—to put themselves in touch with the working operations of the local manufacturers?—Yes.

Q. I think you venture on a comment somewhere that the guardians have taken a rather arrogant position?—I have said so, yes.

Q. A position of isolation. For instance, I think you say: "Again, in dealing with such a body as the 'municipal alliance (I am not in any way connected with

"it), they seem to have strangely forgotten that the right to combine is not limited to workmen. It is shared by ratepayers, and if a number of these chose to unite, and to approach the board, it is extremely unwise of the board to refuse to acknowledge them"—I say you want knowledge about it.

(Mr. Grant.) When you wrote that had you seen the correspondence with regard to the Municipal Alliance?—No.

Q. Do you know they were supplied with copies of our reports, with copies of our agenda and minutes?

(Mr. Robb.) No, nothing of the kind. I will put in correspondence showing that until this present Inquiry was on foot we were refused practically everything, and called impertinent. Yes, a communication was addressed to the Local Government Board characterising the request of the Municipal Alliance as impertinent.

(Mr. Grant.) (to the Inspector): The correspondence is all before you, you know.

(Mr. Robb.) No, it is not before you. (To witness): I presume you had something in view when you made that comment?—The statement in the *East End News* stated the letters were laid on the table and no answer sent to them.

Q. Your view is that it would be better for the board of guardians to get in touch and co-operate with other local bodies?—Certainly, whether they agree with them or not.

Q. There is another point that has been touched upon. You pointed out that at least 80 per cent. of the electors did not pay rates directly?—I do not think I pointed that out, sir, but I believe it is admitted.

Q. 80 per cent. are compounded?—That was put to me, I think.

Q. I take it you agree that that system deprives the individual of interest in the doings of the local spending bodies?—For some years past the Charity Organisation Society has tried its best to get a change made in the method of collecting small rents, to bring home to the individual occupier what the amount of the rent is and what the rate.

Q. Have you seen a statement prepared by the Municipal Alliance showing the amount set forth on the rate demands of the borough council indirectly payable by the tenants of weekly property, the amount of the expenditure incurred by the borough council, the board of guardians and the London County Council?—No.

Q. Perhaps you will look. The statement shows weekly tenants' payments, and then it shows the amount expended on account of the guardians, county council, police, education, public health, and so on, and at the bottom is shown, in red ink, the total amount payable per week by a man whose rental falls between two given figures. For instance, where the weekly rent is 7s. and 7s. 6d., the total amount weekly is 2s. 3d., and so forth.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Lansbury tells us the town clerk queries the figures. We will have them checked, and see if they are right.

(Mr. Robb.) I am going to put Mr. Broodbank in the box, and you can cross-examine him.

(Mr. Grant.) I object.

(Mr. Robb.) I do not mind, for the purpose of this present examination, whether the figures are read, or not. I am dealing with the principle.

(Mr. Grant.) I only ask if the figures are not correct I may have them put right.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, but my instructions are they are correct, and Mr. Broodbank will present himself for cross-examination upon it. (To witness): I take it you agree, in principle, that is a useful return?—Extremely useful. I should say anyone would agree with it.

Q. And have you seen a model rent book that has been prepared on the same basis?—I have seen it mentioned in the paper, but I have not seen it.

Q. With the object of showing the weekly tenant when he pays his rent the proportion of that rent attributable to rates?

(Mr. Grant.) I do not want to stop Mr. Robb, but he is now attacking the system of compounding.

Mr. Martley.

11 July.

(The Inspector.) No, I do not think so. What he is doing is that he has approached a subject of great economic importance. So far from attacking compounding, I should say he is supporting it.

(Mr. Grant.) What I mean is this: We are inquiring into the administration of the Poplar Guardians. The matter of compounding is not within their powers at all. It is regulated by statute.

(The Inspector.) (to witness): This question of rate-aided sweating is very important, is it not?—Yes.

Q. Did you read a letter from Mr. Lansbury on it?—No.

Q. In which it points out that these women who are underpaid applied to the board of guardians, and the guardians are obliged to relieve them?—Yes.

Q. Well now, do you think the whole system of out-relief to these people makes it possible for the industries based upon casual labour to continue?—I think it certainly prevents an improvement in these conditions. It prevents readjustment.

Q. It makes a system, which we all agree is open to objection, easier?—Yes, I should say it did.

Q. Did the guardians make any change at Laindon after your criticism?—I do not know.

Q. From what you know of the results at Laindon, are you still of the opinion you expressed?—Very much.

Q. That is to say, it is a very important experiment?—Yes.

Q. But up to now it has not succeeded as one might have hoped?—It does not fulfil my expectations.

Q. With regard to the point of the compounding householder, is not the situation in Poplar this: The small shopkeeper pays rates and votes?—Yes.

Q. And the compounding householder does not know he pays rates but votes?—Yes.

Q. And the large magnates, as I think you would call them, who own shares in docks and railway companies, pay rates, but have no votes?—Yes.

Q. That is the basis on which the elections are conducted?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Martley, you said you approved of the principle of both the Hutton schools and Laindon colony?—Yes.

Q. Have you seen the Hutton schools?—No.

Q. What is the average value of the class of house occupied by a labouring man and his family in Poplar, the average capital value. Would it exceed £150?

(The Inspector.) Mr. Martley would not know that?—I am not a house valuer, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) But surely the value of an ordinary cottage is pretty well known?—There are many houses here at 12s. a week.

Q. Do you know the rent value per week in Poplar?—No.

Q. Well, you may take it from me that the ordinary house occupied by a labouring man and his family would certainly not exceed £150 in value?—Capital value?

Q. And there would be the greatest difficulty in realising anything like that in Poplar at the present time. Do you think that, however desirable schools may be, a capital expenditure per child, which far exceeds the capital expenditure per family in Poplar, is just?—I am afraid I cannot say. My approval was directed not to the cost of new schools, but to the provision of new schools.

Q. Do you know the general fitting up of these schools is a long way ahead of any of the present public schools in England?—I have seen it so stated.

Q. And it is equal to Rugby and some of the other colleges?—I do not know.

Q. Do you know that the walls and passages are tiled with these red encaustic tiles. I am entitled, in cross-examination, to put this question?

(Mr. Grant.) The witness has said that he has not been to Hutton schools, and now he is asked whether they are tiled with these encaustic tiles.

(Mr. Robb.) I am entitled to put this question. Do you know that the swimming baths at the schools will be among the finest in London?—I have heard you say so.

Q. I suppose when you and I went to school, if we wanted a swim we had to go to a brook, or something of that kind?—Yes.

Q. Do you think it is wise that elaborate baths of this description, tiled throughout, should be provided?—They should be in possession of a swimming bath.

Q. Yes, the principle of swimming baths we are agreed upon. Do you think that to provide swimming baths of this elaborate description for the children is wise, looking at their future. We all approve of schools, but do you approve of elaborate expenditure on schools for pauper children which renders the schools as good as the best public schools in the kingdom, so far as fitting up is concerned?—No, I do not think so.

Q. Do you think that the children of working men at Poplar get accommodation or facilities of this description?

(Mr. Grant.) You have got fine baths in Poplar?—In the East India Dock Road.

Q. And these are tiled, Mr. Martley?—I am afraid I do not know.

(Mr. Robb.) These baths are not free in Poplar. These baths at the schools are free, and are for the exclusive use of the children?—I would say that the ordinary workman's house in Poplar does not contain a bath.

(Mr. Anderson.) Unfortunately.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you think that the ordinary working man in Poplar lives under and enjoys the same luxuries as the paupers in the Poplar Workhouse do?—Well—

Q. Do you think he gets provisions of the same class and quality?—No, I should think not.

Q. You have heard, of course, what the dietary was at Laindon?—Yes.

Q. You know that roast meat is given every day, and that meat was given three times a day?—Yes.

Q. Does the ordinary labouring man in Poplar get a dietary of this description?—I do not suppose he does.

Q. Then what do you think is going to be the eventual effect of providing a better diet in an institution of this character for people doing no work than the working men who do work can get?—That is a very difficult question to answer. It is surely a question for the Local Government Board to settle.

Q. You know you have studied this question and have had great experience of this matter; do you think it is wise to render pauperism more attractive than the ordinary man who labours?—No.

Q. Is that not calculated to do away with the incentive of work?—It is.

Q. We have had it in the evidence of Mr. Clarke on the ninth day that the average wage of the agricultural labourer in Essex is 17s. per week?—Yes.

Q. And that if a colonist at Laindon had a wife and a family of five children the total expenditure on him would be 25s. per week?—Yes.

Q. Do you think it is wise that the guardians should pay for maintenance for a pauper family 7s. or 8s. a week in excess of what the agricultural labourer earns for his family?—It seems to be inevitable that a pauper must be an expensive person.

Q. An expensive person?—Yes.

Q. But if you are making his conditions so beneficial to him, are you not likely to augment his cost. What inducement is there for the agricultural labourer with eight or nine children to go to work for 17s. a week, when he could go to Poplar and become a colonist, or an inmate of the workhouse, and have provisions of the best, and have his wife and family supported?—Surely the contrast should be between the working man of Poplar, and not the agricultural labourer in Essex.

Q. Why is the comparison unfair when you have established a colony down in Essex to make agricultural labourers of the men there?—Yes, but—

Q. You are trying to make agricultural labourers of the men on whose family and himself you are now spending 25s. a week?—Yes.

Q. You are trying by an expenditure of 25s. a week to fit men for a position in which they will earn 17s. per week. That is, or is it not, the case at Laindon?—Yes.

Mr. Martley.

11 July.

Q. Do you suggest that the average wage of the agricultural labourer is 25s. per week?—Not except immediately round London.

Q. And not then, Mr. Martley, surely?—I have met men who earned that amount.

Q. 17s. or 18s. would be a fair average throughout the country?—Probably so.

Q. Then I ask you whether it is wise to spend 25s. a week to fit that man for the position of earning 17s. or 18s. a week, even if he is fortunate enough to get it?—I say in the abstract, no. But the guardians are tied down by the Local Government Board and other things.

(The Inspector.) I think what is in everyone's mind is that this expenditure may be justified as remedial expenditure, putting men on their legs and giving them a fresh start.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you considered the class of men who have been sent down there?—Yes.

Q. You do not think it is desirable that the ordinary pauper class should be sent?—Yes, I do.

Mr. B. DIAMOND, Guardian; sworn and examined.

Mr. Diamond.

11 July.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Diamond, you are a member of the Poplar Board of Guardians, are you not?—Yes, sir.

Q. What is your occupation or profession?—Manager.

Q. How long have you been a member of the Poplar Board of Guardians?—From April 19th, 1904.

Q. For what district?—No. 2 district of Bow.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Diamond, when were you elected to serve on the Poplar Board of Guardians?—28th of March, 1904.

Q. And I suppose you commenced your duties immediately afterwards?—Some time in April.

Q. Were you elected a member of any of the committees?—The finance committee.

Q. Yes?—The general purposes committee and the workhouse committee are committees of the whole board.

Q. Are you a member of these committees now?—I am on none except the general purposes committee and the workhouse committee, which, as I say, consists of the whole board.

Q. Committees of the whole board?—Yes.

Q. You are on no other committees?—No.

Q. How is that?—I was only elected on the finance committee. I resigned from that committee this last election because I could see I held a position where I had to submit to the inevitable. Anything I proposed or suggested was ignored by the rest of the members of the committee.

Q. Now, when you were first elected and undertook your duties, was your attention drawn to anything, to any particular point, in the policy or administration of the Poplar Board of Guardians?—Well, soon after my election I noticed that the policy of the board did not agree with what I thought was the policy of the Poor Law. It struck me that they were taking a position that was untenable, and had a tendency to foster pauperism in Poplar.

Q. You are dealing now with out-door relief?—Yes, out-door relief mainly.

Q. What was the policy of the board with reference to out-door relief?—In effect it was: all who come are served. That is what it appeared to me to be. All my objections never had any effect. The committee on which I sat seemed to act upon Socialist and Labour principles, that of giving food to labouring men who thought they were entitled to it.

Q. Was out-door relief given in this way a matter of sympathy with the poor or as part of the Socialist policy?—The whole programme bore out that it was a sentimental idea. They did not go into any of the cases from a Poor Law point of view, but from a Socialistic and Labour point of view principally.

Q. Yes. Your view is that this was part of a set policy?—Yes.

Q. Were you a member of any of the relief committees?—Yes.

Q. Which?—The Bow relief committee.

Q. I gathered that you did not. What class do you recommend should be sent there—paupers, or unemployed, or unemployables?—The workhouse man.

Q. Well, now, you know what results have so far been obtained?—Yes.

Q. You know that out of 1,100 men who have been sent there 25 have been emigrated, only three of whom have been heard of?

(The Inspector.) It is not 1,100 men, it is only 500.

(Mr. Robb.) There have been 1,100 admissions, but only 600 different units. Nine of them left to get employment?—I have not the figures here.

Q. Do you consider that a satisfactory result?—I believe it is extremely difficult to trace the after career of men who have been to such a colony. If you take any colony in this country or in Germany you will get the same result.

(The Inspector.) You do not even attempt it?—It is almost impossible.

Q. Who were the other members on the committee?—Mr. Watts was chairman. Mr. Bacon, Mr. Phillips, Mrs. Cordery—I will not be correct with reference to Mrs. Cordery, but she was generally there—Mrs. Wilson, and Mr. Lansbury were members of the committee.

Q. I think that is sufficient. What was your procedure on the committee when you met to consider the cases?—You are referring now to the cases that came before the committee? Well, in effect, we were not to consider merits at all.

Q. How were they dealt with?—The relieving officer would call the case and go through the particulars he had got in his note-book. Then the chairman would invite the applicant in through the door-minder, and he would come before us, and he would be asked his name and one or two questions as the outcome of what was in the note-book. Then naturally the committee were invited to ask questions. Of course, I had the privilege of asking questions, but if my questions were of a searching character, I was generally stopped by the committee, and often stopped right in front of the applicant.

Q. If you attempted to put any questions, you were stopped by the committee?—Yes.

Q. In front of the applicant?—Absolutely.

Q. Do you remember any expressions levelled at you in this connection?—They were more or less expressed round the table.

Q. What was said?—

(Mr. Grant.) Did they come from ladies?—I regret from ladies as well as men.

(Mr. Robb.) What was said?—If I asked a question as to where they worked last, or how long they had worked there, or if they had any proof of their last occupation, or asked for proof as to where they had gone that morning to look for work, I should be told to mind my own business, that it was no business of mine, if I doubted the accuracy of their statements. I have often been called a fool in front of the applicants, and the applicants have been told not to take any notice of me when I asked questions.

Q. When you were putting questions of a proper description to the applicants, your brother members have made abusive remarks and told the applicants not to take any notice of you?—Absolutely.

Q. With the exception of yourself, did any other members put questions of that character to the applicants?—Only in a perfunctory way.

Q. Were they questions of a more or less perfunctory nature?—Questions absolutely sympathetic with the applicants. A man might say "I turned up a job because I was not getting trade-union rate of wages and turned 'it up.'" The committee would say "Hear, hear," to that. Another characteristic incident is that of a man who worked for a particular firm, and the manager sent him to Southwark. He and two other men came back because the distance was too far, and he had to get up at an unearthly hour. His case was approved and he was released.

Q. He gave up work because he had to get up too early in the morning, and his action in refusing to work was approved by the Bow committee?—Absolutely.

Mr.
Diamond.
11 July.

Q. And although he was an able-bodied man he was given relief?—Absolutely.

Q. Do you remember any more typical instances?—Of course, typical instances, hundreds of them. I am not exaggerating when I say hundreds of cases. I had a doubt in nine cases out of ten, because there was no opportunity for the relieving officers to make that discreet and minute investigation, and then when the relieving officers did find anything that would lessen the chance of the applicants in getting relief, the committee would take no notice of the relieving officers.

Q. No notice of the relieving officers?—Absolutely none.

Q. Yes?—But so long as the relieving officers gave in a report as would justify them in giving relief to the applicants it was all right.

Q. What the committee wanted was to relieve on any terms?—That is what it seemed.

Q. And they went out of their way to oblige the man who refused to work because of non-trade-union conditions, and they relieved him?—Absolutely.

Q. Did you personally inquire into any of these cases?—Yes.

Q. Did you inquire into one or two of these cases and then communicate with the superintendent relieving officer?—I know of a man who might have had a job as long as his father had it, who died while working for the firm. But the employer had to sack the son, who might have been there to-day, because he was such a lazy man.

Q. Did you ascertain these facts from the employer?—I did not obtain them actually from the employer, but from a good source. I sent to the relieving officer, and he investigated and found that my statements were correct, from the employer and also learned from friends outside.

Q. I see. Well, now, the cases you investigated. What did you find with regard to them?—Well, I cannot remember for the moment the actual cases where I had seen the actual employer; but I do know that men have refused in effect to work, because previous to 1904 these men did go and do a day's work occasionally, but afterwards they degenerated.

Q. Do you know a number of these men by sight?—Absolutely. I am among the men every day.

Q. I think, Mr. Diamond, you are an agent connected with a sewing-machine company?—Yes.

Q. And you know a good many of these men by sight?—Yes.

Q. You pledge your word that prior to 1904 these men used to work, and declined to after?—They did not make any effort to find work, on account of being able to get relief so easily.

Q. And they relied altogether on relief?—Yes.

Q. Now, what were the instructions given to the relieving officers?—The instructions given to relieving officers were in effect that they were not to be too cute as to the character of the applicants, they were not to be too scrupulous into inquiring into the applicant's statements.

(Mr. Grant.) I did not catch the last part of the sentence. They were not to be too scrupulous?—They were instructed not to be too scrupulous in their investigations. That was the effect. I do not want to be caught by Mr. Corrie Grant. That was the tone it was put to the applicants, if not the actual words. The relieving officers did in effect carry out the instructions.

(Mr. Robb.) You say in effect these were the instructions. Do you know of any case of the relieving officers acting contrary to the instructions?—Many cases.

Q. What happened?—The relieving officers would be bullied by the guardians if they did their duty.

Q. Do you know of any instance of a relieving officer being bullied for doing his duty?—Yes.

Q. Who?—Mr. Gard was bullied, Mr. Deason was bullied, and Mr. Law has been bullied, and Mr. Smith only on one occasion. These are the officers. The first three have invariably been bullied by the committee because of the attitude they took up in refusing where they thought it justifiable to refuse.

Q. Mr. Pitt was censured?—He was not on my committee.

Q. That was the attitude the committee adopted towards the officers?—Yes.

Q. Do you know whether personal communications were addressed to the relieving officers by members of the committee?—I have heard, I have seen—well, I have heard letters read out by the relieving officers, which were sent to them by members of the committee relating to cases which they thought might be relieved, which was done.

Q. Do you know of any instance of this after the case had been decided by the committee?—Well, of course there have been cases, but I have not got them before me. I think the relieving officers can bear me out.

Q. Was outdoor relief in your judgment given with judgment or discretion or wastefully and indiscriminately?—It was given wastefully and indiscriminately.

Q. Now, I want to ask you a few questions about the tenders and contracts. They are considered in March of each year, are they not?—Yes, in March of each year.

Q. Therefore you were present. The first contract night you were present was March 25th, 1905?—No, I was not at that board meeting.

Q. Which one were you present at?—1906, this year.

Q. Then we will not deal with 1905. You were not present?—No.

Q. But when you saw the contracts and prices that had been accepted, what course did you take?—When I saw the figures in the papers I could hardly credit the press, and I called on Mr. Lough, I think, the next day, and asked him to show me the figures. He showed them to me, the official figures, and the notes of what was accepted and what was rejected.

Q. Did you take any steps on the board?—I moved at the next meeting of the board that the acceptance of the tenders be rescinded, and, of course, the board told me that the tenders had been already sealed, and that there was no alternative.

Q. You were too late?—Yes.

Q. You were present this year?—Yes.

Q. When were the contracts opened?—In March.

Q. Very well. You took steps on that occasion. I want you to tell the Inspector the manner in which these tenders were dealt with?—They are dealt with in a blindfold manner. I think I should be correct in saying that, because neither myself or the other members know what the prices are for each item. The figures read out were simply the aggregate ones, and then it was open for us to accept which ones we desired to.

Q. Yes?—Irrespective of whom the competitor was.

(The Inspector.) You know the names of the contractors, I suppose?—The names we know.

(Mr. Robb.) Whose duty was it to check the tender forms?—They would be opened in front of us by the clerk.

Q. And you would be given the total figures?—The total figures, without any chance of looking inside them.

Q. Were they handed round the board for inspection?—No.

Q. Who kept them?—Mr. Lough, the clerk.

Q. Did any member of the board ever ask for the inspection of any tender?—Not this year.

Q. Now there were altogether 27, I think?—Yes.

Q. 27 tenders to be dealt with?—About that number.

Q. How long a time was occupied in dealing with them?—There was more time taken up in taking the names of the members than anything else.

Q. What were the names of the members taken for?—On every occasion I thought necessary I would claim a division, and that meant taking the names of every member, and that took up more time than anything else.

Q. Was there any discussion in dealing with any individual tender?—No.

Q. For instance, the butcher. You know there the lowest tender was not accepted. We have been shown that £398 might have been saved. Was there any reason given why the Poplar Guardians should go to Mr. Blott, of Kensington, to get their meat?—No. If I remember right, I think I moved the lowest tender. Of course, it was not seconded. I moved that the lowest tender be accepted, and then on the general question I claimed a division. That was all I could do.

Q. Did anyone get up and explain the reason—some good and sufficient reason—why Mr. Blott, of Kensington,

Mr.
Diamond.
[11 July.

should be given the contract in preference to the lowest tender?—I have no recollection, I am sure.

Q. He was not a local tenderer?—No, he belonged to Kensington.

Q. Then with regard to the poulterers. They were both local tenderers?—I believe so.

Q. Geary and Warn?—Yes.

Q. Warn's was accepted, was it not. Was it Wickes and Geary?—I could not tell you offhand.

Q. Wickes was accepted. I think Geary was £5 12s. 6d. less. What reason was assigned for preferring one Poplar tender before another when it was £5 or £6 less?—If I am allowed to have an opinion, I am satisfied that some members of the board had practically settled who were to have the contract before the board sat.

Q. Had there been a hole-and-corner meeting beforehand?—I am satisfied of that, if I am allowed to judge for myself.

Q. You knew that from the absence of proper discussion?—Yes.

Q. You think that things could not have been dealt with in this way unless there had been some understanding beforehand?—There must have been.

Q. Between a certain section of the board?—I could tell by the tone of the meeting.

(The Inspector.) Were the seals of the tenders broken in the room?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) I suggest that although the seals were broken in the room, it was pretty well known who the local tenderers were?—It struck me that certain members knew who the contractors were.

Q. And whether you accepted the highest or any tender instead of the lowest it does not matter very much, where the tenders are known, so long as you know one?—Absolutely.

Q. For example. If you know the tender of one man beforehand, and you are determined to support him at all costs, no matter whether other tenders are higher or lower, it does not matter whether you have information as to the other tenders or not?—As a member of the board, my observation led me to this. That there are two or three sections on the board, and each section had their particular tenderer, the whole board would take up one party in turn, and the tenderer they favoured would get in.

Q. That is your deliberate opinion?—Absolutely.

Q. Was any reason given for preferring Mr. Wickes, a Poplar tradesman, to Mr. Geary, another Poplar tradesman?—I—

Q. Mr. Geary's being the lowest tender?—I think it went by default. It was simply put, and so and so got it.

Q. Mr. Geary is a respectable and responsible man?—I am sure he must be.

Q. There was no good reason assigned for giving the contract to a higher tenderer?—Absolutely none.

Q. Now, the milkman. Was the contract given to a man named Whitlock?—Yes.

Q. Had Mr. Whitlock been an absolutely satisfactory contractor before?—I heard that his contract had been cancelled a few years before.

(The Inspector.) You were not on the board then?—I was not on the board then.

(Mr. Robb.) But it is on the minutes?—Yes.

Q. And you know there has been a recent conviction?—In spite of that, Mr. Whitlock's tender at 9d. a gallon was accepted in preference to that of the Museum Dairy Company at 8½d. a gallon. It was known a day or two before the board meeting that the board had decided to give him the contract.

Q. You knew a day or two before the contract night that the board had decided to give the contract to Whitlock?—I told the members of the board before the contract came on that they had decided to give it to him.

Q. How did you know?—I heard it outside.

Q. And what you heard was confirmed in practice?—Absolutely.

Q. Was Mr. Whitlock friendly to any of the guardians?—Of course, it is only hearsay.

(The Inspector.) Do not say it then.

(Mr. Robb.) Did you know to your own knowledge whether Mr. Whitlock was familiar with any of the guardians. Anything you know or have seen you can tell us, but not merely what you have heard?—I might say I have never seen the gentleman.

Q. Well, now. Was any reason given to the board for preferring Mr. Whitlock to the other lowest tenders?—The only reason that was given was that you could not get really such good milk for 8½d. a gallon as you would get for 9d.

Q. I see. Do you know what price Mr. Whitlock supplies Greenwich for?—I could not say. I think it is 9½d.

Q. Well, now, the brewers. £311 was accepted against £196, Thorne's. What reason was given for that?—The master said his beer was the best.

Q. Was the master present?—The master was present in the board room and also the superintendent of the Forest Gate Schools.

Q. When the tenders were opened?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Which master?—Mr. Madeley, the late master.

Q. But he had resigned?—He was in the board room.

Q. When did Mr. Madeley resign?—

(Mr. Grant.) I am told in April.

(Mr. Robb.) Did you know at that time that Mr. Madeley was in disgrace?—Many of the board knew.

(Mrs. Cordery.) I never knew about it.

(Mr. Robb.) Had you heard Mr. Crooks speak about the moral ulcer, and so on?

(The Inspector.) That was later.

(Mr. Robb.) It was well known among the board.

(The Inspector.) Did you know?

(Mr. Grant.) This matter of Mr. Madeley was not known to the whole board. It was kept secret between two or three.

(Mr. Robb.) There is a speech made by Mr. Crooks in which he says he has been trying to do his best to prevent the disclosure of the moral ulcer for some time past.

(Mr. Grant.) The date?

(Mr. Robb.) I think some time in March or April. The speech shows that the matter had been within the knowledge of some of the members for some time.

(Mr. Grant.) That is my point.

(The Inspector.) The only question—I am rather mixed—is, what was the date of this contract?

(Mr. Grant.) We have got that. The 16th of March?—I don't want to lay myself open, but I believe that he had some intrigue with the nurses.

Q. What?

(The Inspector.) He means an intrigue?—I believe I knew it then.

(Mr. Robb.) And this was the person who was called in to assist the guardians in considering the tenders?—He was there to be asked any questions.

Q. To express an opinion, and you would take his advice?—He said Messrs. Whitbread's beer was the best.

Q. Do you know that out of that £311 contract, £118 might have been saved?—Had we accepted the lowest tender.

Q. I want to know what the argument was that induced the guardians to accept the highest?—That they could not get good beer for the lower money.

Q. Whitbread's is the best—the best price at all events?—That is true.

Q. Oilman's goods, Mr. Eaton's was accepted although £122 in excess of another tender?—He gives local employment, they called it local work.

Q. And that reason was good in that case?—That argument was good in some cases, but not in this. For instance, the oilman would not manufacture his oil or his cans, but would import them; in that way he does not give local employment.

Q. I want to know what the argument was that induced the guardians to accept the highest tender?—They could not get the best articles for the lower money.

Q. You think then that the extra price paid to this contractor cannot be justified?—It cannot be justified.

Mr.
Diamond,
11 July.

Q. On any grounds?—No.

Q. Is Mr. Eaton a local man?—I believe so.

Q. Then there is the ironmongery. Mr. Pyle was given the contract?—Yes.

Q. And apparently he was only £12 more than Pryke & Palmer's, whereas we knew in reality it was £170?—I did not know it was £170 more. I knew it was £18 more, and although I objected to it they gave it to him because he was a local man.

Q. Then we come to a number of items: clothing, officers' uniforms, children's underclothing. They were all given to Cartwright & Co.?—Yes.

Q. Did you make any inquiries about Cartwrights?—Yes.

Q. Where do Cartwright & Co. carry on their business?—Blackfriars.

Q. In what street?—I could not tell you offhand. It is a building where Cartwright and Milns & Co. and another firm carry on business.

Q. Reynolds?—Yes.

Q. Cartwright, Milns & Co., and Reynolds are in the same building?—Yes.

Q. Are they all contractors for clothing, and so on?—Yes.

Q. All three firms?—Yes, clothing and drapery.

Q. Have Milns & Co. any other address?—Victoria Park.

Q. Does any guardian live at the same address?—Yes.

(Mrs. Wilson.) I do.

(Mr. Robb.) Mrs. Wilson, a guardian, lives at the same address. We are told that Cartwright & Co. were preferred to Watts for one thing, that they employed sweated labour?

(The Inspector.) Wait a minute. Watts tendered in the first year?

(Mr. Robb.) In 1905. I am wrong. Watts did not tender. In one year it was said that Cartwright's were preferred because they did not indulge in sweated labour?—That was so.

(The Inspector.) But he was not there on that occasion.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you made any inquiries where Cartwright & Co. get their work done?—They get work done outside.

Q. Well, I do not want to prejudice any poor women. Have you the names and addresses of some women you can hand to the Inspector?—I can hand them to the Inspector, but I do not want the women to suffer.

Q. You do not want these women to be injured. Have you ascertained that—there are poor women in the East End?—Yes.

Q. In Poplar?—Yes.

Q. Carrying out contracts or sub-contracts for Cartwright & Co.?—Yes.

Q. Do these people work for the three firms who occupy the same building in the borough?—If I shall not be asked to give their names, I was told that when you take work out for these three firms they get their work marked with a ticket. C would mean Cartwright, M would mean Milns, and then there is the other one.

Q. Reynolds, with an R?—Yes.

Q. In the houses of poor women?—Yes.

Q. Whose names you will hand to the Inspector?—The Inspector only.

Q. Because these women are apprehensive of losing their jobs if their names are disclosed?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) I am afraid I know very little about this particular firm or labour questions. Is it right that there is sweating in these sub-contracts?—This particular person gets about 7½d. to take back completed and she gets 2s. 3d. for machining trousers. That would be for a dozen.

Q. Then there is an intermediary?—A person, say, living in Jupp's Road, gets the work in bulk. She would get so much for making them complete. This person would give them out to another person at so much a dozen for machining.

Q. Is there no other person between the person in Jupp's Road and the firm in Blackfriars. There would be a sub-contract, would there not?—There would probably be.

Q. Do you mean that there would be two persons making the corduroy trousers that would be given out by Messrs. Cartwright & Co. Would A do something herself?—Yes.

Q. And then pass it on to B to do something else?—Yes. When it was completed A would return it to the firm.

(Mr. Robb.) You have ascertained the address?—Yes.

Q. You saw some workhouse trousers?—Yes.

Q. And does this particular woman get 7½d. for making?—Yes.

Q. Is that a fair price?—Well, it is the ordinary price. The labour party would call it sweated price.

Q. Now, do these three firms who occupy the same building in Blackfriars, tender for poor law work in competition with one another?—They would not tender in one union.

Q. This particular firm of Cartwright & Co. were given the contracts this year for drapery, haberdashery, officers' uniforms, and tailors' articles at a total apparent cost of something like £800 in excess?—They got the contract this year.

Q. Children's clothing they got at £93 15s. 6d. over some other tender?—Yes.

Q. What reason was assigned for giving them the contract at that increased price?—No reason was given at all. It went by default.

(The Inspector.) Did you move an amendment?—I moved that I claimed a division whenever the highest tender was put forward.

Q. Were you the only person who took up that position?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) I do not seem to have the list here of the drapers' contract for last year.

(Mr. Osley.) That is because it is not the lowest.

(The Inspector.) Do I understand that your procedure was that when the lowest tender was not accepted you claimed a division?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) Now was anything said about you by your colleagues when you took up this attitude?—Well, they certainly did not agree with me. They told me I had no business and I knew nothing about it. In fact I was insulted.

Q. I believe some very objectionable expressions were used to you?—If you will allow me. I was going down the East India Dock Road one morning, and by accident I called at the receiving homes.

Q. Langley house?—Yes. When I got there a committee was called to inspect some furniture that had been supplied by Butcher, the out-contractor. Mrs. Cordery was on the committee and I inspected a carpet. I think it was a hearthrug or something of that kind. The quality of the article did not appear to me to be what the guardians should pay for.

Q. Not up to sample?—They were common articles and because I criticised and examined minutely, Mrs. Cordery asked me what I was doing and what I knew, and said she would smack my face if I took too much liberty on my shoulders and examined things like that too exact, and so forth. That was in front of the contractor himself, and the matron, and I believe the assistant clerk, Mr. Wright.

Q. That was the manner in which you were treated by Mrs. Cordery who was present at the committee with the clerk?—Yes.

Q. When you had the audacity to see that the guardians were getting the class of article they were contracting for?—Yes.

Q. Were there any other instances of that kind of thing? Were you insulted at board meetings?—Yes. I was promised a punch on the nose if I exposed a certain matter outside the board room.

Q. What was that?—Milns, Victoria Park Square. They wanted four dozen suits and four after. I was criticising them. They were paying, I believe, 16s. or 18s. for them, and Mrs. Wilson came round to me and said: "I will punch you on your nose if you say anything outside."

Mr.
Diamond.
11 July.

Q. To put it short, you were constantly exposed to insults because of your independent attitude?—Always.

(Mr. Grant.) Had you not better finish your story about Mrs. Wilson?

(Mr. Robb.) You know all about it, Mr. Grant. (To witness) Did the chairman ever protect you from insults of this character?—No.

Q. I see from the public press that you were called a fathead by your brother guardians?—Yes.

Q. Did you complain that the chairman laughed instead of protecting you?—Yes.

Q. Was that all because of your challenging the policy of the board?—Yes.

Q. Do you remember the purchase of Lawson Tait bedsteads?—Yes.

Q. How many were wanted?—The master said to the committee that on account of the influx of paupers in the house he would want 50 bedsteads. The committee argued the point, and they finally decided that they would have 25 on that occasion, and another 25 were ordered two weeks after, where we should have ordered 50 at once.

(Mr. Grant.) May I ask about future arrangements. I understand you will not sit on Friday in this week. And I think we said something about next week.

(The Inspector.) I will not sit Thursday. On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

(Mr. Grant.) You won't sit on Friday next week?

(The Inspector.) I must miss Friday and Saturday this week, and Thursday in next week I must drop.

(Mr. Grant.) And that will bring us in the week ending the 1st. Do you see any chance of finishing by that time?

(The Inspector.) That depends.

(Mr. Grant.) We finish with Mr. Robb to-morrow. Then come my witnesses. I don't know whether you are going into the box.

(The Inspector.) Oh, no.

(Mr. Grant.) I wish we could put you in. You signed the memorandum.

(The Inspector.) I think Mr. Oxley can give you what information you want.

(Mr. Grant.) I have a very important letter from the Local Government Board. At your suggestion Mr. Lough wrote that we might have an opportunity of seeing what otherwise would be a privileged document, and the Local Government Board have refused to let us have that opportunity. Will the Board, and I think they know me pretty well, let me see that document?

(The Inspector.) I do not mind you seeing it in the least. It is not of very great importance. The only

Q. What was the reason of ordering 25 on one occasion and then another 25?—It was to avoid advertising, because the amount for the whole would be over £50, and that Mr. Butcher might supply them.

Q. Who is this man, Butcher?—The out-contractor.

Q. Where does he carry on his business?—Somewhere in Market Place.

Q. Randall's Market. What is he?—He buys second-hand.

(The Inspector.) You must not make this statement. Is it not Walber?

(Mr. Robb.) No, that is the other one. Butcher was the contractor for the bedsteads you purchased?—Yes.

Q. I do not think I can finish to-day, Mr. Davy.

(The Inspector.) I will just ask one or two questions. In the first place carry your memory back when contracts were taken. Were any words or threats used at that particular meeting?—Not last March.

(The Inspector.) I will leave the rest of the enquiries until to-morrow.

letter I have that you have not got is a letter from a witness asking to come and see me. I wrote and said, Come. He came and told me it had been said that he had been to see me, and therefore he thought he would come.

(Mr. Grant.) If I may see this document I should be very much obliged.

(Mr. Robb.) If we are going into that, I have information that certain witnesses were approached by two members of the board of guardians. I am prepared to give names. If we are going into this I shall ask that these persons be called.

(The Inspector.) If these things were of any importance I should refuse to show them to anyone, and advise the Board so. But as a matter of courtesy to Mr. Grant, I do not object.

(Mr. Robb.) But what this will involve. Do not you realise that if you are going to show Mr. Grant or anyone confidential documents from officials you will not in future get information?

(The Inspector.) It is very bad procedure.

(Mr. Robb.) I do not think a Government Department ought to show confidential documents from officials.

(The Inspector.) Or inmates.

(Mr. Grant.) I always understood that Mr. Robb was going to assist me. Now I understand he is objecting to your decision.

(The Inspector.) The whole thing is a ridiculous trifle.

(Mr. Grant.) If so, there can be no objection to my seeing it.

THIRTEENTH DAY.

Thursday, July 12th, 1906.

(Mr. A. S. Bird.) Mr. Davy, as representing a large number of ratepayers, and also particularly the ward that I represent on the Borough Council, I have been requested to ask you two questions, if you will allow me. The first is, what proportion of expenses, if any, will be allowed out of the local rates in carrying out this Inquiry?

(The Inspector.) The guardians will pay and the expenses will come out of the local rates.

(Mr. Bird.) The second question is, are they, or will they—that is, the guardians—be allowed to draw any funds from the local rates in defending themselves at this Inquiry?

(The Inspector.) Yes.

(Mr. Peacock.) I have also an application to make as an ex-guardian. There were certain assertions made?

(The Inspector.) What is your name?

(Mr. Peacock.) Councillor Peacock; there were certain assertions made the other day by a certain ex-contractor, and I also noticed that he asked you for protection for any evidence he might give. I ask you if you think that fair, that this contractor should be given protection to go into that box and practically libel any member of the board of guardians, when they are unable to take proceedings against him. Well, the question I put to you is this.

(*The Inspector.*) We cannot protect a witness against the penalties of perjury, Mr. Peacock, if what he said was not true.

(*Mr. Peacock.*) I want to know the position. What do you mean by a protection order?

(*The Inspector.*) If he desired, the protection would be that, as far as I can arrange, he should not be prosecuted under the Corrupt Practices Act for evidence given here. I should do my best with the Attorney-General.

(*Mr. Peacock.*) In cases of perjury there is no protection.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Would it not be better for this gentleman to go into the box?

(*Mr. Peacock.*) If Mr. Robb will pardon me, I must ask Mr. Robb to sit down. This is indiscreet of Mr. Robb.

(*Mr. Robb.*) The charges were made on oath, and any denial ought to be made upon oath at the proper time.

(*Mr. Peacock.*) No doubt Mr. Davy would have given me that information.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I think Mr. Peacock was, you will remember, deliberately charged yesterday with attempting to offer a bribe, and with endeavouring to make a definite bargain in regard to a contract. The course you have followed when a personal charge was made, was that persons who wished to deny it on oath you gave an opportunity of doing so, and I think if you gave Mr. Peacock the opportunity now—

(*The Inspector.*) I don't see why he should come now.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I shall want Mr. Peacock's books to see if it was true he sold the clothing to Mr. Greaves and put him through a long cross-examination. We had better take it another time. Have you your books, Mr. Peacock?

(*Mr. Peacock.*) No. Don't worry about the books; you shall have all the books.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Mr. Peacock has the course open to him to prosecute for perjury. Mr. Peacock is not a guardian, but in the case of Mr. Madeley and Mr. McCarthy—

(*The Inspector.*) That was a different case.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I leave it in your hands.

(*The Inspector.*) Mr. Peacock has his own remedy. I may say that it seems to me I shall have to make further investigations. He is doubly out of court. He is not a guardian, and this particular instance did not happen at the Poplar Board of Guardians, but at the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum, which is under different management. What course I shall take in regard to the Poplar and Stepney Asylum I have not yet decided, but I do not want to damage the case of the guardians by mentioning it now.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Shall we allow Mr. Peacock to come up on Monday and make his defence?

(*Mr. Bird.*) May I supplement my two questions? Will the expenses of the Local Government Board also be saddled upon the local rates?

(*The Inspector.*) No.

(*Mr. Robb.*) How about our expenses?

(*The Inspector.*) The one moral is this: the sooner this Inquiry concludes the better.

(*Mr. Robb.*) But there is this. We have been called upon to defray expenses; we had to pay the expenses of Superintendent Marden.

(*The Inspector.*) I shall see you in reference to that evidence. Make an application.

(*Mr. Robb.*) If you please.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Probably we shall want to make one too.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Before we go on, I want to correct a misapprehension which arose yesterday in regard to Mr. Martley's evidence. He put in four documents, and I should like to ask the gentlemen of the press if they were handed four documents or one document in regard to Mr. Martley's evidence. I think, sir, from what I have seen in the organs of the press this morning, that was so. I arrived here late yesterday, and saw certain notes made by my clerk of evidence given by Mr. Martley, upon which, slightly, I cross-examined him. To my great surprise, in the evening papers I saw a long statement put in which I had never heard given in evidence, and which I had no opportunity of cross-examining upon, and of which I find a copy handed to me by Mr. Lough's clerk to-day.

(*The Inspector.*) What document is that?

(*Mr. Robb.*) This document.

(*The Inspector.*) What happened about it was this. I asked Mr. Martley a question, in answer to which he prepared this statement. In order to save his voice, I read it.

(*Mr. Grant.*) And the copy was handed to the press.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Unfortunately it was not in my hands. Mr. Lough's clerk came to me soon after I arrived, and said he had a copy, but they wanted it for the press, and would it do later on. Not knowing it had been put in evidence, I said "certainly." Later on in the day when I was in the course of following the evidence, this document was handed to me, which I had no opportunity of seeing until after we adjourned. It is represented in the press, that Mr. Martley says some words, I believe, quite favourable to the guardians, in regard to one item of their policy.

(*The Inspector.*) The press is not a homogeneous body. Do you follow the view of this particular paper.

(*Mr. Robb.*) The unfair part of it is this. A letter written four years ago warning the guardians of the probable results of their policy, and containing the severest strictures on that policy, has not been handed to the press. The guardians seem to represent they have been white-washed by the Charity Organisation Society, to whose criticisms Mr. Crooks took the strongest exception. He said the criticisms of the Charity Organisation Society were open to very grave exception, both as to their character and tone.

(*The Inspector.*) I undertook, Mr. Robb, that Mr. Martley's four communications should be put in. They will be part of his evidence.

(*Mr. Robb.*) If I had known this I would have tested Mr. Martley's evidence in an entirely different way. I should have asked him, as I asked about the Shenfield Schools, as to whether he had sufficient knowledge to justify that statement.

(*The Inspector.*) Mr. Martley lived in the district so long, and studied the subjects; and I considered it only fair to call him.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I do not gather Mr. Martley came to attack or defend either party. He came to give evidence on the result of his experience, and although sympathising with the guardians on one item, he disapproves strongly of many of their methods.

(*The Inspector.*) Mr. Martley was not called by me in any sense as a representative of the Charity Organisation Society. He was merely called as one who had lived in the district and was well acquainted with the conditions. I think his evidence justified his being called.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I do not know whether you think in the circumstances I should have an opportunity of cross-examination.

(*A ratepayer.*) As a ratepayer, we have no control over the press whatever, and as soon as the alliance get scent of anything in their favour against the guardians it must go out.

(*Mr. Robb.*) This document was handed to the press by Mr. Lough at or about mid-day. The clerk said he wanted it for the press. I never handed any documents to the press in the course of this Inquiry. Let the press have the whole of them and not one which happens to contain some statements favourable to the guardians.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I plead guilty. I am an old press man. When Mr. Martley's document was handed in there were only three copies. One was handed to me, one to you, sir, and one to Mr. Lough. I asked Mr. Lough at once to have copies made. Then I found the evening papers wanted it at once, and I handed them my copy. I have not got it back yet. That is rather a characteristic of the press. Mr. Lough came and told me that the *Westminster Gazette* wanted it, and I suppose we again got one as quickly as possible. Mr. Lough has handed Mr. Robb's to the *Westminster Gazette*. I think that is the highest compliment. If he wanted it for the *Evening News* I could have understood it. That is up to that point. Mr. Robb was not here. What happened was, you read Mr. Martley's statement; I read the other three documents in detail, and they were put in, except the printed copy of Mr. Martley's evidence before the unemployed committee, and the press had the fullest opportunity of hearing these documents, because I flatter myself I read rather well, and I went slowly. That

particular document, which I agree is a perfectly impartial statement by the Charity Organisation Society—

(Mr. Robb.) Not by the Charity Organisation Society.

(Mr. Grant.) Yes, by the secretary.

(Mr. Robb.) By the secretary?

(Mr. Grant.) Well, a paid servant.

(The Inspector.) I do not propose to continue this. Mr. Martley's first document is his; the other letters were written by others. They are distinct.

(Mr. Grant.) I agree.

(The Inspector.) As a matter of fact all the documents were read out publicly. All of them were. That particular one was handed to the Press.

(Mr. Grant.) By me, sir.

(The Inspector.) And the Press had an opportunity of taking the whole thing.

(Mr. Robb.) The vital point is a document which Mr. Martley prepares on his individual responsibility is put in, and the official documents of the Charity Organisation Society were not put in.

(Mr. Grant.) Oh, yes.

(The Inspector.) They were put in.

(Mr. Robb.) I venture to hand to the Press the letter of 10th March, 1902.

(The Inspector.) We ought to have the whole thing.

Mr. B. DIAMOND; recalled, and further examined.

Mr.
Diamond.
12 July.

(Mr. Robb.) One statement which Mr. Martley made yesterday—you are in a position to tell us as to alien Jews?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) May I say at once, by some mistake that has been entirely misrepresented. What Mr. Martley said was that the Jews came in an impoverished state to Whitechapel, and came to live in Poplar and got on the guardians, and it has got into the press that they got on the rates, which is entirely different.

(Mr. Robb.) I should like to see the shorthand notes.

(Mr. Grant.) The shorthand notes are here.

(The Inspector.) My impression was that he meant the rates and said the guardians.

(Mr. Robb.) I suppose this is meant as an attack on someone. But is it a fact that the alien Jews come to Poplar in that way?—No, sir.

Q. You know, because you are constantly in touch with all classes?—In the whole course of my guardians' work—two years and four months—I never had a single case of an alien Jew pauper, as understood to go to the guardians for relief.

Q. I think you have some special information about the convalescent homes to which the guardians sent pauper patients?—Yes.

Q. Were you deputed to inspect and report on one of these homes?—One of the homes.

Q. Where was it?—Mr. Lough, can you help me?

Q. Margate?—Perry's sanatorium.

Q. Margate?—Yes.

Q. When was that?—I think in 1905—the early part of the year, or the latter end of 1904.

Q. Did you present a report to the guardians?—Yes; it was a joint report.

Q. I call for that, a joint report with whom?—Mr. Watts.

Q. Do you know what the guardians pay at this sanatorium per week per patient?—I speak from memory. I may say about 17s.; I shall appeal to Mr. Lough to help me.

Q. Would that appear in your report which you made at the time?—The guardians knew how much we were paying, certainly.

Q. Now, would it appear by your report, or on your report—the report simply dealt with conditions?—The report dealt with the sanitation of the place, the conditions of the place as a whole, the effect the place had upon patients there, and the report was totally damaging to the institution as a place unfit for the private patients going there.

Q. Do you know about the homes at Sandgate—convalescent homes, so-called—to which pauper patients were sent?—Jones' is another place, I never inspected it. There are reports, which are also unfavourable.

Q. It was condemned?—Yes.

Q. At that time very strong criticism appeared in the *Lancet* and other medical journals?—Yes.

Q. Condemning these homes?—Yes.

Q. Pointing out, in one of them, a large number of deaths had occurred?—There were a number of deaths in consequence of the place.

Q. Was the institution you saw at all fit for the purpose?—No, sir. It struck me as a place, particularly the dining-room struck me as a place that one would only

want to see in a back room of a beerhouse where they are playing cards and dominoes—very dilapidated and dirty it appeared to me. It was so, in fact; the men there were smoking.

(The Inspector.) Your report is there?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) When you went down were you met by the proprietor?—No.

Q. Did he send a carriage to meet you?—Not to me, sir.

Q. Are patients still sent to these homes?—To Jones' homes?

Q. To Jones' homes?—Yes.

Q. At Sandgate?—Yes.

Q. In spite of the criticism levelled at them by the medical profession?—Yes.

Q. Patients are still sent?—Yes, 23 were there on the 20th June.

(The Inspector.) I can speak as to Jones' homes. The Local Government Board might have prohibited the reception, but after careful consideration of the whole subject, they did not prohibit pauper patients there. I also remember that the board of guardians proposed to erect a convalescent home at Sandown—I suppose in order to get away from the necessity of sending phthisical patients to a home. In regard to the sanatorium, for reasons, it was withdrawn.

(Mr. Robb.) I will not carry that further. I put in documents. Now, Mr. Diamond, have you ever been to the Shenfield schools?—I went there on a visit with the rest of the board about the time when the place was being built.

Q. Have you been since it is nearing completion?—No, I do not think so.

Q. I want to ask you one or two questions about the staff. What has been the discipline maintained in the workhouse in regard to the staff?—No discipline in the workhouse in regard to the staff; it appeared to me everybody were their own master. They did not have that tone of superiority of one over another.

Q. Do you say the officers have been treated leniently or strictly?—Absolutely leniently.

Q. Has any case come under your notice of breaches of duty or discipline?—Yes.

Q. Can you give one or two instances?—Well, about six or seven weeks ago an attendant at the lunacy ward was charged with calling upon the relatives of a patient for money to buy the patient some luxuries in the way of—

Q. Fruit: Never mind what it was?—Grapes and oranges, &c. He was called before the committee, and he admitted he had been round, but said he went on the authority of the patient himself.

Q. Was that proved or disproved?—It was proved. He did not deny it, and the relatives gave the man 2s., and we were satisfied he only had one pennyworth or two pennyworth of oranges at the most.

Q. So he had misappropriated a portion of the money?—It seems the relatives told this attendant he might keep the balance, which I would assume would be 1s. 10d. out of 2s.

Q. After these facts were proved what was done?—He was reprimanded, and told if it occurred again he would be dealt with.

Q. Any other case recently?—The case of a man drunk on duty.

Mr.
Diamond.
12 July.

Q. Who was he?—Woodbridge, I think the name was.

Q. Did he occupy any position which made the fact of his being drunk on duty additionally great? What was he?—I will tell you in a minute. He was a receiving-ward attendant at the time.

Q. What was done with him?—He was brought before the committee, and he was cautioned not to get drunk again, and I understand there are reports before the committee showing everything as to his conduct. At all events, he was dealt with in that way leniently.

Q. In your view, then, the discipline is not sufficiently strict?—Not in the house.

Q. Now, Mr. Diamond, referring again to what you told us yesterday, as to the attitude you took in regard to the unemployed. Have you been subjected to any intimidation?—Yes, very much.

Q. In what way?—Well, on one particular occasion we had a board meeting in this very room. The gallery was occupied by the usual unemployed, and I passed strong criticism upon the board fostering what I called pauperism in Poplar, and as I was going out of the room to put my hat on I was warned that the mob were outside waiting upon me to do me an injury. I went down stairs and heard the mob howling, and although I was prepared to go out and go home, I was not allowed to go out until, I believe, there were three or four policemen had to be requisitioned and accompanied me to the railway station.

(Mr. Grant.) That was when?—Some time last year.

(The Inspector.) What time of the year?—I regret I have not the date.

(Mr. Robb.) I think I can assist you, Mr. Diamond. I see you mention the incident at a meeting early in December, 1905. You said: "Last Friday" 50 or 60 undeserving unemployed met outside the meeting place to way-lay you and do you some injury; that was at the end of November, 1905?—That would be it. I appealed to the police immediately.

(Mr. Grant.) I do not know whether the *East End News* is a trustworthy journal. I have a paper, November 28th, 1905. There is a special meeting of the guardians for the purpose of calling attention to a statement by Mr. Diamond, and that was the meeting apparently at which Mr. Diamond spoke, and the unemployed intimidated him. I think that is probably the date?—I stand by the press report, sir.

Q. I only want to get the date?—I could not give the date except you get the date in the press.

(Mr. Robb.) Did that happen more than once?—It has happened frequently, but on another occasion I got the same treatment outside the borough council chambers. I went there on a usual visit, when I was entitled to, and when I came out there was a mob standing opposite, and I could not see in the dark for a moment, and I heard murmurs from across the street. Vulgar remarks were made, such as "There is that b—Diamond," and so on, and I stayed there for two or three minutes. No one came down and I decided to go along the road by myself to the station. Going along, these people followed me and threatened me.

Q. Were these the so-called unemployed?—Yes, the so-called unemployed.

(Mr. Grant.) Actually, the unemployed.

(Mr. Robb.) Very much employed at that time?—When I got halfway down the street, the mob getting closer, a young fellow who knew me came up to me and said: "I will accompany you to the station." I advised him to go away in case he might get molested at the station. I walked into the station. There were folding doors, and when they closed the mob threw the doors open and called me every name they could. The ladies and people in the station seemed alarmed. I told the people in the station that was the unemployed, when they went away.

Q. That happened, you say, frequently?—On that occasion I had to go to Bow station and appeal for protection and Inspector How promised me I should be protected. He said I was being protected right the way through.

Q. Do you think it would be a correct or fair thing to say that these men were attempting to obtain relief by intimidation?—Apparently it was so.

Q. Did you hear them speak to the relieving officers?—I have heard them say outside the relieving office in Fairfield Road: "I shall get relief whether you like it or not. If you don't, I shall see some one?"

Q. Meaning they would see a guardian?—A guardian, oh, yes.

Q. You saw these bands of men, I suppose, as they were following you?—Yes.

Q. And you saw the crowd who came here at that time?—Yes, sir.

Q. You have a large acquaintance with the working classes in this district?—Yes.

Q. Were these men who were encouraged to come here genuine unemployed?—No, sir. There were two classes. They were a mixture of borough council employees. Of course, I am not referring to all the employees—some borough council employees and some so-called unemployed, who were men who didn't want work.

Q. No doubt there were some deserving cases?—Yes, but they did not mix themselves with this class.

Q. Was there distress in Poplar?—There was distress everywhere, sir.

Q. Do you think it was as severe in Poplar as in 1894 or 1895?—I have only knowledge of 1904, but I do not think that the distress—

Q. Real distress?—Real distress in 1904 was as bad as 1894. Of course, I am speaking from a business standpoint.

Q. You speak of the borough council methods. Is it a fact that several guardians are also members of the borough council?—Yes, sir.

Q. And that there is a certain amount of sympathy, shall we say, between the two bodies?—There is, sir, as a matter of fact, a certain section of the council employees who are compelled to support the Social and Labour members to save their positions.

(The Inspector.) It might save time—

(Mr. Grant.) Are you looking at the minutes? That and one other point is all I want to ask.

(The Inspector.) Here is your report on the Margate and Sandgate sanatoria. Tell us what the guardians did on your report?—They decided in the first instance not to send anybody else.

Q. I do not follow what you are complaining of?—My complaint is this, that my report ought to have been a report handed in long before I gave my report.

Q. You are a better visitor than the guardians?—Apparently.

(The Inspector.) Now I understand.

(Mr. Robb.) My complaint is that they ought never to have sent to institutions of that character, but the board professed to treat its cases so thoroughly, and send them to institutions of that character.

(The Inspector.) I think I ought just to read the minutes of the guardians on the sanatorium at Margate: "The committee accordingly recommend (d) that the 'medical officer of the workhouse be requested to institute inquiries, and advise as to the establishment of a separate home in a suitable locality for (a) 'phthisical cases, and (b) convalescent cases. (c) That further representations be made to the Local Government Board as to the urgent necessity for the 'provision of accommodation for phthisical and convalescent cases, and that they be informed of the steps contemplated by the guardians to deal with the question. (f) That pending the provision of such accommodation, inquiries be made with a view to securing vacancies for present cases in existing homes other than the 'sanatorium' at Margate and the 'Sandgate sanatorium,' and that, except in urgent circumstances, no further cases be sent to these institutions." The guardians did all they could on that report, and it is made a subject of complaint that they contemplated going to the expense of another home?"

(Mr. Robb.) The complaint is not that they contemplated, but apparently a deposit had been made before the sanction of the Local Government Board had been obtained.

(The Inspector.) These deposits were to be returned if the sanction of the Local Government Board was not obtained.

(Mr. Robb.) I am afraid that is not so.

Mr.
Diamond.
12 July.

(Mr. Crooks.) It was never paid.

(Mr. Robb.) According to the minutes, the cheque had been paid, but it was cancelled.

(Mrs. Wilson.) I should like to ask Mr. Diamond—

(Mr. Grant.) I think this fact about convalescent homes has got by mistake on the minutes. There was a proposal to purchase certain property of Walton & Lee. Thinking the thing would go through, the guardians on 10th September, 1904, sanctioned the payment to Walton & Lee, of £460. The matter was in Mr. Marsh's hands, but Mr. Marsh never came to definite terms. Therefore they never wanted the deposit, and the cheque was afterwards cancelled according to the minutes I read yesterday.

(The Inspector.) The point is that apparently Mr. Marsh never paid that deposit. Had he paid it there would have been a chance of losing it had the Local Government Board refused their consent.

(Mr. Marsh.) It would have been subject to the sanction of the Local Government Board if it had been obtained.

(Mr. Robb.) I suggest the whole thing was irregular. It is an example of the way guardians rush to spend public money, irrespective of what will happen.

(Mr. Grant.) It is quite right. The guardians actually expended a penny on a cheque; the cheque was cancelled and the penny was lost to the ratepayers. A most iniquitous thing.

(Mr. Robb.) If someone had not moved in the matter, £460 would have been paid the first time.

(Mrs. Wilson.) Can I ask Mr. Diamond a question, or several questions, through you, about the statement he made yesterday?

(The Inspector.) Might Mr. Grant not ask the questions?

(Mrs. Wilson.) I want them cleared up at once. They are in the press.

(Mr. Grant.) This is a personal matter between Mrs. Wilson and Mr. Diamond. Personally, I think Mr. Diamond is much more afraid of Mrs. Wilson than he is of me.

(The Inspector.) You do it for her.

(Mr. Grant.) Well, give me the papers. My difficulty is, there must be some limit to what questions are asked. Mr. Smith, come to me. I will go into this matter at once.

(The Inspector.) Anything that reflects upon Mrs. Wilson.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Diamond, I am going to ask about other matters presently. About your relations with Mrs. Wilson; when you got on the board you found Mrs. Wilson a member of the board?—Yes.

Q. How long had she been a member?—Well, I believe she had been on some time, I cannot say how many years.

Q. And you found that she was living at St. Stephen's Road, Bow, did not you?—She apparently lived there at the time.

Q. She apparently lived there?—I could not say definitely.

Q. What?—I could not say definitely that was her address.

Q. Why did you address a letter to her?

(Mrs. Wilson.) I moved afterwards to Victoria Park Square.

(Mr. Grant.) All right. Afterwards did she remove to 18, Victoria Park Square?—She did live at 18, Victoria Park Square.

Q. You know that?—She lives there.

Q. Did you send a registered letter?—Did I? who said so?

Q. I ask you a question?—I sent no letter.

Q. Just answer the question. Did you send a registered letter to her at that address?—No, sir.

Q. Do not let us have any mistake. Is that your writing?—No, that is not my writing.

Q. Did you authorise anyone to write it?—No, sir.

Q. This document, Mr. Diamond?—That is my writing.

Q. Is it all your writing?—Yes, I think it is.

Q. Mr. Diamond, just look at it again. I want you to speak the truth about the matter?—The signature is my writing.

Q. Is it all your writing?—Yes, it seems my writing.

Q. Look at the heading. Is that your writing?—Do you mean, "Not visited"?

Q. Look at the heading?—What, the London County Council?

Q. Look at the heading: it is in writing. Tell me if that is in your writing?—It is all in writing, sir. "Mr. B. Diamond, member of committee."

Q. Is that your writing?—"Not visited" is not my writing. These schools have been previously reported on by Mr. Watts, when special visits were required. There are two inks there.

Q. Give me the document back. Now then, the heading reads, "London County Council, North—" "School." Is that your writing or not?—It seems like my writing.

Q. "Member of committee, Mr. B. Diamond," is that your writing?—No, sir.

Q. The signature, "B. Diamond," is your writing?—Yes.

Q. "Not visited" is your writing?—No. Let me see that signature, sir. No, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) I can assure you it is a form filled up partly by an official and partly by Mr. Diamond?—"Not visited" is not my writing.

(Mr. Grant.) Is the next sentence your writing?

(The Inspector.) "London County Council" and "B. Diamond."

(Mr. Grant.) Is clearly not his?—The signature there is mine.

(Mr. Robb.) Apparently the last two items only are his writing.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, Mr. Diamond, the signature you admit is not your hand?—On the form, yes.

Q. Look at the address "Lena Wilson" on that form?—Yes.

Q. Look at the signature on the form. You tell me the person who wrote "B. Diamond" did not write the envelope: Don't take it out?—This writing here is presumed to be mine.

Q. I ask whether the writing on the form "B. Diamond," and the writing on the envelope is not your writing?—Absolutely no.

Q. Look at it?—That is not my writing.

Q. Do you know anything about it?—No.

(Mr. Robb.) This very question was raised—I believe there has been a meeting of the board about it, and some gentleman came forward and admitted he wrote it. If Mr. Grant looked that up and Mr. Almond—

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Robb must allow me to conduct this matter in my own way. Now, then. Did you refer at a public meeting to a registered letter that had been sent to Mrs. Wilson?—Yes, there is a report in the papers.

Q. When did you refer to it?—On a particular night when there was a meeting.

Q. That is a little indefinite. What is the date?

(The Inspector.) What year?—Last year.

(Mr. Grant.) What did you say at the meeting about the registered letter?—I simply said I held in my hands a registered letter handed to me, proving that Mrs. Wilson lived at 18, Victoria Park Square.

Q. How did you get the receipt of the registered letter?—Handed to me.

Q. By whom?—By Mr. Almond.

Q. By whom?—An undertaker in the Old Ford Road—Almond.

Q. A friend of yours?—Yes.

Q. Are you members of the same association?—No. What association do you mean?

Q. Any association?—He is a Conservative and I am a Liberal.

Q. You might be members of a friendly society?—No. There is no connection between us.

Q. Well, now, are you a member of the Ratepayers' Protection Association?—There is none in existence.

Q. At that time was there one?—Yes, I was chairman of it.

Q. Was Mr. Almond a member of it?—I cannot say. I do not know whether he paid any contribution.

Q. A good many belonged who did not pay any contribution?—Probably.

Q. Did you pay any?—Well, naturally.

Q. You have not answered my question. Did you pay anything?—I believe I did.

Q. How much?—I could not say.

Q. Do you swear you paid anything?—I could not say. I believe I paid 2s.

Q. You thought fit at a meeting of the board of guardians to charge Mrs. Wilson with being corruptly concerned with Cartwright's contract?—I said she lived on the premises where there was a firm that contracted with the Poplar Board of Guardians, and Mrs. Wilson's husband managed the firm.

Q. Yes, you put it a little stronger than that, did you not?—I forget the actual words. Will you put them to me and I will tell you if they are correct?

Q. I would sooner have your account of them?—Surely you will not expect me from memory to say what I did say.

Q. The *Bow and Bromley Free Press*. Is that a newspaper that reports fairly?—I don't take it in, sir.

Q. I don't ask you that. Is the *Bow and Bromley Free Press* a newspaper which reports fairly. Nov. 8, 1905, reports a meeting—"this meeting held in Poplar Town Hall, on Monday last, Guardian B. Diamond in the chair?"—I was in the chair.

Q. At this meeting Mr. Diamond stated that Mrs. Lena Wilson, a fellow guardian, with Mr. Lansbury, was manageress at one of the firms who received work at high rates. Is that true?—I could not say. I simply rely upon the reports.

Q. You are to rely upon your recollection of what took place. At the meeting in the Poplar Town Hall, did you say Mrs. Lena Wilson was manageress of one of the firms who received work from the board of guardians at high rates?—I don't think. I didn't say anything about high rates.

Q. Did you refer to Mrs. Lena Wilson?—Only through the envelope.

Q. You did refer to her?—I said here is an envelope representing that she lived at 18, Victoria Park Square.

Q. What else did you say?—I cannot say, off-hand, what I did say.

Q. Didn't you say at 18, Victoria Park Square lived the manager of one of the contractors to the guardians?—I don't think there was any need for me to say it, and I don't know whether I said it definitely.

Q. You said it absolutely?—I could not say.

Q. I put it directly, have you ever charged Mrs. Wilson with being interested in the contracts of the guardians?—In regard to Milns & Co.?

Q. Anything?—Milns & Co., Victoria Park Square.

Q. I put the general question, have you not charged Mrs. Wilson with being interested in the contracts of the guardians?—Will you allow me to refer?

Q. Refer to anything you like?—May I read it out?

Q. No, Mr. Diamond?

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, let him read what he says?—I want to read from a minute.

(Mr. Grant.) Read anything you like. I want an answer. What minutes are these?

(The Inspector.) Minutes of the guardians?—Yes, sir. "That an order be issued to Messrs. Milns & Co. for four dozen men's suits." That would be 4th October, 1905; and on the 1st day of November, 1905, "Messrs. E. Milns & Co., four dozen suits (men's)." That firm is in Victoria Park Square, No. 18, where Mrs. Wilson lives, where Mr. Wilson manages.

(Mr. Grant.) Have you at any time, anywhere, stated or suggested that Mrs. Wilson was interested in the guardians' contracts?—There are two instances here, sir.

Q. Mr. Diamond, be good enough to answer my question?—Well, here are two instances which prove it, sir.

Q. Whether they prove it or not, I want an answer to my question. Have you at any time stated or suggested Mrs. Wilson is interested in a guardians' contract?—Well, she must be, sir.

(Mrs. Wilson.) That is what he always says.

(Mr. Grant.) Where did you make the suggestion?—At the board meeting.

Q. You made that suggestion?—At the committee meeting, when Mrs. Wilson promised to punch me on the nose.

Q. She not only promised, but did it, did not she?—Later on, sir.

Q. Now, we will see. This is the suggestion you made, is not it—"That Mrs. Wilson lives at 18, Victoria Park Square"—?—Yes.

Q. "That her husband lives there with her"?—Yes.

Q. Nothing improper in that?—Oh, no.

Q. That her husband is the manager of one of the firms of Milns & Co., of Victoria Park Square, and Blackfriars, and that Milns & Co. have had orders from the guardians?—

(Mr. Robb.) Pardon me, there it one special feature, and that is that Milns & Co. and Cartwright are together at Blackfriars.

(Mr. Grant.) That Milns & Co. have works in Victoria Park Square and head offices at Blackfriars?—Yes.

Q. And that Milns & Co.—never mind about Cartwright, Milns & Co.—got orders for this stuff?—Yes.

Q. And therefore Mrs. Wilson must be concerned in getting this contract?—Yes.

Q. That is your suggestion?—Common-sense, sir.

Q. Did you make that charge at the board of guardians that Mrs. Wilson was interested in these contracts?—Yes, sir.

Q. Had Mrs. Wilson—hitherto she had never voted on these contracts at all, but after the charge she was going to vote upon them?—I cannot recollect that. You cannot pin me down to recollect anything like that.

Q. I do not expect you to remember what Mrs. Wilson said, but I would expect you to remember what she did?—No member of the board could remember the actual words.

Q. Never mind. Whatever statement you made did Mrs. Wilson say if you repeated that outside the board room, she would punch your head?—That was at the committee at High Street Workhouse.

Q. She did say that?—Yes.

Q. Outside and she challenged you to repeat it?—I have no recollection.

Q. At any rate did she afterwards do what she said she would do—did she punch your head?—Not then.

Q. You had it punched, but do not remember the exact occasion?—I did have it punched, but not on that date.

Q. Having had it punched you summoned her before the magistrates?—Yes.

Q. And Mrs. Wilson summoned you?—No, sir.

Q. I thought you took a cross-summons. I beg pardon. She was summoned at the Thames Police Court before Mr. Dickinson?—Yes.

Q. I see the *East End News*, November 21st, 1905. Is that a trustworthy newspaper?—All newspapers are trustworthy.

Q. Oh, no, sir. I cannot agree there. The newspaper says:—"A great deal of interest centred in the case in which Mrs. Lena Wilson, a member of the Poplar Board of Guardians, residing at 18, Victoria Park Square, Bethnal Green, was summoned for assaulting Mr. Barnet Diamond, a member of the same board, living at 23, Saxon Road, Bow. The case was heard at the Thames Police Court on Saturday before Mr. Dickinson, and the limited accommodation of the court was taxed to its utmost capacity, those present including many members of the Poplar Board of Guardians and Borough Council. Mr. Diamond was represented by Mr. A. A. Robinson, and Mr. J. A. Symmons, instructed by Mr. C. R. Enever, was for Mrs. Wilson. In opening the case, Mr. Robinson said, after consultation with the learned counsel on the other side, he had decided to ask the court to adopt a certain course.

Mr.
Diamond.
12 July.

Mr.
Diamond.
12 July.

"Mr. Diamond and Mrs. Wilson were co-guardians on the Poplar Board of Guardians, and Mr. Diamond thought it was his duty, rightly or wrongly, to call attention to a contract in which it was alleged Mrs. Wilson had some interest. Undoubtedly a letter was written to the firm for which Mrs. Wilson's husband was manager, or acted in some other capacity, and Mrs. Wilson came to the conclusion that Mr. Diamond had written the letter. Mr. Robinson had, however, satisfied his learned friend, and if necessary, could satisfy the court, that Mr. Diamond had nothing whatever to do with it. The gentleman who wrote the letter was in court that day, and he had written to the chairman of the board of guardians acknowledging that he wrote it, and was prepared to take upon himself the responsibility." "I am putting in the names in place of 'defendant' and 'plaintiff.'"

(Mr. Robb.) I must ask if that is the letter put to the witness; we did not have it.

(Mr. Grant.) These documents are put into my hands. I am reading them. When that letter was given to me, I was told that was the charge made by Mr. Diamond. Now to test him. I hear of the document.

(Mr. Robb.) Mrs. Wilson knew.

(Mr. Grant.) She does not believe it.

(Mr. Robb.) Her counsel believed it.

(Mr. Grant.) It does not always follow what you say for your client that you believe it yourself.

(Mr. Robb.) Perhaps we shall find that out later on.

(Mr. Grant.) "Mrs. Wilson was extremely annoyed about the matter, and in the course of a meeting, and in a fit of great temper, she admitted through her learned counsel, that she struck Mr. Diamond twice." Twice! I thought it was once?—It was twice. She struck me on Tuesday night and on Wednesday night.

Q. Tell me about these two assaults. What did she do the first time?—She knocked me and pushed me about.

Q. What did you do?—Simply nothing, sir.

Q. Mrs. Wilson suggests you ran away?—No, sir.

Q. Mrs. Wilson suggested you ran away, was that so?—No.

Q. Now, on the second occasion what did you do?—She struck me as well, but I did not run away. How could I run away? I stayed there, but she did hit me.

Q. Several times?—She hit me once and walked back, and there was not a single member of the board who tried to keep her away from me.

Q. You could not protect yourself, because you could not hit a lady?—That was so.

Q. And none of the members of the board would intervene to protect you?—Well, they did not interfere, sir.

Q. (Continuing to read from the newspaper report.) "And in the course of a meeting and in a fit of great temper, she admitted, through her learned counsel, that she struck the complainant twice. Of course, she had no right to do that, but on behalf of the complainant he was instructed to say that if the complainant had said anything at the board, or committee, or in public, alleging anything against the defendant of a dishonourable nature in regard to the contract, he unreservedly withdrew it."—It was Mr. Robinson's way of putting it. I never said that.

(Mrs. Wilson.) It is all very well. We have our character taken away in this way and we are not allowed to defend ourselves. This man knew when that order was given to Milns in the workhouse I took no part in it, I was looking at the table. He said: "Why do not members hold their heads up?" I did not answer him. The order was settled, and afterwards he started sneering across the table about contracts being given to employers, and I said: "Mr. Diamond, I have taken no part in this order, and if you go out and tell the public I have influenced the guardians in any way, I shall punish you." That is what I said. He knows I never took any part. He does not know how to tell the truth.

(Mr. Warren.) As a large ratepayer, allow me to say—

(The Inspector.) You must not say.

(Mr. Warren.) I wish to say on this matter—

(The Inspector.) Never mind what you wish to say.

(Mr. Geary was about to intervene.)

(Mr. Grant.) Two constables come up at once and take these men out.

(Mr. Geary.) No, no: they are not going to take him out. There are other ratepayers besides you. The man is only speaking—

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Davy—

(The Inspector.) I cannot have all this talk about sending anybody out—

(Mr. Geary.) Certainly not; this is a ratepayers' meeting.

(The Inspector.) This is not a ratepayers' meeting. This is my Inquiry.

(Mr. Geary.) Quite so.

(The Inspector.) You come here to listen as you have a perfect right to do, but if each of you gets up and talks and answers questions we shall be like a disorderly borough council. It must not be, I cannot allow it.

(Mr. Grant.) May I just put in two words?

(Mr. Robb.) I want to know if we are to have constables here to be ordered by Mr. Corrie Grant?

(Mr. Geary.) No, Mr. Corrie Grant is no more than anybody else. He is only a man.

(The Inspector.) Be quiet, sir.

(Mr. Geary.) Well, the ratepayers have got to pay for this.

(The Inspector.) Look here. You are a body of men come here on your own business, but if you indulge in these interruptions, your own business will not be carried forward one bit, and I do appeal to you men to use your common sense. I should very much regret having to clear the room. I think it is right all the ratepayers and all those who sympathise with the guardians, should know what is said, but do as I said; if you only use your common sense you will see it is most unfair to interrupt.

(Mr. Geary.) Pardon me. Are we to be insulted by being told we should be pulled out by policemen—ratepayers in this parish? It is most monstrous if such a thing should be allowed.

(The Inspector.) Be quiet.

(Mr. Geary.) We want justice and fairness. This is the way we get it.

(The Inspector.) (addressing Mr. Grant.) Now, I think you had better get on.

(Mr. Grant.) You asked me to take Mrs. Wilson's case, and I have done it. Now I will cross-examine Mr. Diamond on behalf of the guardians. Who was relieving officer on the relief committee when you went there?—Beg pardon, sir.

Q. Was Mr. Pitt relieving officer at the committees when you were there?—No, there has been a change of relieving officers since I came on the board.

Q. Give me the names of all the relieving officers when you were attending the relief committees?—I can only give you the present ones, because I cannot remember the name of one who left the union.

Q. What is the name of the man who left, Mr. Lough?

(Mr. Lough.) Higgins.

(Witness.) I believe he left before the rush.

(Mr. Grant.) I want the names of the relieving officers when you attended the committee. Higgins was one; who were the others?—Law, Denson, Gard, and Mr. Smith, and Mr. Stone, who was prosecuted, I believe.

Q. Any others?—I trust to Mr. Lough to help me, if there are any more.

(Mr. Lough.) Mr. Gibbs?—No.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Pitt?—No.

Q. Well, see what Mr. Pitt says—it is Mr. Robb's examination, June 28.—"Have you ever been present at committees with Mr. Diamond, one of the guardians?—"I have. He is a member of my committee?"—Not Mr. Pitt, sir.

Q. Then that is wrong?—Am I correct, Mr. Lough?

Q. I am reading what Mr. Pitt said when he was giving evidence. The rule of committees, I am told, is that every member of the guardians may attend any meeting, while there is a rota for relief. Mr. Pitt says Mr. Diamond is a member of his committee. You say you were not attending the committee when Mr. Pitt was there?—I have the privilege of attending all the committee meetings.

Q. Then you have attended meetings at which Pitt, the relieving officer, was present?—Probably.

Q. "Q. Is it correct—have you ever been present in committees with Mr. Diamond, one of the guardians?—I have, he is a member of my committee. Q. Have you ever heard any guardian object to searching questions being put to applicants by another guardian?—No, I cannot say I have. Q. Have you ever heard searching questions put?—By him. Q. By guardians to applicants?—Oh yes, I have heard them question cases. After I have read my report, he has asked questions of applicants beyond what my report has said. Q. General questions?—Yes. Q. Was any attempt made to properly investigate cases, to search out a man's antecedents and so on?—The chairman of the guardians did that—the chairman of the committee I should say. Is that correct or not?—You see I have never been on these committees.

Q. When you were on the committee with Pitt, does that correctly describe what took place?—I cannot say I have ever sat on a committee where he has been the relieving officer. I have the right to attend all the committees but cannot swear I attended one at which he has been present.

Q. Does it correctly represent what took place at meetings you did attend?—At committee meetings I did attend, the proper questions would not be asked, or not discreet questions anyhow.

Q. Do you suggest, because you were there they did not ask proper questions?—Because I was there they did not ask them.

Q. Yes, you see that Mr. Pitt says that at relief committees at which you were not present these proper questions were asked; you say they were not asked?—But Mr. Pitt cannot say I attended these committees.

Q. That is not the question. You have plenty of brains. Put your brains to the question. Mr. Pitt is a relieving officer. He says at his relief committee, the guardians put proper general questions to the applicants. You say when you attended, proper questions were not put to the applicants?—May I have, sir, the members of that committee?

Q. Do not interrupt. Do you mean to suggest that you went to the relief committees, and it was because you were there, proper questions were not put?—But Mr. Pitt could not have anything to do with the committee I sat upon.

Q. I do not say he did?—But I cannot speak for another committee.

Q. I am not asking you to speak for another committee, but for your own. Do you suggest the practice was special at the committee at which you attended?

(*The Inspector.*) There is the evidence of the other relieving officer, Gard, which is rather strong, about the other members of the committee telling him to shut up and mind his own business, or words to that effect.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Then Mr. Robb can take that up when he comes to it. Mr. Diamond, do you suggest there was a special practice at the committees you attended?—The practice was the Socialist and Labour one, and they practised it whether I was there or not.

Q. Do you suggest that they had a special practice at the committees you attended?—They could not insult me in my absence.

Q. Would you be good enough to say yes or no?—I cannot follow you.

Q. Never mind about following me, you can answer. I do not want you to follow me. Do you suggest a special practice was followed at the relief committees which you attended; yes or no?—I cannot follow you. I want to answer, but you do not give me a direct question.

Q. I will try again, Mr. Diamond; was a special practice followed in dealing with applications at the relief committees which you attended?—Do you mean at Bow relief committee?

Q. Any relief committee?—At Bow relief committee.

Q. Well, we will take Bow first?—I would be abused if I did interfere and ask proper and legitimate questions of the applicants.

Q. Just answer my question. Do you suggest at Bow committee a special practice was followed?—They were biased against me.

Q. Do you suggest a special practice was followed when you were present—yes or no?—I cannot say what practice they used when I was absent.

Q. I do not want you to. I want to know of the practice followed when you were there?—They abused me.

Q. In regard to abusing you, did they follow a special practice?—In regard to abusing and preventing me asking a legitimate question.

Q. Was any other guardian abused?—Oh, no.

Q. I leave that other point you cannot answer. Can you suggest to me why you were the only guardian abused. Were you the only honest man on the board?

(*Mr. Bundock.*) He said so.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Mr. Diamond, will you answer that question?—I want to know from what point of view you mean honest?

Q. Leave the point of view for the moment and answer the question. Were you the only honest man on the board?—I was a man who had the courage of my convictions.

Q. You see a thief may have the courage of his convictions. Were you the only honest man on the board?—I had the courage of my convictions, which the others did not have.

Q. Again—leaving out the women for the present—were you the only honest man on the board?—From the point of view of looking after the ratepayers' interests and also the general poor.

Q. You were?—Yes; at least, I am referring to the Bow relief committee. There might, of course, have been some outside.

Q. I am asking you about the board now. You go on to the committee. We will take it at that. Did Mr. Launsbury serve on the Bow relief committee?—Yes.

Q. Mr. Watts?—Yes.

Q. Do you suggest they were both dishonest men?—They had their Socialistic and Labour principles—what I call sentiment, which certainly does not agree with the true principles of the Poor Law system.

Q. You know you can take two views of the Poor Law system without being dishonest?—But they have no respect for the ratepayers' interests at all.

Q. Their only respect was for the poor?—Their only interest was for all and sundry that said they were poor and starving.

Q. I suppose you think it was an improper thing to have respect for a man who was starving, do not you?—I have every sympathy for a genuine starving man.

Q. But you do not help him?—I do, sir.

Q. Just tell me. You are laying down a law generally as to Poor law principles. How long have you had any experience of Poor Law matters?—Two years and four months.

Q. Did you know anything about it when you went on to the guardians?—No, sir.

Q. Are you on now?—Yes, sir.

Q. Does it occur to you that a man who has been 15 years a guardian is likely to know more about it than a man who has been a guardian 15 minutes?—If he has got a set policy he is not bound to know anything. He can have narrow views which hold him in that sphere.

Q. Is it not possible for a man to have narrow views, which hold him in that sphere, about Poor Law administration, from the other point of view?—It is quite possible for a man with little knowledge—

Q. May I suggest you have narrow views which hold you in your sphere?—I have much more experience now than I had then.

Q. You have learned a woman can defend her honour?—I have yet to be told I have disregarded the honour of a woman.

Q. Your solicitor unreservedly withdrew the charges you made, and you said he did what you wanted him to do?—I am not responsible for his statements. He made them unbeknown to me.

Q. If you had been there, and had not had a solicitor, you would not have withdrawn?—I had nothing to withdraw.

Mr.
Diamond.
12 July.

Mr.
Diamond.
—
12 July.
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Q. You still adhere to the charge, that Mrs. Wilson is corruptly concerned in the guardians' contracts?—I have the minutes here.

Q. You have found something in the minutes which you think proves it?—Here is proof.

Q. You think so?

(Mr. Robb.) He never used the word "corrupt."

(Mr. Grant.) Oh, yes, he did. He has charged that all along.

(Witness.) I have been called a wooden-head. Is that true?

(Mr. Grant.) I will tell you when my cross-examination is finished. So far as we have got at present I am bound to say I think there is some truth in the charge.

(Mr. Robb.) Is that a proper way to treat the witness? You may call yourself a Christy Minstrel, but you have no right to call the witness wooden-head. It is a little straining the position.

(Mr. Grant.) I never called myself a Christy Minstrel, that is what a friend of mine called me. He asked me a question and I allowed it, and that was wrong, because a counsel should never allow a witness to ask a question, and he should not answer. But in this particular instance I saw the chance of making a score off Mr. Diamond and I took it. Do you now adhere to that charge, that Mrs. Wilson is personally interested in the contracts of the guardians, yes or no?—I say that as a guardian's husband manages a firm which contracts for the guardians there must be a connection.

Q. Very well. Because her husband is a manager at Milns & Co. there must be connection between Milns & Co. and Mrs. Wilson?—Because Mrs. Wilson could use influence upon the board, it necessarily follows.

Q. Did she use it?—She did not to me, sir.

Q. Just let us see how it goes. Mr. Wilson is a manager at one of the departments at Milns'. That is correct, is it not?—Yes.

Q. Mrs. Wilson is the wife of Mr. Wilson, and Mrs. Wilson is on the board of guardians. If one of Miln's contracts came before the board of guardians, Mrs. Wilson must have an interest in it?—But might I say, Milns is not a contractor for the board of guardians, and, in spite of that, they get this contract.

Q. Not a contract. They get an order?—They got an order, but are not contractors of the board.

Q. That you think proves corruption?—It tends to that. Can you explain how it does not?

Q. I am not going to answer any more questions. It tends to that, to your mind there is a suspicion of corruption about it?—Yes.

Q. Does it affect your mind, whether Mrs. Wilson voted on the contract or not?—The question of a particular person's vote has no effect on my opinion.

Q. A particular person's vote has no effect on your opinion?—No, sir. These things can be rearranged.

Q. What you suggest is that Mrs. Wilson, with the press present and a vote being taken, did not take any part in the proceedings?—There was no need for her vote. There was sufficient to carry it.

Q. But before the thing got into the board-room she had used her influence privately in a hole-and-corner meeting?—It could be possible.

Q. You think it did take place?—It would be possible. How could I know? I was not there in the hole-and-corner meeting.

Q. You had an opportunity of judging Mrs. Wilson's character. Do you think she was the sort of person that would do that sort of thing?—I could only go by how the affair goes.

Q. She did not vote, and yet you say she might have used her influence. Do you think she is the sort of woman who would do that?—I do not think the answer is relative to your question, sir. I can only say there must be connection when an order like this is given like that.

Q. Because there must be something corrupt in it?—I want to say that Mr. Corrie Grant wants to assume I am hateful towards Mrs. Wilson. But may I say I hold her no personal spite, and I have got nothing against her personally. As a Poor Law guardian, in the interests of the ratepayers, I have a right to point out what I think

is wrong, but personally I have nothing against Mrs. Wilson.

Q. I am not complaining, Mr. Diamond. Do you think what you point to shows corrupt intention on Mrs. Wilson's part?—From the public point of view.

Q. It does?—Yes.

Q. Do you want to add anything to that?—Here are the minutes, sir.

Q. Do you want to add anything to the answer you have just given?—I have given an answer.

Q. Do you want to explain it?—What is there to explain?

Q. I do not know if there is anything to explain. I am satisfied. I want to know if you are?—I can only say I pointed out to the board it was a wrong thing to give a contract order to Messrs. Milns & Co., where Mrs. Wilson represented or her husband managed the firm, and it tends to point that there could be corruption.

Q. Now did you say with regard to the contracts, this, on Wednesday, July 11—You told Mr. Davy yesterday that you claimed a division whenever the highest tender was put forward for acceptance?—That was last March.

Q. And you were the only person who took up that position?—I moved the lowest tender, and also claimed a division, but it was not accepted.

Q. And you were the only person that took up that position. Do you still say that?—The only person.

Q. The Inspector asks you this: "Did you move an amendment?—I moved that I claimed a division whenever the highest tender was put forward. Q. Were you the only person who took up that position? Yes." Do you adhere to that answer?—Yes, I believe I moved for a division on that contract night.

Q. And you were the only person who took up the position of objecting to the tender being given to the highest contractor?—I believe so. I will accept it to be corrected if any member of the board will say they were with me. At all events, I took a leading part.

(The Inspector.) Do you say in every case you objected to the higher tender being accepted?—Yes, sir.

(Mr. Grant.) Let me just say as to that—this is the 16th March, 1906—that was the meeting, was not it?—It was in March.

Q. I see you were present—Mr. B. Diamond. "The board proceeded to appoint the tradesmen for the supply of the following goods not in contract. Resolved—That the following tradesmen be appointed"—1 to 21. There was no amendment on any of those. "Pursuant to advertisements appearing in the public newspapers, the board then proceeded to open tenders for provisions and other goods. Resolved—That the following tenders be accepted and sealed as contracts as from 1st April, 1906, subject in all cases to the calculations thereof being found correct upon examination."

(Mr. Robb.) May I on that—this is very interesting—ask whose duty it is to make these calculations?

(Mr. Grant.) That will surely come later on.

(Mr. Robb.) I have heard that it—

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Robb may ask that in re-examination.

(Mr. Robb.) I should suggest the person whose duty it was to calculate should have pointed out the discrepancies.

(Mr. Grant.) "For 12 months' supply—Flour. 1. J. W. French & Co., Limited, Bow Flour Mills, Bow. Meat. 2. Upon consideration of 15 tenders for meat it was moved by Mr. J. T. McCarthy, seconded by Mr. A. G. Finden, that the tender of Mr. T. W. Blott, of 6, Church Street, Kensington, W., be accepted. Amendment moved by Mr. R. H. Gibbs, seconded by Mr. B. Diamond—"it is not correct to say you always moved—"that the lowest tender, the British New Zealand Meat and Produce Company be accepted"?—Which was the lowest tender?

Q. Mr. Gibbs moved the British New Zealand Company, that is the point. You have told the Inspector that you moved on every occasion. On this occasion Mr. Gibbs moved, you did not?—Perhaps he preceded me by a second. We sat together.

Q. Notice "For the amendment Diamond, Gibbs, Jungblat, Lansbury." Do you suggest any reason why Lansbury voted for the lowest tender there? Is that collusion?—In the vote for the lowest tender?

Q. Yes?—Had not you better ask him?

Mr.
Diamond.
12 July.

Q. I am asking for your suggestion?—I cannot give you a suggestion regarding his action.

Q. But you have been watching Mr. Lansbury's actions as you have been watching Mrs. Wilson's?—I have watched the whole board—may I suggest.

Q. And you suggest Mr. Lansbury was actuated by different motives from Mrs. Wilson or others?—I don't think he would interest himself in the meat.

Q. What other contracts would he interest himself in?—On the general voting, when he has voted for Mrs. Wilson—I beg pardon, for contracts given to Milns or Cartwright.

Q. Has he interested himself in that?—He has voted for them when he has been there. I will accept any correction if he did not.

Q. Your suggestion is he was actuated by the same motives as Mrs. Wilson?—They are all one body—the Socialists.

Q. Now then—"Upon consideration of five tenders for poultry it was moved by Mr. McCarthy and seconded that the tender of C. J. Geary & Son be accepted. Moved by Mr. Ford, and seconded—That the tender of Wickes, Poplar, be accepted. Upon a vote being taken thereon there were—for Wickes, 13, for Geary, 8," Mr. Diamond amongst them. That was a higher tender?—Was it?

Q. What?—Was it not a question of £3 or £4?

Q. I do not know what the question is. You are posing here as a friend of the ratepayers, a man who insists upon the lowest tender being taken. Tell me how you reconcile that with this vote of yours on the poultry tender?—It is a question of £2 or £3. I do not know.

Q. Do you remember anything about Geary's contract?—No recollection at all.

Q. You are not doing yourself justice. I am told Geary was the lowest?—Who was the lowest?

Q. Geary?—I have not the figures before me.

Q. You said it amounted to £2 or £3?—If it was the highest. I am speaking from memory. Was it?

Q. I was not there?—I cannot remember last March.

(The Inspector.) Do you say the tender was the lowest?—I have no recollection. If Mr. Corrie Grant tells me I have voted for the highest tender it would be a question of £2 or £3.

Q. Probably you voted for the highest tender?

(Witness) (to Mr. Grant): Will you go through the tenders?

(Mr. Grant.) Yes, I am going through them?—The whole lot.

Q. "There were two tenders for greengrocery, and it was moved by Mr. Bacon, and seconded, that the tender of Mr. Halls be accepted. Amendment, moved by Mr. Diamond, that the lowest tender, Messrs. Whiteley, be accepted." That was a question of a local man against Whiteley, Westbourne Grove?—I cannot tell offhand. It was the question of the lowest tender.

Q. Amendment lost, 20 for Halls, 1 against him, that was Diamond. Yeast—that was accepted; there was no division on it, I mean. The tender for milk—"Moved by Mr. Beaumont that the tender of Abbott Brothers be accepted. Moved by Mr. Diamond that the tender of the Museum Dairy Company be accepted. Moved by Mr. McCarthy that the tender of Whitlock & Co. be accepted. The board voted—Abbott's, 9; Museum Dairy Company, 1; Whitlock & Co., 11. The tender of the Museum Dairy Company being rejected, a further vote was taken, when there were for Abbott, 8; for Whitlock, 13; not voting, 1, Mr. W. Crooks. Resolved, that the tender of Whitlock be accepted?—Who voted for the Museum Dairy Company?

Q. Beaumont, Bellsham, Diamond, Lansbury, Lindsay, Phillips, Mrs. Wilson?—Is that the Museum at 8½d.?

Q. I do not know the price. Mrs. Wilson voted for it and Mr. Yeo?—As against Whitlock?

Q. No, the Museum Dairy Co. was one; Abbott was against Whitlock?—Yes, but who voted for the Museum?

Q. Well, I expect you did, but there is no entry of it?—I believe I did.

Q. You moved it be accepted, and so I presume you voted for it.—Yes.

Q. And the tenders of the Museum Dairy Co. being rejected, a further vote was taken, and for Abbott's—

Beaumont, Bellsham, Diamond, Lansbury, Lindsay, Phillips, Mrs. Wilson, and Yeo. And so you and Mrs. Wilson voted for it?—And we would when it was a question of ratepayers' interests.

Q. But I thought Mrs. Wilson was a corrupt person?—I say in a specific case. She was interested in Milns & Co.

Q. You say in a specific case Mrs. Wilson was interested in contracts with the board?—Yes.

Q. Now for Whitlock 13—Anderson, Bacon, Bundock, Cordery, Finden, Ford, Gibbs, Jungblut, McCarthy, Peckham, Poole, Sumner, Watts. Not voting—Crooks. Grocery—10 tenders for grocery, and upon a show of hands—Whiteley 6, Robert Jones Stores 5, Cox & Sons 2, Lewsey 8. The tenders of Jones and Cox being rejected, a further vote was taken, when there were for Lewsey 14—Anderson, Bacon, Beaumont, Bellsham, Bundock, Cordery, Finden, Gibbs, Jungblut, Lindsay, Phillips, Sumner, Watts, Wilson. For Whiteley 8—Crooks, Diamond, Ford, Lansbury, McCarthy, Peckham, Poole, Yeo?—The lowest tender.

(The Inspector.) What is the object of this?

(Mr. Grant.) It is a bit unusual when one is in a cross-examination to be asked the object. The object of this is to show how worthless Mr. Diamond's memory is. In answer to your questions he said he was the only person who voted for the acceptance of the lowest tender?—I think Mr. Corrie Grant is misconstruing my whole position. I said I did not know whether I did say that. I always advocated the policy of the lowest tender, and if other members of the board agreed with me or preceded me, I could not help that.

Q. I presume Mr. Diamond knows what he is saying, but he said in answer to you, "I moved that I claimed a division whenever the highest tender was put forward."

(Mr. Robb.) He was the only person every time.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Diamond had a division every time the lowest tender was not accepted.

(Witness.) I could see from the proceeding of the board how the work was being carried out, and I at once stated that I was going to have a division on every occasion when the highest was going to be taken, and in some cases I was preceded and the lowest accepted.

(Mr. Grant.) You remember yesterday, Mr. Diamond, in the box you said in open Court:—(Q) When were the contracts opened?—In March. (Q) Very well. You took steps on that occasion. I want you to tell the Inspector the manner in which these tenders were dealt with?—They are dealt with in a blindfold manner. I think I should be correct in saying that, because neither myself or the other members know what the prices are for each item. The figures read out are simply the aggregate ones, and then it was open for us to accept which one we desired to. (Q) Yes?—Irrespective of whom the competitor was. The Inspector: You know the names of the contractors, I suppose?—The names we know. Mr. Robb: Whose duty was it to check the tender forms?—They would be opened in front of us by the clerk. (Q) And you would be given the total figures?—The total figures, without any chance of looking inside them. (Q) Were they handed round the board for inspection?—No. (Q) Who kept them?—Mr. Lough, the clerk. Did any member of the board ever ask for the inspection of any tender?—Not this year. (Q) Now there were altogether 27, I think?—Yes. (Q) 27 tenders to be dealt with?—About that number. (Q) How long a time was occupied in dealing with them?—There was more time taken up in taking the names of the members than anything else. (Q) What were the names of the members taken for?—On every occasion I thought necessary I would claim a division, and that meant taking the names of every member, and that took up more time than anything else. (Q) Was there any discussion in dealing with any individual tender?—No. (Q) For instance the butcher. You know there the lowest tender was not accepted. We have been shown that £398 might have been saved. Was there any reason given why the Poplar Guardians should go to Mr. Blott, of Kensington, to get their meat?—No. If I remember right, I think I moved the lowest tender. Of course it was not seconded. I moved that the lowest tender be accepted, and that then on the general question I claimed a division. That was all I could do. (Q) Did anyone get up and explain the reason, some good and sufficient

Mr.
Diamond.
12 July.

"reason, why Mr. Blott, of Kensington, should be given the contract in preference to the lowest tender?—I have no recollection, I am sure. (Q) He was not a local tenderer?—No, he belonged to Kensington. (Q) Then with regard to the poulterers they were both local tenderers?—I believe so. (Q) Geary and Warn?—Yes. (Q) Warn's was accepted, was it not? Was it Wickes and Geary?—I could not tell you offhand. (Q) Wickes' was accepted. I think Geary was £5 12s. 6d. less. What reason was assigned for preferring one Poplar tender before another when it was £5 or £6 less?—If I am allowed to have an opinion, I am satisfied that some members of the board had practically settled who were to have the contracts before the board sat. (Q) Had there been a hole-and-corner meeting beforehand?—I am satisfied of that, if I am allowed to judge for myself. (Q) You know that from the absence of proper discussion?—Yes. (Q) You think that things could not have been dealt with in this way unless there had been some understanding beforehand?—There must have been. (Q) Between a certain section of the board?—I could tell by the tone of the meeting. That is the evidence, and I have read all this to you in order to show whether Mr. Diamond is to be believed when he puts forward statements of that kind. I do not want to carry it on any further, but I will go right through the contracts if anyone wishes it. I have got enough for my purpose from the minutes to show whether that statement was trustworthy or not?—I think Mr. Corrie Grant might say I moved that Cartwright's contract be accepted because it was the lowest.

(The Inspector.) He says he moved Cartwright's tender be accepted because it was the lowest?

(Witness.) I was invited to move it and I did it. I think the board will bear me out there, but it is not on the minutes.

(Mr. Grant.) May I just read it? No. 18—this shows the accuracy of Mr. Diamond. "No. 18. Upon consideration of five tenders for clothing, it was moved by Mr. Diamond that the lowest tender, Mr. E. Grove—"

(Witness.) I am talking of the drapery.

(Mr. Grant.) Grove is the clothier. "To which an amendment was moved by Mr. McCarthy that the tender of Messrs. Cartwright & Sons be accepted. Resolved, that the tender of Messrs. Cartwright & Sons be accepted and sealed as a contract." Contracts No. 20, Children's Underclothing, Cartwright & Sons; 21, Drapery, Cartwright & Sons; 22, Haberdashery, Cartwright & Sons; 23, Tailors' Articles, Cartwright & Sons; 24, Boots and Shoes, Mr. Lansbury moved the lowest tender, Wilkins & Denton. Amendment, moved by Mr. Smith, that the tender of Messrs. Pocock Brothers be accepted." For

children's underclothing, Cartwright's was not the lowest tender, because the lowest tender was Grove, so that when Mr. Diamond says he moved on every occasion, he did not do it.

(Mr. Robb.) Really you must be a little accurate. We are wasting a lot of time by suggesting that Mr. Diamond says he said he moved every time. He did not say anything of the kind. "On every occasion I thought necessary I would claim a division." Is it fair to the witness, having said that, to say he said he claimed a division every time. He qualifies it by saying when he thought necessary.

(Mr. Grant.) That is all very fine. May I just call your attention to the fact that Mr. Robb is reading from one place and I am reading from another. It was the answer Mr. Diamond gave to you, sir. "Do I understand that your procedure was that when the lowest tender was not accepted you claimed a division?" "Yes." Then you asked, "Now, was anything said about you by your colleagues when you took up this attitude?"—Well, they certainly did not agree with me. They told me I had no business, and I knew nothing about it. In fact I was insulted. There is a clear statement.

(Witness.) Mr. Corrie Grant is misconstruing or misrepresenting me. I was referring to the 1905 contracts when I was in there, and I was criticising the 1905 contracts after the board meeting.

(Mr. Grant.) There is just one question I want to ask you about the Bow relief. When Mr. Watts was in the chair were you properly treated at the relief committee?—Not by the committee.

Q. By Mr. Watts?—I am talking of the committee as a whole.

Q. I am talking of Watts. Will you be good enough to answer the question. When Watts was in the chair at the Bow relief committee, did he treat you properly?—As chairman, no, he did not treat me altogether unfairly.

Q. He did not treat you altogether unfairly?—Not as chairman, no.

Q. So he did treat you to some extent fairly?—He listened to what I had to say, but it had no weight.

Q. That was not Mr. Watts' fault?—I do not say it was.

Q. "I always gave Mr. Diamond fair play, never shut him up, and always asked him what he proposed in dealing with cases, and if he would move anything. On some occasions he was grossly insulting to the poor people, and then I said I would not have it." Is that true?—Oh, no, sir.

(The Inspector.) Yes.

(Mr. Good.) I presume that will be Monday morning. I think I shall be able to put an entirely different aspect on many of those items. Will that be on Monday morning, sir?

(The Inspector.) I can't make any definite statement on the subject at present.

(Mr. Good.) Well, I will be here on Monday morning, sir.

Mr. R. V. BROODBANK; sworn and examined.

Mr.
Broodbank.
12 July.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Broodbank, your name is Robert Victor Broodbank, and you live at 52, Bow Road, and you are the secretary of the Poplar Municipal Alliance?—I am general secretary.

Q. I think you have lived in the district of Poplar for some years past?—I was born in the district.

Q. Have you had considerable experience of its labour and other conditions?—A particularly good experience—a wide experience in casual labour, dock labour, in this district and other parts of London.

Q. In the East End of London?—All in the East End of London. That is the only place where shipping is.

Q. Have you had a particular experience in the shipping trade?—Yes, and in this borough—this union.

Q. Before I ask you a few questions on that I want you to give the Inspector a few particulars about the alliance. Do you hand in a copy of the prospectus of the alliance, with a list of its executive committee and with a short statement of its rules, and so forth?—Yes.

Q. Do you also hand in some further literature issued by the alliance consisting of a form of application for membership, with a return showing the cost of maintenance of workhouse inmates calculated from the figures given in the official statements of the board of guardians, an abstract of expenditure of the board of guardians, showing the comparison between the years 1901 and 1905, and a comparative statement of outstanding loans, distinguishing those for which the guardians are responsible?—Absolutely.

Q. And then, further, that statement which was put to Mr. Martley yesterday showing the amount of the weekly tenants' rent, which is properly allocated to local rates?—Yes, there is one word of explanation I should like to give—

(Mr. Robb.) I will just hand that in, and let Mr. Grant have a copy.

(Mr. Grant.) Can you manage two?—I can.

Q. Have you a copy for the Press?—Yes.

Q. Have you, further, in your hand a statement showing the percentage of increase on each heading—that is the statement you have already handed in, distinguishing between 1901 and 1905?—The abstract of expenditure?

Q. Yes. It is the statement with another marginal column added, showing the percentage of increase?—Yes.

Q. Will you hand that in?—Yes, I will send you on further copies, Mr. Grant.

(Mr. Robb.) I am afraid I did not know what would be required; if so I would have supplied them.

(Mr. Grant.) I am glad to get any.

(Mr. Robb.) Just dealing with that for a moment—but probably we will give them all in first—perhaps that would be the best way. I think we will call that 1 (b). I don't think it is necessary to number the others. That is the percentage of increase. Then, 1 (c), a statement showing the cost of St. John's Road Workhouse, Islington, as compared with Poplar, and 1 (d), an analysis showing the percentage of each item as against the total expended which you claim proves generally that the increased cost is for each section of expenditure. I think 1 (a)—we call that statement—I handed in yesterday?—That is so.

(Mr. Grant.) That is the Metropolitan Borough of Poplar, this one; where does that come in in the order—with weekly tenants?

(Mr. Robb.) The weekly tenant is bound up with the general body of literature issued by the alliance. That we call 1—the entire bundle.

(Mr. Grant.) It would be convenient to identify it to make sure.

(Mr. Robb.) The bundle we will call 1 will comprise the prospectus of the association, the application form for membership, three statements.

(Mr. Grant.) Maintenance of workhouse inmates, expenditure of 1901 and 1905, outstanding loans.

(Mr. Robb.) And the statement as to weekly tenants—they are all bound together and constitute 1 (a). There is the Metropolitan Borough of Poplar, and the other statements I have put in that you had yesterday. There is 1 (b), 1 (d), and 1 (c). Then the witness has prepared a convenient statement, which I will call 1 (e), showing in parallel columns the increase in pauperism during the years 1904, 1905, and 1906. Will you hand in copies of that 1 (e). That does not embody anything new, but shows it in convenient form in parallel weekly figures. Then 1 (f) the abstract of the distributor's stores account, and the relieving officers' accounts, showing by the correct weekly figures the increase or decrease in the years 1905 and 1906?—1904, 1905, and 1905-6, you break into that quarter.

(The Inspector.) Where did you get the figures?—They are taken from the minutes of the guardians.

Q. Published every week?—Every fortnight.

(Mr. Robb.) Then, Mr. Broodbank, have you prepared a detailed statement of that abstract—that is to say, a detailed statement of the out-relief distributor's stores account, and of the relieving officers' accounts?—That is so.

Q. Showing each section against the name of the relieving officer in charge of a particular section, so that it can be seen at once in which section any increase or decrease has occurred?—That was the object I had in view.

Q. We will call the relief accounts 1 (g), and the stores account 1 (h), if you will kindly hand in copies of those?—I will hand in all of them, and they will show how it has diminished.

Q. Then, have you some figures?

(Mr. Grant.) I have the out-relief distributor's stores for the quarter ending Lady Day, 1906, and Midsummer, 1906. Is that all you have?

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, that is not a comparison of years, that only relates to the present year?—That was to explain the fall since January 1st this year in detail, as compared with the bulk fall, and comparing the bulk fall with last year's maintenance, the object being to show in what districts the reduction had occurred.

Q. I think you have one more, Mr. Grant?

(Mr. Grant.) It is a detailed statement of each relieving officer, and that detailed statement is for two quarters. Those are both (g). That will be 1 (g), 2 (g).

(Mr. Robb.) Put them both together, and the out-relief distributor's stores accounts, will be both (h). I think, Mr. Broodbank, you have a statement showing empty business premises in Poplar, and the percentage of irrecoverables?—Yes, the percentage of irrecoverables, business and private residences, and details of the business premises.

Q. Then you have prepared a number of small items you have extracted from the minutes of the board of guardians, to which you desire to draw attention, but which are small details unless to labour the evidence with. Will you put that statement in—extracts from the minutes of the guardians. That will be 1 (j)?—I have five prints of those.

Q. We will have them bound together—

(Mr. Grant.) Just see if they are put in right.

(Mr. Robb.) I am not going through all those. I am only handing them in.

(Mr. Grant.) I want to see if I have got everything.

(Mr. Robb.) I am doing it with the object of saving time. Will you let one of Mr. Lough's clerks check it later on with ours. It will be more convenient.

(Mr. Grant.) That is the shortest way; if anything goes missing I should have to raise the point again.

(Mr. Robb.) I will undertake later on to have the whole of them checked.

(Mr. Grant.) These are all the pages you are putting in?—That is so.

Q. Eleven pages?—Twelve pages.

(Mr. Robb.) These documents have been prepared from the official records of the guardians themselves?—That is so.

Q. Well, now, when was your alliance formed?—May 9th, 1905.

Q. With what object?

(Mr. Grant.) You have got it on the prospectus?—To keep before the burgesses and electors of the borough the necessity for and duty of each and every "one taking a personal interest in all local matters, particularly those relating to municipal control."

(Mr. Robb.) Now, what was your membership on May 9th, the day you started?—Nine.

Q. What was it on June 9th?—54.

Q. What was it on September 9th?—128.

Q. On December 9th?—498.

Q. On January 9th in the present year?—616.

Q. On February 9th?—870.

Q. On March 9th?—1,215.

Q. April 9th?—1,623.

Q. On May 9th?—1,957.

Q. On June 9th?—2,200.

Q. On July 9th?—2,707.

Q. What is it to date?—2,750.

Q. As near as you have got it, what is the aggregate rateable value of its membership?—The date I have is on the last quinquennial—not the new—and that makes 39.34 per cent.

Q. Give us the figures you make it first, before the percentage?—The calculation I made was on July 9. It was then £319,265.

Q. The aggregate rateable value of your members?—That is the aggregate rateable value.

Q. Representing 39.34 per cent. of the total rateable value on the last quinquennial; what would it represent?—38.01.

Q. Is the membership of the alliance comprised of any particular class of the community?—The rateable value, if you take it as rent, from the highest rent paid in the borough to 4s. 6d. weekly rent, with a large preponderance of weekly tenants—over 60 per cent.

Q. Over 60 per cent. of your tenants are occupying weekly property?—Yes, not shops.

Q. Other than shops?—Yes.

Q. So that you claim to represent all classes?—All classes.

Q. What are you particularly attempting to do with reference to the working man by the issue of these

Mr.
Broodbank,
12 July.

Mr.
Broodbank.
12 July.

returns?—We are trying to convince the working man particularly that he pays rates indirectly, and we wish him to appreciate what a large proportion of his rent is rates, in the conviction that he will come to the conclusion that he is not properly represented.

Q. Now what were the immediate circumstances that led to the formation of the alliance?—The quarterly report account from the borough council rose from 2s. 6d. to 3s. at one leap, being an increase from 10s. per annum to 12s. per annum on the rate.

(The Inspector.) What date was that?—That would be about May, Mr. Davy, before I joined the Alliance. On May 9th the first meeting was held.

(Mr. Robb.) What year?—1905.

Q. And the details are set out in the statement of the borough council, which you have put in?—Yes; but there is one remark the town clerk draws my attention to that I should make—that in 1905–6 it is estimated equal to 12s. per annum, and the quarterly amount is set forth; but that was exceeded in actual fact, I am advised.

Q. It was more than 12s.?—Yes, that is the estimate—it was exceeded.

Q. The estimate was 12s. in the £ for the rate?—Yes.

Q. In practice the town clerk informs you?—I know there was a debit balance of £13,000 for the borough to carry forward.

Q. How much does a penny rate produce?—Slightly over £3,000.

Q. So that would have represented another 4d. in the £?—Fivepence to cover it; 13s. 8d. it should have been made if they had made it pay.

Q. Of course, we have been told that the rates have risen, I think, from 6s. 1d. in 1884 to this 12s., or, as you put it, nearer 13s. in 1905?—That is so.

Q. What effect does that have first of all on the tradesmen?—Paralyses them.

Q. What do you mean?—Well, regarding a 6d. rate as £20,000, if £20,000 more is spent by the borough as a borough and a union combined, there is £20,000 less for the householder to spend with the local tradesmen.

Q. What was the condition of trade in the borough—retail trade in the borough of Poplar—between, say, 1884 and 1894?—Exceedingly good—probably not a more prosperous borough in the kingdom.

(The Inspector.) When?—In the 10 years preceding.

(Mr. Robb.) From 1884 to 1894?—Trade was good.

Q. In 1894–5 we had that severe winter?—Yes, I was superintendent that year at the West India Dock of the Atlantic Transport Company, and had the direct control of the labour in the docks, and of the ships.

Q. So that you had an exceptional opportunity of gauging the distress and the labour conditions?—I controlled then between 200 and 1,100 men.

Q. And you were also here in Poplar in 1904?—I was in the neighbourhood of Poplar.

Q. Comparing your experience of those two periods of acute distress, what deduction do you draw, and what comparison (if any) do you make between them?—In the year of the severe frost, the West India Dock was frozen over; all the docks in this parish were frozen over. For about four weeks we paid nothing whatever in wages, whereas, before that, we paid anything from £300 to £1,100 a week.

Q. Of course, you were only one out of many?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) You mean your firm?—I was paying out for my firm.

(Mr. Robb.) For the Atlantic Transport Company?—Yes.

Q. And for four weeks, owing to the frost, you paid no wages whatever?—No wages whatever.

Q. Were there any other circumstances about that year 1894–5?—You must understand that when there is any frost about work is upset, and the men employed in it then turn round to see what odd jobs they can get, and we get crowded up with men. In that year I started a soup kitchen in the West India Dock, co-operating with the Shipping Federation, and altogether, I daresay, I collected from friends in the district £70 to £80, which we distributed, and when the frost broke I called all the men on our docks, and gave them 2s. each to fill their stomachs, so as to put some backbone into them in the morning.

Q. Before work?—Yes; and the best way to test a man is to look at his boots. The first thing an honest working man does when he gets work is to buy boots.

Q. We know that the figures in 1894–5 do not show nearly the same percentage of out-door pauperism as the year 1904?—That is so.

Q. What were the special conditions in 1904. There was no severe frost, for instance?—There was a cycle of bad trade, which comes, as far as I can judge, every eleventh year. Every eleventh year there is a depression, and it was only just the ordinary depression which followed the depression of 1893.

Q. It followed the depression of previous years?—It was due again in that period.

Q. And the next year was worse?—In 1904–5 the bad trade in this borough was more local than it should have been.

Q. What do you mean by that?—Well, if the number ran up, as it did, to 7,000 in receipt of out-relief, there was 7,000 getting their food, not from the local tradesmen. The local tradesmen would have to discharge assistants, and default in their rates, and have to clear out of the district, as was shown by the letters I had returned which I addressed to tradesmen. I had some hundreds returned as "Gone away."

Q. That you addressed to tradesmen?—We addressed letters to every shopkeeper in May or June, 1905, and hundreds were returned because they had gone, and the letters were not forwarded, showing that they did not leave in comfortable circumstances.

Q. Normal conditions?—Yes, or else their letters would have been forwarded, because there were penny stamps upon them.

Q. You say you had hundreds of letters in May, 1905, addressed to local tradesmen?—Tradesmen in the borough exclusively.

Q. Which were returned addressed "not known"?—No, "gone away; left no address." That does not include the number who went away, and whose letters had been sent afterwards, mind you.

(Mr. Grant.) Hundreds you say; can you give us the exact figure?—I think it is 327. I have a worse case than that.

(Mr. Robb.) Let us have it?—We called a second meeting after that, and letters which were returned in the one case were scored from our list. The previous ones had found the rest. Between three and four weeks after, if my memory is right, I had over 200 additional letters returned, showing that 200 had gone in the one quarter.

Q. Are you sure they were all addressed to tradesmen?—There was an abstract made from the directory of every tradesman, and the number, if my memory is right, was 4,467. I could tell from my stamp book.

(Mr. Grant.) You might specify the figures?—They are quite near enough.

Q. I like them to be accurate?—You can have them accurate. They will be worse then. The first effort we made was to take the shopkeeper, as being the biggest sufferer. The tenant could move to Canning Town or West Ham, whereas the shopkeeper had to sell his business to get out of the district.

(Mr. Robb.) Were businesses in Poplar saleable then?—I can find plenty of records where no bid could be obtained for businesses. One of our members came to me and explained that his principal had put £10,000 into the business. He had raised a loan, or mortgage, or interest of £2,500, which had been called in. He could not get an advance of 25 per cent. on the value of the property, because it was Poplar.

(Mr. Grant.) Will you give me the name?—I will do so to you privately.

(Mr. Robb.) You have an instance of a man who was unable to get an advance of what was nominally 25 per cent. on the capital value of his property?

(Mr. Grant.) He could not get it?—The surety of Poplar was not good enough.

(Mr. Robb.) You know, I suppose, that under the Trustee Act, of 1893, Trustees are allowed to lend on property up to two-thirds?—Yes.

Q. And yet you say a tradesmen in Poplar was unable to get an advance of what was nominally a quarter?—He

Mr.
Broadbank.
12 July.

was a manufacturer. A tradesman depends on local trade. A manufacturer can seek his business.

Q. What do you say has been the effect of these heavy rates on the value of property?—The value of Poplar as a borough has diminished by more than three million pounds.

Q. Are you speaking of the value of freehold and leasehold property in the borough?—Yes, if you take it that the rates have increased, as they have by £170,000—if you capitalise that you get somewhere near three million pounds.

Q. And you believe that would work out in practice?—Certainly, the revenue from the borough must be less. Either the tenant pays more to the landlord, and he puts it on, or the landlord gets more for his investment.

Q. Have any actual instances of decreased value of property come under your notice?—The best point is to take the increase in unlet property, which is over 50 per cent.

Q. Did you see a sale advertised the other day by order of the executors of some gentleman who lived in Kensington?—Yes, I saw the late manager to-day. The case I quoted was Blythe & Pascoe's property. When they were in Bromley they were a successful firm. Through a death, and some matter of the will, the business was sold, or was disposed of. The premises were put up quite recently, and no price obtained. I could quote another instance of a gentleman living at Leytonstone who owns thirteen houses in the borough, and wished to dispose of them. His evidence would be, if you wish him to come, that five years ago you could not have got into the mart for the crowd. When he put them up he could not get a bid. Nobody came, and he could not get within £1,000 of what he could have got five years ago.

Q. What did he get four years ago?—Oh, they had been his property for years.

(Mr. Grant.) May we have this?—I do not know what street these houses are in at Poplar.

(Mr. Robb.) What is the name of the owner?—J. T. Browne, he lives at Grove Road, Leytonstone.

Q. I want you to get at the case of a gentleman who, I am informed, died in Kensington recently. His son was here the other day. I do not know whether he is here now. A year or two ago the property was valued for Probate at between £30,000 and £40,000. The property was submitted by auction, and I thought you could have given us the particulars?—No.

Q. Well, perhaps if that gentleman from Kensington is here, he will give me the particulars after the adjournment. At all events, you are satisfied there has been this heavy fall in the value of local property?—Someone has to suffer. Either the rent has to go up or the returns of the landlord must go down.

Q. We have dealt with the effect on property and on the tradesmen. What has been the effect on the working man?—To send him to East Ham and West Ham. There is a car service from Bow Bridge to West Ham, and the North London Railway goes from Poplar and Bromley through to Victoria Park and Hackney.

Q. What do you deduce from that?—He can get the same accommodation elsewhere for less money than he is obliged to be charged by the landlord here. The landlord must see himself reimbursed—or endeavour to—and if he raises the rent, it is cheaper to go elsewhere.

Q. Do you mean that, owing to the rates, the rents of working-class property have risen to an abnormal height?—Yes, that is so, and I have had enquiries from tenants to know what the landlord or landlady should have charged extra owing to the rates.

Q. Just a word or two on these figures. Your own literature, I think, calls for no comment. Mr. Grant will ask anything he thinks fit. That is 1. 1 (a) is the statement of the borough council. That I shall not want. 1 (b) is a statement showing the percentage of increase on different heads of expenditure of the guardians, distinguishing between 1901 and 1905. I will not take you all through it, but what has been the percentage of increase to the union of relief of outdoor poor, contrasting these two?—In four years the increase has been 113·8 per cent.

Q. And maintenance of in-door poor?—Has increased by 41·28 per cent.

Q. Repairs and alterations to buildings is not quite a fair comparison, because there might be an unusually heavy year. Take conveyances and travelling expenses?—186·11 per cent.

Q. They have increased 186 per cent. in four years?—Yes.

Q. Furniture and property?—92·81 increase.

Q. Farm account?—218·76. There is a mystery about the farm account, Mr. Robb.

Q. Cost of officials?—22·42 per cent.

Q. The borough's contribution to Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum?—20·06 per cent.

Q. Then 1 (d). What has been the percentage of increase in the cost of provisions per head per week. I am speaking of maintenance in the workhouse comparing 1905 with 1897?—The percentage of increase is 56·70.

Q. That is provisions. Clothing?—15·47 per cent.

Q. Necessaries?—27·83. As to the second column I do not think you have that quite right. The total increase is not 15·47; the total increase is over 70 per cent.

Q. Then the percentage is the percentage of the total increase?—The total increase is 2s. a week, of which 3½d. is for clothing. That 3½d. is nearer 70 per cent. The clothing increase is about 70 per cent.

Q. I was wrong; the figures you give here are the percentages of each item applicable to the total of 2s.?—That is so.

(Mr. Grant.) It is not the percentage of increase at all?—It is the percentage of the increased cost.

(Mr. Robb.) It is a percentage of a percentage.

(Mr. Grant.) It is not a question of how much clothing increased between 1897 and 1905. You say it is 15 per cent.?—I did not say so.

Q. The table says so?—The table says so.

(Mr. Robb.) No, it does not; if you will read; the increase per head per week, 1905 over 1897, and then it goes on in pen and ink, the percentage of the total increase of 2s. 0½d.

(Mr. Grant.) That is exactly what I said?—You did not.

(Mr. Robb.) It is simply an ordinary rule of three sum.

(Mr. Grant.) The question was what the percentage of increase on clothing had been. The percentage on clothing is not 15 per cent.?—I corrected Mr. Robb and told him that he was on the wrong tack.

(Mr. Robb.) But, unfortunately for Mr. Grant, the increase on clothing is 70 per cent.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Robb thinks I do not want to elicit anything unfavourable to myself. I want to point anything out, whether it is favourable or unfavourable.

(Mr. Robb.) We will leave that statement and come to 1 (c). The point of 1 (c) is a comparison with St. John's, Islington. Before you go to it, are the circumstances such at St. John's that this comparison is of any value?—The reason I went to St. John's was to get at the water statistics. I could not understand them in Poplar; they would upset anyone to get at their foundation.

Q. Seventy-five gallons per head are consumed at Poplar. What amount at St. John's?—Thirty gallons.

Q. You have worked out here a comparison of the cost of maintenance at the workhouse?—Yes; one special reason was I happened to know that carelessness had got into the contracts. The total cost per unit for the half-year of 1905 was 4s. 7½d. per week.

Q. In St. John's?—In St. John's, as against 6s. 5½d. here.

Q. Nearly 2s. lower per head per week than in Poplar?—Yes.

Q. But it was originally higher than Poplar?—Yes, it was. It went to 6s. 8d. in 1902 in one half-year; 6s. 5½d. for the year—over us by 6d.

Q. And your opinion is that by looking closely into estimates and other matters the guardians at St. John's, Islington, have been able to reduce the cost by about 2s. per week?—It was practically the action of one man.

Q. I do not mind whose action it was—that was the result. Then as to the out-relief weekly returns in parallel columns, are there any particular weeks you

Mr.
Broodbank,
12 July.

would like to refer to?—It may interest ratepayers to know what the effect has been since January till now. In the first week of January, 1904, there were in Poplar 3,474 in receipt of out-relief. In the week ending June 23, there were 3,662, an increase of nearly 200 more. In the first week of January, 1905, after that meeting, there were 7,384, an increase over the corresponding week for the previous year of 3,910. In June of that year it came down to 6,827.

Q. A slight drop?—Yes; in 1906, this year, in January, there were 6,793 the first week. The last return I have is 4,275.

Q. That was June 23 this year?—Yes, of this year; the lowest figure we have had since October, 1904.

Q. So that between January and June of this year the out-door paupers have decreased by 2,450 and some odd?—Yes. There is another point. In the third week in February, before the Inquiry commenced, there were 7,128, an increase over January of 320; so that since February 17 there was a decrease of almost 3,000.

Q. Since February 17 in the present year, when the investigations which led to this Inquiry were set on foot, out-door paupers have decreased by nearly 3,000?—That is so, sir.

Q. About 40 per cent. of the total?—About 40 per cent.; whereas the other six unions in East London had only decreased 6½ per cent.

Q. In the same period?—In the same period. Percentage 37 drop since that time.

(Mr. Grant.) February 17?—Those are your own figures.

Q. But you are giving them?—I think I am accurate.

(Mr. Robb.) Give them to Mr. Grant again.

(Mr. Grant.) I do not want figures; I want the date.

(Mr. Robb.) How do you account for that immense reduction in out-door pauperism in that short period?—I am not inside the guardians' committees and relieving officers, Mr. Robb. They have accounted for it by saying in this room that stricter methods are being used.

Q. I did not understand everyone to say that. I understood some to say that improved labour conditions accounted for it?—Not so; improved labour conditions is not so. The labour conditions of Poplar individually affects in a small degree only the population of Poplar. Those in this room know that thousands come from Canning Town and work in Poplar. They can come from Barking to work in Poplar, yet the Poplar man says he cannot find work, while he can get relief.

Q. Your view is there are a large number of people who get cheap houses outside Poplar?—And work in Poplar.

Q. Because the rates are lower. And because they live in districts where rates are low, and get cheap-rented houses, they compete unfairly with Poplar workmen?—Not necessarily, because they may have been Poplar workmen themselves and gone.

Q. But their conditions enable them to compete?—Certainly. They are generally the better class, because they look about for something better.

Q. Is this your view, or have you seen and counted them?—I have seen them. I have tried to get on the same car. The terminus is at Canning Town, and thousands tram over here every morning and go back in the evening.

Q. Your view is that this large reduction is due to stricter methods being employed?—Yes, and my view is that if ordinary methods were used it would be far lower still; and one has always to remember that any man off relief is an earning power, and reflects this benefit right through the borough.

Q. Now, do you know anything more about the employment of casual labour in Poplar?—I have employed casual labour in Poplar, and in the Victoria Docks, Albert Docks, and Tilbury, and had upwards of 3,000 men under my control direct.

Q. What do you say about that. You heard Mr. Martley's evidence. Can you give the Inspector any information with regard to the conditions of casual labour here?—The casual labourer living in Poplar simply uses Poplar as a place to go to. He would just as soon be in

Canning Town or anywhere else. He does not find his work necessarily in Poplar. He may follow a certain line of steamers, as they did in the Atlantic Transport. If that line fails, he has something else to look forward to. To understand the casual labourer, you must remember that they work more or less in groups, and if Tom does not know of anything, Jack does; and if Jack does not, Bill does. They put one another in touch with jobs. I have known a man walk from Canning Town to Tilbury, and to ask for me; that man would always get a job because he has backbone in him, and wants work and not relief.

Q. What effect has this indiscriminate granting of relief on the casual labourer?—It makes them all Weary Willies. There is a class of men who will not work, and I have met them.

Q. Of course you are only speaking of a small minority?—It is possible to increase the number by fostering them.

Q. You don't deny there is a large amount of genuine distress?—I quite agree, but the genuine distress generally hides itself. The small clerk class suffers more than many working people.

Q. What do you say about the employment of women in casual labour?—I have made enquiries with regard to that, but I had evidence without enquiry. A woman might be at work. The husband gets work, and the woman doesn't want it, and quite right, too. But how can the employer tell whether the husband has got work, and whether the woman will turn up. Many employers in this union have told me that women in their employ have come for two days a week, and gone on the rates the rest. As long as they get the rent and beer, they care nothing for the rest. They have represented to the guardians that their earnings were for a week what they were paid for two days' work.

Q. Can you instance cases?—I have been asked not to mention the firm by name.

Q. You will give Mr. Grant and the Inspector the names?—Oh, yes, but I do not want mud thrown at them by ill-tempered people.

Q. Do you know that an attempt was made to give work to some of the unemployed in February of the present year?—Do you mean that case of Ward of Morecambe?

Q. Ward, of Sheffield?—Yes, they had a job going at Morecambe.

Q. They were breakers-up of ships, I believe. They wrote a letter to Mr. Lough with reference to the employment of some men. It is dated February 17th, 1906?—That is so.

Q. I will read it, and no doubt Mr. Lough will check it. The letter is as follows:—

"Dear Sir,

"We beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of yesterday, respecting the men sent to Morecambe. To begin with we may tell you we were able to do with men at Morecambe, but they must be what is known in the trade as 'cutters-up.'

"In conversation with our Directors, they suggested that such men might be included in those out of employment in London, and it was their endeavour to do what they could to relieve this, by drawing men from London if suitable ones could be found.

"We had a hundred applications and were convinced that a great many more of the men were not the class of men we wanted, but we did our best to pick out a number who perfectly stated that they were 'cutters-up.' We spent over thirty pounds in sending these men to Morecambe, and it is thrown away; moreover, it does not appear that we shall see anything of it back. Since their return to London, the men have described themselves to local authorities as fitters, engineers, mechanics, and similar occupations, totally opposite to the description and particulars they gave to us when they were examined here.

"We have before had experience with those men, and they were told that providing they could prove themselves satisfactory as cutters-up, they would be paid the full price of sevenpence per hour, which is the figure we are paying our own men at all our ship dismantling depots, and which figure is higher than has been paid during the last few months on the Thames by other firms in our line of business.

Mr.
Broadbent.
12 July.

"One of the men who is at present working, and among those who have expressed themselves in every way satisfied with the job, has informed us that these men on their way to Morecambe, arranged amongst themselves, that all were to be employed at 7d., or they would stick out and not work, being evidently under the impression that we were fast for men."

"We never promised the rate of wages the men mention, nor did we offer in any way to pay lodging money, we simply cannot do it, we can get plenty of good men and have since sent men from London who are perfectly satisfied with the rate of wages which are being paid."

"Our directors informed us that the spirit of these men on arrival at Morecambe was of the worst, they said they were not going to be pitted against any class of men, that they were London men and that they should do a London day's work, and when they were offered piece work, they said we wanted horses and not men."

"The other statements made by the men in the various inclosures are quite incorrect, if the men had made a start and shown what sort of workers they were, everything would have been right, but they were not prepared to do this unless we signed an agreement to give them 7d. per hour. Now that we know what some of the men are, we should have landed ourselves in a nice situation if we had agreed to do this. When the men were here, they grumbled that the rate of wages was low, and they were distinctly told that if they thought they could not manage to do, they had better say so at once, and indeed a good many of them said they could not possibly manage it."

"We have lost £30 to £35 at an honest effort to give good employment to men out of work, and this is the result, and we shall be very loth to try the experiment again."

"Cutters-up who are used to the work are still applying here to be sent forward, but we now insist that they shall go forward entirely at their own expense and responsibility."

"We are sorry that our effort was not more successful in relieving you of what we are sure is a very difficult question.—Yours faithfully."

That letter is written by a firm—a large and well-known firm?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) Thomas Ward, Ltd. Have you read the letter in answer?—I have not got it.

Q. This letter, dated February 17th, 1906, is from Thomas W. Ward, Limited, Sugar House Lane, High Street, Stratford, London, E. So that although it was about men at Morecambe, it was written by a firm in London. It refers to a previous letter, which shows clearly there has been previous correspondence. The letter begins: "We beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter," &c.

(The Inspector.) There is further correspondence?

(Mr. Robb.) Well, put it in.

(Mr. Grant.) If not, we were going to produce it. If Mr. Robb had told us before we could have looked it up.

(Mr. Robb.) I was very busy this morning.

(Mr. Grant.) Perhaps, Mr. Robb, when he is going to call attention to any more correspondence will let us know beforehand.

(Mr. Robb.) I most certainly will.

(Mr. Grant.) The note on this letter is this: "G. Tunncliffe, 35, Allamont Road, White Post Lane, Hackney Wick; A. Harmsworth, 64, Appian Road, Bow, E." The letter is from Watts:—"20, Selwyn Road, Bow, Feb. 8/06. Dear Mr. Lough, I return you the balance-sheet of Bryant & May, with thanks. It will be safer in your possession, and I can see it again if necessary."

"I also enclose you a letter I received from one of the men at Morecambe. I heard there was a strike there, and that our men were to take the places of those on strike. So I wrote to this man: his reply is interesting, as bearing on the whole question I raised last night, and may help to guide you in your dealing with the firm."

"Please tell Mr. Wallace I will not be at Bow at 4 o'clock on Monday, as I have agreed to go down to Laindon. I had promised to get there half an hour before relief, and do the convalescents."

"I think you said 2 o'clock, Liverpool Street, on Monday.—Yours, A. A. WATTS."

Q. Then there is the following letter. I have not yet read it.

(Mr. Robb.) That is rather dangerous.

(Mr. Grant.) We have nothing to conceal, and we are anxious to have all the facts brought out. My only chance in this matter is to put all my documents in. The letter is:

"26/1/1906. 21, Bay Cottage, Northumberland St., Morecambe, Lancs. Dear Sir, In reply to your letter, there is no strike here, but they cannot get the men to stop because they will not pay enough money. The tip-top price here is 7d. per hour with no expenses. There was 10 of us come down here with the understanding that we was to get either 7½d. or 8d. per hour with expenses for the married men, but when we started only four of us got the 7d., the rest only got 5½d. They worked for two or three days and then when the others come down they turned it up, so that out of 26 men there was only us four stuck at it all, and we have given it a fortnight's trial and we find we cannot possibly do on the money, so that as soon as we can get our fare together we are coming home. The others I do not know how or when they will reach home, as they have started to walk home. Food is very dear down here, you cannot get board and lodgings under 14s. per week, and that does not include washing, so that it is no good of us stopping here when we cannot send much home for our wives and families. I have received a postcard from Mr. Shillinglaw to go before the committee as last Tuesday. Will you kindly oblige me by explaining the reason I could not attend. My mate's name is A. Harmsworth, and his address is 64, Appian Road, Bow.—Yours respectfully, G. TUNNICLIFFE. The others address is Mr. T. J. Kitchen, 8, Rippoth Road, Old Ford. His mate his going to stop for a bit as he is a single man."

(Mr. Robb.) What committee is referred to?

(Mr. Grant.) The unemployed committee.

(Mr. Robb.) He is apologising for his non-attendance at that committee, because he is detained at work.

(Mr. Grant.) I suppose even a labourer may be allowed to have some sense of apologising for absence?

(Mr. Robb.) Any way, it is rather a charming position. A gentleman has turned up his work in order to appear before the Relief committee.

(Mr. Grant.) Not at all. Oh, no.

(Mr. Robb.) Really, it is a charming situation.

(Mr. Grant.) That is not a fair comment on the letter. The following letter and statements I also have:—

"16th February, 1906. Dear Sirs, I am directed by the board of guardians to state that they have received from certain applicants for relief statements as to the reason for returning from Morecambe, whence they had gone for work in the ship dismantling depot of your firm. As the men allege that the conditions upon which they were led to travel to Lancashire for employment were not fulfilled by the firm, I am directed to forward the accompanying statements and to state that the guardians will be glad if you will favour them with your observations thereon.—Yours faithfully, G. H. LOUGH, Clerk. Messrs. T. W. Ward, Limited, Sugar House Lane, Stratford, E."

"Robert William Smith, of 56, Donald Street, Bromley, states that in company with David Owen on Saturday, 20th January, he agreed with Mr. Ashley Ward at the Stratford Yard, Sugar House Lane, to go to Morecambe as a cutter-up, at the rate of 7d. per hour. He was also told the married men would be allowed to work overtime, and might have piecework to add to their wages. When he got to Morecambe he was told by the manager he would only be paid 5d. or 5½d. per hour if worth it."

"Was told at Stratford that the men would be met at Morecambe by the foreman, who would find lodgings at 12s. per week. He had, however, to find his own lodgings at 4s. per week without board. He understood from the men who were at work that they had to stand off for wet weather and rough sea. Cannot remember whether anything was said as to the number of hours per week, but when he arrived at Morecambe found it was 50 hours. He refused under the altered conditions to start work,

Mr.
Broodbank,
12 July.

"and walked back to London with the other men. He heard Mr. Ward say (in the office at Morecambe) that he could not understand what the firm were about, sending men from London. ROBERT W. SMITH. 9th February, 1906.

"William Henry Lock, 252, Devon's Road, Bromley, states he went to Messrs. Ward's yard at Stratford on the 20th January, Saturday, and saw Mr. Ashley Ward, he was in company with Arthur Nash. Mr. Ward asked him if he was willing to go to Morecambe and whether he had read the bill outside on the gate; he said yes; Mr. Ward then said the terms were 7d. per hour and 54 hours' work per week. Most likely the men would work by electric light and go on piecework; on these conditions he agreed to go. Fare 19s. 5d. was paid by Messrs. Ward and he went on Sunday night by midnight train. Just before the train started the men were presented with 5s. each by Messrs. Ward's clerk. Arrived at Morecambe on Monday morning at 8 a.m.; he was told by Mr. Ward a foreman would meet the men at the station and would find them lodgings (16 of them); there was no one there, and the men had to find their own lodgings. The men went straight to the ship at about 9.15 a.m. and saw the foreman, Mr. Walmesley; he said he didn't think he would have sufficient tools for all of them to start, but arrangements were made to start after dinner: in the meantime went and found lodgings. When they went to start they asked again what the terms were and were told 5½d. per hour, or payment according to ability; they mentioned terms fixed with Mr. Ward, at Stratford, and decided not to start. They went down to the ship again on Tuesday morning and saw the time-keeper, who said he could do nothing in it, the terms were 5½d. per hour. During the day two men were deputed to see Mr. Ward on the ship; he said he had nothing to do with it, they must see the manager; saw the manager, who said they could start and be paid according to ability. The deputation stated Mr. Ward said he could not think what his nephew was about sending the men down there. Sixteen men came away the next day, Wednesday. WILLIAM HENRY LOCK. 9th February, 1906."

(The Inspector.) These unemployed, I take it, were sent at the expense of the board. They were offered 5½d. a hour, and if they worked 48 hours a week they would receive 22s., and they refused it, because they were not receiving 7d. per hour.

(Mr. Grant.) They made statements that they were promised 7d. an hour.

(Mr. Robb.) It is quite a misunderstanding between Messrs. Ward and the men, that the latter came back. I suppose the thing is mentioned because it showed the men would prefer to be unemployed in Poplar to getting 22s. a week at Morecambe. That is the suggestion.

(Mr. Grant.) If the men have to pay 14s. per week out of 22s. for board and lodging, there is not much left to send home to their wives. Messrs. Ward tried to get work done cheaply.

(Mr. Robb.) At all events Messrs. Ward spent between £30 and £40 in trying to find work for the unemployed.

(Mr. Grant.) To get cheaper labour.

(Mr. Robb.) The only arrangement was to give the men 4s. 6d. a day before they started. And if they gave a man a "sub" before they started they would get no work done. They paid their fare and gave them 5s. each, I suppose?

(The Inspector.) We are not discussing the conduct of Messrs. Ward, but the effect of relief on able-bodied men.

(Mr. Robb.) So much for that. Just one reference to your total—the summary of your totals of weekly out-door relief. I want you to give me the figures for the first week. That is (c), is it not?—I have it before me.

Q. Yes. Just give us the first week this year?—The first week this year—the distributor's stores account?

Q. That is so. Yes?—The first week this year was £233 18s. I will give you the second week—£230 13s. 6d. This was distribution in kind.

Q. Which week are you giving?—The second week.

(Mr. Grant.) What table are you on?

(Mr. Robb.) (e) or (f).

(Mr. Grant.) This is (f), I think?

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, (f).

(The Inspector.) I think we ought to be clear. I believe that when the men came back to Poplar they were all refused relief?—They were refused relief.

(Mr. Grant.) The guardians took the view that they ought to take the work. Will any of the guardians tell me about that?

(Mr. Robb.) Then it is rather hard to say that Messrs. Ward were trying to get cheap labour.

(Mr. Grant.) To get cheap work.

(The Inspector.) It is quite clear that when the men came back the guardians refused them relief. Then I do not think we need go farther than that.

(Mr. Grant.) We have got a testimonial at last for the Guardians.

(Mr. Robb.) Just go through these figures. Does (f) refer to the stores distributing account?

(Mr. Grant.) I have not been able to find it yet. Oh, here it is. Now, which is the table. Where are you, Mr. Broodbank?—In the middle of the page.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes?—You start from the Christmas quarter, and it shows the growth up to Christmas, the influence of charity about Christmas time, and then for the second week, when the charities were over, £230 13s. 6d., distributed in kind.

(Mr. Grant.) Is this in the Lady Day quarter?—The first quarter this year.

Q. And the second week this year. The Christmas quarter is the quarter ending Christmas?—That is so. £230 13s. 6d. distributed in food in the second week of the current quarter.

(Mr. Robb.) What was distributed in money in the same week?—The second week in January, £833 9s. 7d., as against £655 10s. 3d.

Q. Yes?—This shows a total saving of £360 a week as compared with last year, or the beginning of last year. The guardians are saving on out-relief at the present time something like £360 a week as compared with last year. Since the beginning of the year they have saved over £160 a week in kind, and £180 in money.

Q. And I suppose you attribute that to the same reason you gave just now?—Yes.

Q. Now, Mr. Broodbank, there is one point that I mentioned in my letter to the Inspector of the 31st of May, and that I have given no evidence at all of—the irregularities and discrepancies in the published abstract of accounts. Will you hand in the statement you have?—I hand it in.

(Mr. Grant.) This is one we have not seen yet. Have you any more we have not seen?—I do not think so.

(Mr. Robb.) Well, just give us these. The comparative statements of receipts and expenditure—

(The Inspector.) Just one moment. These comparative statements are not in the compulsory accounts. Where is it seen. Did the guardians do it on their own initiative, or in a prescribed form?

(Mr. Lough.) The statement is a summary of the statutory returns?—These accounts were put in the comparative statements in the years 1901–2.

(Mr. Robb.) From a ratepayer's point of view is that statement useful?—Most useful. That is what we want, so that any ordinary person could see.

Q. Then it was a most valuable document?—Yes.

Q. The Poplar Union training school establishment charges disappear in 1905?—Yes.

Q. It appears first in 1898?—It appears every year up to 1904, including 1904; and 1905 it is not in.

Q. The statistical statement showing the number of children in the schools disappears in 1905?—Yes.

Q. There are no particulars of officers at all in the returns from Laindon Farm Colony at all?—That is a point on which a deal of light should have been thrown instead of hiding it.

Q. Do not say hiding it?—It was omitted from the account.

Q. Is the Langley House receiving home included?—No.

Q. Regarding the bakery account, what did you find?—With regard to the bakery account, there was a balance of £382 11s. 9d., common charges. Well, if there was £3,800 turnover, a 10 per cent. discount to each school or institution should have been disclosed. It is as artificial as it is inaccurate.

Mr.
Broodbank,
12 July.

(Mr. Grant.) The whole of the bakery account is artificial and inaccurate.

(The Inspector.) What is the matter with the form?

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Broodbank has been misled, what happens is this: The guardians buy their flour and make their own bread, and employ people to make it, a staff of trained men to superintend. Then they charge themselves every week the current price of bread in the open market, and at the end of the year the account shows profit or loss. It is only done for the purpose of justifying the work?—That I agree with.

Q. What is your complaint?—Are these charges the market price you are showing? What is the actual cost?

Q. The account is not drawn for that purpose. Mr. Broodbank can see this. He is a business man. The actual cost appears in the regular books of the guardians. Flour bought and wages paid; but in order to show what the bakery costs every week they charge up the amount of bread made at the market price of bread and then at the end of the quarter show whether a profit or loss was made. It is merely given for information?—I quite agree. But what is to prevent them charging Messrs. Blott in the same way. I say the prices should be what the goods actually cost.

Q. That would be absurd. You would only have the same account twice over. Just think—

(Mr. Robb.) You don't give him a chance.

(Witness.) If you put it this way. If you credit the bakery account with 4½d., and it only costs 3½d., why not charge 3½d.?

(Mr. Lough.) The price has to be fixed at the beginning of the half year. It is only at the end of the half year that the actual cost can be ascertained.

(Mr. Robb.) What is the alleged profit of £200 in 1896? We will go on now.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Broodbank has found a mare's nest?—I have found nothing.

(The Inspector.) It wants explaining. What Mr. Broodbank has done is—

(Witness.) My point is that it disappears in 1905. Why?

(Mr. Robb.) That is the point.

(Mr. Grant.) Will Mr. Broodbank deal with the point he has made?

(Mr. Robb.) Whether the account was good or bad it disappears altogether in 1905?—If it was necessary in 1902 it should have been necessary in 1905.

Q. The same thing applies to the farm account at the Forest Gate schools?—Yes.

Q. The farm accounts at Shenfield are mysterious?—Yes.

Q. What happens there?—There may be some purpose. In 1902 the farm account at Shenfield—

(The Inspector.) Is Shenfield the same as Hutton?—Yes. The 1902 accounts show a profit on hay of £220.

(Mr. Robb.) Ah. But before you go on, I think I will deal with the general account. In 1902 the profit shown is £33 4s.?—Yes.

Q.—The next year a loss?—In 1903 a loss of £19 9s. 5d.

Q. The next year?—A profit of £17 5s. 9d.

Q. And then it disappears?—Yes.

Q. Well then, I want the rest of these peculiarities about the farm account. Read the rest of your evidence?—In 1902 there is shown a balance remaining of hay valued at £220 at Shenfield. In 1903, £31 10s. was realised and £405 remained of this commodity.

Q. That was out of the current year's stock?—Yes. In the 1904 account no hay is shown as being used, or sold, and only £329 then remained out of the £405 in hand at the previous year.

(The Inspector.) Do you mean pounds sterling?—Yes. £70 of hay again in the account.

Q. I suppose this is subject to valuation?

(Mr. Robb.) Then the deficit ought to be wiped off. Did you look at anything else in these farm accounts?—One thing is that there are no oats shown, and the straw decreases in value.

Q. Yes?—The oats diminish in value from £63 to £31 12s. 6d., without any variation being accounted for.

Q. And with regard to the potatoes, what did you find about them?—It is known that in each year all the potatoes have been disposed of, and in fact, all vegetables and greenstuffs, but with regard to potatoes especially, I am informed that they have been credited to the farm at contract prices, but that the contract for the supply of potatoes is for "best Scotch" at something like £4 5s. or £4 10s. per ton, but the potatoes raised at Shenfield are of a far inferior class.

Q. Assuming then this is right, is there anything to show that any deficit has been written off?—Only the mysterious word, tilth—tenant rights.

(Mr. Grant.) If you think the tilth bears the same interpretation as tenant rights, you are mistaken.

(Mr. Robb.) I will accept instructions from you on matters of agriculture.

(Witness.) It would mean value put in the farm by the farmer, and not derived from the land.

Q. In all these accounts is there anything given as to the person by whom the value is made?—No certificate of valuation or any sign of how it is arrived at.

(Mr. Robb.) Well, now, Mr. Broodbank.

(Mr. Grant.) You do not say you know anything about farming, do you?—I do not profess to be a jack of all trades.

Q. Do you profess to be a master of any trade?—I know my own business.

(Mr. Robb.) You are simply asking for information and pointing out items in the account which call for attention. There may be much in them or there may be little, but they are certainly very peculiar and extraordinary. There was a matter Mr. Diamond mentioned about Messrs. Cartwright & Co. Have you made any inquiries?

(Mr. Grant.) Are you going to deal with documents?

(Mr. Robb.) I am not putting everything in the documents. I have finished with all that. I put them in if Mr. Grant wishes to ask for them.

(The Inspector.) Have you any other questions?

(Mr. Robb.) Only one or two. (To witness.) Have you made inquiries about Cartwright's?—I have.

Q. What is the result of those inquiries?—I find three firms at 59-72, Hatfield Street, Borough. These three firms are Cartwright & Co., Reynolds, and Milns.

Q. All at the same address?—Hatfield Street, Borough.

Q. Does that appear in the Post Office Directory?—It was in the Post Office Directory for this year. They have different telephone numbers. Milns & Co. have a telephone at Victoria Park Square. My information is that a Mr. Miller acts on behalf of the three firms. This Mr. Miller must either be a sub-contractor for the three firms, or he must be manager for the three firms. One or the other. Sub-contractors under Mr. Miller took work from him and again sub-let it, so that we have got three firms all sub-contracting if Mr. Miller is not the contractor.

Q. Have you seen any of these women in the East End?—Not personally, but I have their statements.

Q. Just answer this. It was suggested that every possible information would be given you by the guardians. Did you ask in the early part of the present year for copies of the tender form?—I did.

Q. Did you see Mr. Lough?—I did.

Q. What request did you make?—I made personal application for a tender form, which I understood would be given to anyone who wished to tender, but no ratepayer was entitled to secure or see a copy.

Q. You eventually saw them?—I have seen them.

Q. You have obtained some very valuable information?—A great deal.

Q. I think that is all.

(Mr. Grant.) At any rate, when you asked for this tender form you were not wishing to tender?—I represented a large number of ratepayers.

Q. Will you be good enough to answer my question. When you asked for this tender form you did not wish to tender?—I did not want to tender; I wanted information.

Q. And you were representing, who?—I was representing the alliance, which, as Mr. Martley has said, has

Mr.
Broodbank,
12 July.

been treated very discourteously by the board as a body. Personally, I have nothing to say as to their conduct. We wanted information, and I was told it was no business of any ratepayer.

Q. When were you told that?—By Mr. Lough on the 9th March.

Q. Well?—I was told it was not the business of any ratepayer to direct attention to the guardians.

Q. The only business of the guardians was to spend money. You must pay a little attention. You say Mr. Lough told you it was not the business of any ratepayer?—I went back and wrote some notes.

Q. May I see your notes?—Not except by permission of Mr. Robb.

Q. You are going to be met by Mr. Lough on this matter?—I am sorry for Mr. Lough, then.

Q. It may be you will be sorry for Mr. Broodbank. As a matter of fact, Mr. Lough told you that if you were not a contractor you were not entitled to a tender form?—That is so, but I was given to think that if I told a deliberate lie I might have one.

Q. You might have been a person who wanted to tender?—But they knew I was not.

Q. Did not that strike you as a perfectly reasonable explanation. Any person who came here and said he wanted to tender could have a form; any person who said he represented ratepayers could not have one?—He should have it.

Q. That is another matter?—I quite agree with you.

Q. That was the position taken by the guardians, and Mr. Lough says he has no recollection of the answer said to have been given. Now, at the beginning of March you communicated with Mr. Lough on the matter and you received a reply. (*The letters were produced.*) The answer was a polite one, was it not?—It was a diplomatic answer.

Q. Did you consider it a polite answer?—No. It refused our request, and was not polite from my point of view.

Q. Now, just take one or two small things you gave Mr. Davy just now; will you look at your table (*f*) again. The middle of the page I asked you about. You say that you put down there that the relief in kind in the second week of the Lady Day quarter, 1906, was £230 13s. 6d., and that the relief in money in that same week was £885 9s. 7d., making a total for the week of £1,066 13s. 1d. Where did you get the figures from?—The guardians' minutes.

Q. Well, look and see if you can find them. My figures are entirely contrary to yours. I shall have to supply you with a list of your inaccuracies, I am afraid, Mr. Broodbank?—We go on information supplied by the guardians, and as far as we can we deduce the figures.

Q. Our minutes will show everything?—Well, you look them up.

(*The Inspector.*) Would these correspond with form "A"?

(*Mr. Lough.*) This is form "A."

(*Mr. Grant.*) These are all your figures?—I have only a copy of your minutes.

Q. You put these figures forward as being correct. I have taken the very first figures you have put forward, and I have told you they are wrong. You pointed out that the relief amounted to £1,066. Mr. Ford tells me that we have never spent £1,000, except in Christmas week. The figures should have been £816 4s. 2d.?—Then has the non-settled poor nothing to do with the matter?

(*Mr. Robb.*) You say the total should be £816 4s. What is it for the second week? Have you taken in the non-settled poor?

(*Mr. Grant.*) You are not cross-examining me.

(*The Inspector.*) Do get on.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Now Mr. Broodbank, after the letter of the 2nd March, refusing you tender forms, did you see Mr. Lough and ask him to let you have a copy of the tenders behind the guardians' backs?—I did nothing of the sort. I never ask a man to do anything behind his principal's back.

Q. Wait a minute, Mr. Broodbank. We are going right to the bottom of this. Did you see Mr. Lough

about the refusal of the tender forms at all?—I did, and wanted to know if there was any possible way he could get permission to get them for me. What was the reason? I wanted to know why.

Q. You did not say what you wanted them for?—The letter gave the reason that I did not give a reason.

Q. The guardians have considered your request, and in the absence of information as to the purpose for which the request is made they refuse?—They wanted to know why I wanted them.

Q. They told you why they refused—because of the absence of information?—Yes.

Q. Now I put to you an information from Mr. Lough, that you saw Mr. Lough, and asked him to let you have a copy of the tenders behind the guardians' backs?—Mr. Lough is not telling the truth, or he misunderstood. I wanted him to persuade the board to let me have it.

Q. He was not an official of the Poplar Municipal Alliance, was he?—Oh, no.

(*Mr. Robb.*) We shall have Mr. Lough in the box. If suggestions are made at all, I shall have to ask Mr. Lough why he did not check the tenders.

(*The Inspector.*) To my mind the matter is not one of great importance. Here are the figures. If Mr. Broodbank has made any mistakes, they can be verified?—I have never seen form A. I have taken the figures from the minutes.

(*The Inspector.*) But they can be checked by form A. They may not be quite the same, but approximately so.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Now, about these trading accounts. Do you understand what they were for?—To give information to the public.

Q. You understand that?—What else could they be for? It is not a statutory matter and they are not obliged to put them in.

Q. Do not you agree that the guardians might wish to check the work they are doing in the workhouse and elsewhere?—But they need not put them in a public book.

Q. Why not?—There is no reason why they should.

Q. Now, Mr. Broodbank, I put it to you, that these trading accounts were omitted, because it was found they were misunderstood?—Misleading.

Q. I say misunderstood?—Misleading.

Q. And were dealt with by the public as if they were actual cash transactions?—Not by me.

Q. You are not the public?—But I represent a big portion.

Q. You do not have the brains of the people you represent?—But I have the benefit of their brains.

Q. But after all you cannot get more than a pint in a pint measure?—That is the sort of personal remark we should expect from the guardians.

Q. Mr. Balfour once said: "There is a limit to human endurance." I am wrong in imagining that there is, I have to bear a great deal. I will give you the figures so that you can check them. I suggest to you that the figures for the second week of Lady Day quarter were—cash £554 13s. 7d. and kind £231 10s. 7d.?—Then I misunderstood the minutes.

Q. It is quite possible?—And for other people too.

Q. Very likely?

(*Mr. Robb.*) I should like to know whether they include the non-settled poor?—If you show me the minutes I can put my finger on it in a minute.

(*Mr. Grant.*) You have the minutes?—It would be about the fourth or fifth week in the Lady Day quarter of this year.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Now let us come to the Poplar Borough Municipal Alliance.

(*Mr. Robb.*) You don't seem anxious to give Mr. Broodbank time to work it out?—They don't want any working out. The minutes are supplied to us. The agendas are not. The reason for that is that we shall not interfere before they do anything. I got the figures from the minutes. A typewriter may make a mistake and so might we. These figures are culled from the minutes.

Q. The whole point of the comparison is to show the large drop between January of this year and last?—Yes.

Mr.
Brodbank.
12 July.

(Mr. Grant.) It is all the difference if the figures are wrong. Now let me know a little about the alliance. Can you give Mr. Davy the members on the day it was formed?—Yes.

Q. Just tell him the names of the gentlemen?—I decline to tell you that. You only want information.

Q. I have not told you that?—You have told other witnesses.

Q. I am telling you now what I want?—You won't get it.

Q. You can give it?—I cannot.

(Mr. Robb.) Do not say anything you do not know.

(The Inspector.) Is it material to this Inquiry. Here is an Inquiry asked for by the guardians, to be open to the public.

(Mr. Grant.) Just a minute—

(The Inspector.) Even I am not allowed to finish my sentence. The evidence of this witness may be good or bad and right or wrong. It is information of a sort. I believe one of the objects the guardians had in asking for this Inquiry, was that they might be able to put an end to statements they said were false on the part of the municipal alliance.

(Mr. Grant.) On the 27th November, 1905, Mr. Lough wrote to your Board—submitting a copy of correspondence between the Poplar Alliance and the board on the subject of the guardians' expenditure, and their communication was acknowledged on the 28th. I next call your attention to a letter of the 11th December, in which Mr. Gilbert Bartholomew, chairman of the meeting of ratepayers, forwarded copies of resolutions passed at that meeting, and asked for a searching inquiry into the administration of the guardians. Then on the 28th February, there was a letter from the Local Government Board, transmitting for the consideration of the guardians a copy of a communication which they had received from the alliance in reference to the proposed provision of a relief station for the northern part of the union, and requesting to be furnished with the guardians' observations. Then on the 6th March there was a letter from Mr. Lithiby, stating that "attention had been drawn in various quarters to the extent of pauperism in the Poplar Union, and to other matters affecting the administration of the relief of the poor therein. The President has thought it desirable, therefore, to instruct Mr. Davy, C.B., the Board's Chief General Inspector, to inquire and report, as early as possible, with regard to the general industrial and financial conditions of the union, its pauperism and the administration of the guardians and their officers. The President feels no doubt that the guardians and their officers will afford Mr. Davy every assistance in their power in making his investigations." Then on the 8th of March the guardians acknowledge the receipt of that communication and say that their officers will be instructed to afford Mr. Davy every assistance in their power in connection with the proposed investigation. Then on the 19th of March there was a letter from the Local Government Board with reference to a preliminary Inquiry—into matters connected with the union—

(The Inspector.) Or any question affecting their administration.

(Mr. Grant.) That is not in my copy. These letters seem clearly to show that it was the Poplar Municipal Alliance which started this agitation for an Inquiry, and the guardians accepted it.

(The Inspector.) And accepted it as a chance of removing misapprehension. Here we have a chance for removing misapprehension.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, I am asking who are the gentlemen behind the alliance.

(Mr. Robb.) 2,750 of them. You cannot have all the names.

(Mr. Grant.) Have you a list of the members?—I have nothing of the sort.

(The Inspector.) Well, you need not bother—the names of the officers?

(Mr. Grant.) After six months' reckless statements, it is easy to get new subscribers?—Pardon me, Mr. Grant. The result of this Inquiry has brought us a bigger number than we had hoped for.

Q. Up to the present time?—And we shall get more still when we have finished.

(Mr. Grant.) That I differ from you about.

(The Inspector.) Do let us get on with the witness. We are a little behind.

(Mr. Grant.) I am asking about the members. Is Mr. Bartholomew—was he at the meeting?—I do not know. I was not there.

Q. Have you the minutes?—The meeting was a meeting of the inhabitants, called by invitation.

Q. Are the gentlemen who figure on the prospectus the leading members?—Well, they are those who have been elected. They accepted positions on that body.

Q. Come. You have heard my question?—I have.

Q. Just answer it?—I have given you my answer. Will you repeat your question in a way that will admit of a straight answer?

Q. Are the leading members of your association persons whose names appear on the prospectus?—The leading members of the organisation. They are on the executive committee.

Q. Will you answer my question, yes or no?—You know as well as I do that the executive committee control the organisation.

Q. I do not know anything of the kind?—Then you ought to.

Q. But not in political associations?—That is non-political.

Q. Not a ratepayers' association?—It is not a ratepayers' association.

Q. It is not! Where is the prospectus: where is that bundle of documents?

(Mr. Robb.) It is a pity you did not read them.

(Mr. Grant.) I never had an opportunity of seeing them until this afternoon.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Lough has the information. What is the use of you suggesting you have not got it?

(Mr. Grant.) You know perfectly well—

(Mr. Robb.) I know perfectly well that your clients knew all about it months ago.

(Mr. Grant.) I do not.

(Mr. Robb.) Then you ought to.

(Mr. Grant.) I have to pick up my case as it goes along. Here is the list, and I will take the first name, Mr. Gilbert Bartholomew. How much does he subscribe to the alliance?—Nothing.

Q. Mr. Bartlett?—Not a penny.

Q. Mr. Adin Sheffield. What has he subscribed?—£1 1s.

Q. Mr. P. Stuart?—Nothing.

Q. Mr. A. F. Yarrow?—Nothing.

Q. What is the total amount spent by the association last year?—I refuse to tell you.

Q. Something must have been paid for all this work?—And the man who is getting the benefit is the man who has been deceived and seen his money wasted and wrongly expended. This is the man who has benefited and who is going to get the benefit.

Q. The terms of membership, I observe, are that members are to pay on their assessable value?—That is so, because it is the fairest way.

Q. What is Mr. Gilbert Bartholomew's assessable value?—Not a farthing. You do not understand it. I have told you he does not pay a farthing, and he has paid on his assessment, which is nothing.

Q. I am ignorant of this matter. It would help me to know and we would get on much faster?—I am not going to be misrepresented.

Q. Will you tell me if I am wrong in thinking Mr. Gilbert Bartholomew is head of Bryant & May's?—You know he is.

Q. I might be wrong?—You know.

Q. Do Bryant & May's subscribe to the alliance?—Yes, and it is a much maligned firm, just to suit a certain section.

Q. May I ask what their subscription is?—I could not tell off hand.

Q. A considerable sum—may we assume that they pay on their assessment?—You can assume what you like. You want to make a personal attack on Bryant & May's. Attack me. I am quite prepared.

Mr.
Broodbank.
12 July.

(*The Inspector.*) I do not suppose anyone is suggesting that it is wrong to form a ratepayers' association?—Oh, no.

(*Mr. Robb.*) The suggestion is that your clients may squander the rates by employing two counsel, and having full shorthand notes taken every day, and conduct a most elaborate defence; whereas the ratepayers are not to be at liberty to combine to expose anything they think is wrong.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I will just take a word from Mr. Robb's examination of Mr. Broodbank, that the alliance was formed on the 9th May, 1905, and was composed of gentlemen all of whom were opposed to municipal trading?—Read it properly.

Q. That is my note?—You did not write it accurately.

Q. Am I wrong in saying this?—To keep before the electors the necessity for and duty of each and every one taking a personal interest in all local matters, particularly those relating to municipal control.

Q. I have asked you about the President: Mr. Robb is solicitor to the alliance?—He is not the solicitor. Mr. W. H. K. Forbes is honorary solicitor to the alliance.

Q. I gave Mr. Robb credit for knowing that a honorary solicitor is a gentleman who works for nothing. Mr. Forbes may be advising Mr. Robb whilst he is appearing here on behalf of the alliance?—And very ably too.

Q. And Mr. Robb has also been concerned at Tunbridge Wells and many other places?—Mr. Elvy Robb also gave the Brighton Town Council a very severe shaking.

Q. I think he was the gentleman who led an agitation at Tunbridge Wells?—Something, I know. Ask him to speak for himself.

Q. I put it to you that Mr. Robb had conducted a successful agitation against municipal telephones at Tunbridge Wells?

(*Mr. Robb.*) Not alone in Tunbridge Wells, but all over the country. I am responsible for conducting a successful agitation against the ill-conceived system of municipal telephones all over the country.

(*The Inspector.*) I don't know what that has to do with it.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I don't want to know. I don't want to inquire into Mr. Grant's political career. I remember Mr. Corrie Grant appearing 20 years ago on an inquiry into the incorporation of Tunbridge Wells.

(*Mr. Grant.*) And unsuccessfully. My suggestion is how much do the ratepayers of Poplar subscribe towards the expenses of this Inquiry?—Absolutely equally according to the rateable value. Every man according to his scale is paying equally. Everything is pro rata. And all, whether they pay 1s. or £1 are seeking to see public money spent properly.

Q. A most excellent speech?—I do not want to make speeches.

Q. Now answer this. How much of the expenses of this Inquiry has been subscribed by the ratepayers of Poplar?—By the ratepayers—directly or indirectly?

Q. Are there any guarantors?—Not a farthing of any type or description.

Q. You agree with the words of your prospectus that your principal object is—?—To create an interest in local affairs and not to be misled.

Q. No, to keep before the burgesses and the electors the necessity for everyone to take a personal interest in local matters, particularly those relating to municipal control?—Yes, and I flatter myself—

Q. May I suggest if I say as an agitator that you have done your work extremely well?—This is my first experience and I am proud of it.

Q. I am not complaining. Agitation is the life of public affairs in England. Well, Mr. Broodbank, I must

repeat my question. Are there any subscribers to the Poplar Borough Municipal Alliance who are persons who are interested in opposing municipal control?—Absolutely none. Ordinary ratepayers on the rateable list of the borough.

(*The Inspector.*) The whole of them subscribe?—They subscribe on the basis of rating.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Will you take the vice-presidents now. Just look down the list. Tell me the names of the vice-presidents who have subscribed to the funds of the alliance?—You know as well as anyone else that Mr. Gilbert Bartholomew represents Bryant & May's on the alliance, and that Mr. H. H. Bartlett represents Perry & Co.

Q. I have never heard?—Then you should have been properly instructed.

Q. They do not pay directly?—But they pay through the firms.

Q. May I take it then everyone's name who appears on this sheet, except the hon. solicitor, hon. secretary, and hon. treasurer, are all subscribers to the alliance either themselves or through limited companies to which they belong?—No, you are wrong.

Q. Will you tell me how I am wrong?—According to the rateable value they represent.

Q. And other subscribers?—You said large limited companies. You must not think this is a manufacturers' alliance. It is not true. Mr. Forbes, the hon. solicitor, pays his subscription and gives us help. Mr. Durant is not a limited company.

Q. Where did you find him?—He is a member for the north-west ward, Poplar; he is also an executive committee-man.

Q. Does Mr. Durant pay a subscription?—He pays a subscription on the basis of his rateable value.

Q. I am only wanting to know the genuineness of the alliance?—You need not doubt the genuineness, I can tell you.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I cannot gather what the awful suggestion is. Is it a matter of complaint that I have been pursuing my professional advocacy in certain parts of the country with some measure of success, I should like to know.

(*The Inspector.*) I do want to get on.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I am glad for the first time I have asked questions which no one understood but myself. Will you rise from now till to-morrow. Will you sit again on Monday?

(*The Inspector.*) I was hoping you would begin, Mr. Grant. Mr. Robb has finished. This is his last witness. Then there is the man Pyle who wants to answer certain questions. Then you want to cross-examine the relieving officers.

(*Mr. Grant.*) And Mr. Oxley, Dr. Lamont, and Mr. Walton.

(*Mr. Smith.*) And do not forget me.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I have not the pleasure. Are you Mr. Smith?

(*Mr. Smith.*) Yes.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Then there is Miss Grant. She is associated with the Children's Meals Association. She is well known in London and she will give good evidence.

(*The Inspector.*) You will not object to her. Her evidence will be valuable.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I should like to know if Mr. Marsh has written. There are two officers who say they can give information about the stores.

(*The Inspector.*) They can give evidence as to the charges made on the removal of goods. The question is, how it can best be dealt with. We will call them. That will give us enough for Monday.

FOURTEENTH DAY.

Monday, July 16th, 1906.

(*The Inspector.*) I should like to say a word or two. First of all, with regard to the question of the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum. The facts are that Poplar's contribution to the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum has risen from £23,000 to £42,000 in about five years, the numbers chargeable rising from 524 to 601. But the management of the asylum is not directly under the control of the Poplar Guardians, and I think it would be a very unfair thing if this Inquiry extended over the management of that institution, especially as I know there has been a recent change in numbers. As Assistant Secretary to the Local Government Board, I have directed an investigation to be made in reference to the contracts and figures of the asylums district. That is entirely separate from this, and will be kept separate. The Inquiry will very probably lead to further developments, but that is not a matter which concerns the guardians. I want to keep that entirely apart, as they are not responsible for any extravagance, if there has been any extravagance. That is the first point I wanted to mention. My second point is this. This Inquiry is necessarily costing a good deal of money, and the position is rather a topsy-turvy one. Some ratepayers complain of the extravagance, and yet out of the rates these expenses have to come. I mention this because I know that it will be in our minds, and I can safely rely upon everyone concerned helping me to minimise the cost as far as possible by keeping the Inquiry as short as possible, for time is money, and by keeping the Inquiry to points which concern the guardians, we shall keep down the expense. I thought it would be convenient for me to say this, that on looking into my office engagements I see it will be impossible—there are almost insuperable difficulties against my continuing this Inquiry after the end of this month, and, therefore, if the Inquiry should run on to then I should have to adjourn until October. This I should regret, because I have great sympathy with the guardians who are made to bear and who feel very strongly the suspense of the Inquiry. I hope it will not be necessary. But as my engagements—my office engagements—do not permit me to sit, I think it is as well to say this. I shall give as many days as I possibly can between the end of the month and now.

(*Mr. Robb.*) There is one matter, sir, I desire to refer to. I received on Saturday last from Mr. Marsh the return which was asked for in respect of the electric light and power installation at the workhouse. That is a very important return, indeed, because I find that, including repairs and renewals, but exclusive of coal or depreciation, the electric light installation last year cost £3,294 5s. 9d., which included an instalment of £1,033, which I suppose would be termed sinking fund in the ordinary way, but which is not so termed here. It is an instalment towards repayment of loan. Then it is stated here that the cost of fuel is not included in that amount. Anyone who has any knowledge of electrical installation knows that the coal is a most important item. My information is that coal which should properly be debited to the electric light installation is at least £1,000, and probably more. If that is so, it would bring the cost last year to over £4,000. The units generated—

(*Mr. Grant.*) I do not want to interrupt, but this has practically been in evidence.

(*Mr. Robb.*) It is your return.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Excuse me, it is not my return. You have added to my return a figure of your own, which you say is £1,000.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I will take that at once. If the coal is less than a thousand pounds I will accept any figure you give at once.

(*The Inspector.*) What are you driving at, Mr. Robb?

(*Mr. Robb.*) I am going to show the necessity for expert investigation.

(*The Inspector.*) You suggest I should—

(*Mr. Robb.*) Refer it to an electrical engineer.

(*The Inspector.*) One of our own experts?

(*Mr. Robb.*) Yes, because I know something about this.

(*Mr. Grant.*) This return was prepared by the Local Government Board Auditor.

(*Mr. Robb.*) He is not an expert.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I do not say he was.

(*The Inspector.*) Did you check this, Mr. Lough?

(*Mr. Lough.*) No, sir.

(*The Inspector.*) The first thing would be to let Mr. Lough look at it.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I take it Mr. Lough and Mr. Marsh are in touch. I received it from the solicitor to the guardians, and I assume it is correct, naturally. But I understand the guardians themselves—

(*Mr. Grant.*) They came from you, sir. We have not checked it.

(*The Inspector.*) We shall have it checked. I shall consider whether we shall not have a sub-inquiry into this.

(*Mr. Robb.*) What I want to say is this. I know something about electric light stations. I have had the privilege of being chairman of one of the most successful stations in the country, and have some experience of electrical matters. I have never seen until recently—

(*Mr. Grant.*) Is it usual for Mr. Robb to give evidence like this?

(*Mr. Robb.*) There are many towns in the country being lighted at less cost.

(*The Inspector.*) That is not—

(*Mr. Robb.*) I will willingly go into the box.

(*Mr. Grant.*) If I can get Mr. Robb into the box I shall be delighted.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I do not think you would.

(*The Inspector.*) It is a return of large expenditure. If that expenditure is too large for what they bought, Mr. Lansbury will be called to remedy the matter.

(*Mr. Grant.*) May I say in justice to the Local Government Board, we have already, as Mr. Lansbury tells me, asked the Local Government Board to inquire into these figures, and they sent an inspector down to go into them, and he went into them.

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) And decided against Mr. Crooks and me on the whole matter. It is unfair, this statement.

(*Mr. Robb.*) May I send for an electrical engineer?

(*Mr. Grant.*) May I suggest to shorten the whole matter, Mr. Robb. First let us have your expert's return, sir, and then have Mr. Robb's, as an electrical engineer, if he should go into the box, whatever his report.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Certainly.

(*The Inspector.*) I shall see what has happened in the matter. I did not know of this.

(*Mr. Robb.*) There has been no investigation of an expert character.

(*The Inspector.*) That I do not know.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Not by an electrical expert. I am told one of your inspectors sent in figures. What I am urging is an independent electrical expert.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Would the Local Government Board send down an expert?

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) We had Mr. Mott.

(*The Inspector.*) Who is he?

(*Mr. Lansbury.*) A South London electrical engineer. He came on the advice of Sir Benjamin Baker. He is connected with the South London Railway; he is an expert.

(Mr. Robb.) I do not care whether Sir Benjamin Baker or any one else—

(The Inspector.) As Mr. Robb has said so much I am going to take the unusual course of asking Mr. Lansbury to tell us about this.

(Mr. Lansbury.) That is what we did. Some of us were dissatisfied with regard—

(Mr. Grant.) When was this?

(Mr. Lansbury.) Three years ago, I believe. We were dissatisfied with the whole of the electricity undertaking, and I moved that the Local Government Board hold an inquiry into the whole matter. To that an amendment was proposed that we ask Sir Benjamin Baker to send an electrical expert to advise as to whether we had got value for money, and what was the best thing to be done. Sir Benjamin Baker's expert was Mr. Mott, a gentleman who, I believe, was the engineer for the tubes of London. His report really blessed the scheme. He told us to make various additions, to which your Board agreed and said we ought to. Then our own engineer brought an alternative scheme. The Local Government Board on that sent down an engineer to investigate the matter, and on his report our engineer's proposals were adopted as against Mr. Mott's proposals, and for myself, I at any rate covered myself on the advice of these two men, and it is on their advice we have taken all the action.

(Mr. Robb.) Any practical man would light a town of 20,000 people for the money.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Mr. Davy, on that may I point out what Mr. Robb has left out of account. The whole of that coal and the whole arrangements down there are mixed up with the supply of hot and cold water to the whole institution.

(The Inspector.) I find the Board sent down Mr. North and Mr. Hooper. Mr. Hooper is within my own knowledge an expert.

(Mr. Grant.) What is the date?

(The Inspector.) I do not know.

(Mr. Robb.) Anything Mr. Ross Hooper says on electrical matters I shall accept.

(The Inspector.) I shall see Mr. Hooper. We shall postpone further consideration of this matter.

(Mr. Grant.) This may help. Mr. Lough has handed me a letter from your Board, March 10th, 1905: "I am

"directed by the board of guardians of this union to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant, No. 10,444A, stating that the Board's Engineering Inspector, Mr. Hooper, proposes to visit the Poplar Union Workhouse on the 24th instant, with reference to the proposed extension of the engineering plant." If you look at the papers for the 24th March, 1905, you will get it.

(Mr. Robb.) My point is not whether it was wise to extend, I want the comparative cost.

(The Inspector.) I do not know what Mr. Hooper's engagements are. If I sit a day that will suit him you can have him.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes. May we have the quantity of coals and the number of 8 c.p. lamps installed. The return is incomplete without these.

(Mr. Grant.) A Local Government Board return.

(Mr. Robb.) You should know the number of lamps.

(Mr. Grant.) You are under a misapprehension. That is your return. We have copied it and handed it to Mr. Robb.

(Mr. Robb.) It is extracted by the auditor from your figures.

(Mr. Grant.) We have not had anything to do with it.

(The Inspector.) We will see about the whole question. What have we got next. Was not a contractor to be called?

(Mr. Good.) On the last occasion I spoke to you—

(Mr. Grant.) Miss Grant is here—one of the witnesses on behalf of the Board. She is going away.

(The Inspector.) Shall we take her out of order?

(Mr. Grant.) If you will.

(The Inspector.) Will she be long?

(Mr. Grant.) Not very long.

(The Inspector.) What have you got, Mr. Good?

(Mr. Good.) We want to clear one or two allegations against a contractor.

(The Inspector.) Which shall we do first?

(Mr. Grant.) I give way. Miss Grant says she can come next week. I do not want to begin my case yet.

(The Inspector.) Use your discretion.

(Mr. Good.) I shall call Mr. Pyle.

Mr. H. PYLE; recalled, and further examined.

Mr. Pyle,
16 July.

(The Inspector.) Have you been sworn?—On Monday last.

(Mr. Good.) Mr. Pyle, how many years have you been in Poplar?—Fifteen years.

Q. During the 15 years you have been there have you had any complaint made against you as regarding unfair dealing?—Not to my knowledge.

Q. Not to your knowledge. We may take it you have had no complaint?—Yes.

Q. Until this inquiry?—That is so.

Q. The first item I am going to touch—I see from the notes that there was a bath alleged to be put in by you at a cost of £150. Is that correct or incorrect?

(Mr. Robb.) Where is the allegation that it was put in by Mr. Pyle?

(Mr. Good.) Yes. I read the notice in one of the evening papers that there was a bath at the Master's house costing £150.

(The Inspector.) I think you will find that it was £120.

(Mr. Good.) I believe it was £120 at one time and it went up to £150. It is printed in the shorthand notes.

(Mr. Robb.) Did you have a bath?

(The Inspector.) It is not a question whether this bath was put in at a cost of £120. That is part of the guardians' case.

(Mr. Good.) The allegation is that he took unfair advantage of his contract. It matters to Mr. Pyle. He is subpoenaed here, and there are no end of suggestions made by Mr. Robb, and I am going to challenge those allegations.

(The Inspector.) What had it to do with the bath?

(Mr. Good.) The bath was put in at cost price. (To witness.) What price did you charge for that bath?

(Mr. Grant.) Read from the shorthand notes.

(Mr. Good.) Very well. "Cross-examination. Did you have a bath fitted up at the workhouse?" As a matter of fact—

(Mr. Robb.) I object. I find no reference here to Mr. Pyle. The bath may have been supplied by anyone.

(The Inspector.) It has nothing to do with Mr. Pyle.

(Mr. Good.) It has. My client is being shot at here and no explanation is given.

(The Inspector.) He is not shot at.

(Mr. Good.) I must ask the question. Did you supply a bath to the master?—Yes.

Q. Well, that must be the bath. How much did you charge for that bath?

(Mr. Robb.) This does not arise on my cross examination.

(Mr. Good.) Mr. Robb is making a technical objection.

(The Inspector.) That is not a technical objection. Did you hear what I said about the expense of this inquiry? Where is anything alleged against Mr. Pyle, even if Mr. Pyle's name was mentioned? It was not mentioned.

(Mr. Good.) Reading these notes it is charged that he improperly—

(Mr. Robb.) There is no suggestion.

(Mr. Good.) If Mr. Robb will say he did not supply the bath, very well.

(The Inspector.) Just attend to this. It does not matter to the tradesman whether the bath cost £100 or £200 provided it is honest value.

(*Mr. Grant.*) May I point out, if it does not affect Mr. Good it affects me, Mr. Pyle is the contractor for ironmongery.

(*Mr. Robb.*) You can ask it later on.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Let us have done with it now.

(*Mr. Robb.*) If Mr. Good is entitled to ask questions arising out of my cross-examination and if he roams over the notes at will we shall never be finished.

(*Mr. Good.*) As a matter of fact, Mr. Pyle, the first item which was attacked by Mr. Robb is asbestos. I see the charge is made that your accepted tender for 1905-6 was 2s. 6d. Are you aware that there was another tender in this matter by Messrs. Stephens?—No, I was not aware.

Q. You may take it there was, and the price was 2s. 6d. the same as yours. I am going to suggest taking one tender is not a sufficient test. Come to asbestos washers, Item 3. I see you charge 5s. Have you got an invoice here showing the actual cost of these particular washers?—I have not an invoice.

(*The Inspector.*) You are aware, Mr. Good, of course, of the risk about asking for invoices?

(*Mr. Good.*) I am going to be absolutely open.

(*The Inspector.*) The charge you have to meet is that he must have got information.

(*Mr. Good.*) There are other charges made against my client, and in order to clear him I have to meet them. I shall not be very long. I shall go through them shortly. I want to take one or two items. (*To witness.*) Let us go to coal scuttles. You charge 30s. Have you got the invoice of that. Read the price you actually paid?—33s. a dozen.

Q. You paid 33s. a dozen?

(*Mr. Robb.*) What is the effect of putting in wholesale invoices unless we know the discount?

(*Mr. Good.*) You may have a look at the invoice.

(*The Inspector.*) I am bound to say there has been a misunderstanding. The point is not that 30s. a dozen has been charged, but that in the next year it is 20s.

(*Mr. Good.*) I am going to say the rejected tender used against me is no less than 34s. As a matter of fact, Mr. Pyle, what is the discount on 30s. The 33s. you mentioned was less discount?—It is 36s., less discount, bringing it to 33s. nett.

Q. As a matter of fact, you lost there?—That is so.

Q. You actually lost. It is being put to you that you are gaining. Now we get Item 30?—I might just mention the rejected tender was 14s. on that occasion, and it is my idea I could prove to you that they could not be supplied for 14s. Mr. Robb has twitted me with Pryke & Palmer's tender, whereas I have the invoice here to show they have cost me 33s. It necessarily follows there is no firm could supply them at Pryke & Palmer's price.

Q. Mr. Pyle, as a matter of fact, you know that Pryke & Palmer's wanted this contract?—They tendered for several years.

Q. And their object would be the same as yours, to keep the price as low as possible in some cases, and make a profit in others?—Yes.

(*The Inspector.*) I suppose the prices of coal scuttles vary?—No.

Q. Then why in the next year do you tender at 20s.?—Because I had a lot in stock.

(*Mr. Good.*) That is the explanation, and a very good explanation. As a matter of fact, let me take you to Item 22. Six dozen estimated; 18 dozen supplied. Your price there is the same—English table forks—your price is the same as Pryke & Palmer's—2s.?—Yes.

Q. I think it would follow from that if you supplied these articles at the same price as Pryke & Palmer's, you had no information at all?—No, not the slightest.

Q. Let me take you to 32. Tell me whether that was a losing or a gaining item?—Which is that?

Q. The 2s. fork?—There was not much in it.

Q. Let me take you to 32. That is the case Mr. Robb was asking for and I am going to use it strongly. Six dozen the estimated quantity; you supplied no less than 18 dozen—three times the estimated quantity. Inmates' table knives—18 dozen, that is three times the estimated quantity—supplied at 3s., whereas Pryke & Palmer's was no less than 6s. Did you lose or gain on that?—I lost.

Q. Lost considerably?—Yes.

(*The Inspector.*) I must ask you why in the world did you tender next year at 1s.?—I think because—I stated at my examination—that I had a considerable number in stock.

(*Mr. Good.*) If you hadn't this contract on this occasion you would have lost money considerably?—They would have been useless.

Q. Thrown on your hands?—Decidedly.

Q. Now, 35. Your charge—carving knives for inmates—I see you charge 10s. in 1905 and 40s. in 1906. Was the sample changed at all in these years?—Yes.

Q. Changed, I believe, entirely?—Changed entirely.

Q. That accounts for your increase in price. Would you tell me what the difference was?—I believe that the previous sample was a table knife of an inferior quality of steel. The carving knife of that inferior quality of steel was not entirely satisfactory, and for 1906-7 the board wanted something better, and in that case I had to alter my price accordingly.

Q. Let me take the rejected tender price—Pryke & Palmer. Was that only at 5s.?—Absolutely no.

Q. It was impossible?—Impossible.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Would you mind ascertaining who told him that the board wanted something better?—I have the notes.

(*Mr. Good.*) How did you get that information. Were they samples?—I saw the samples.

Q. That accounts for the difference. That answers Mr. Robb. Item 39, ladles, your price is 10s. in 1905-6. I find that Stephens', the other rejected tender, was 22s., and I find Pryke & Palmer's do them at 6s.?—Decidedly not.

Q. You have an invoice if necessary, the price you actually quote?—I have an invoice here.

Q. What is the price you paid for it—the nett price I want?—17s. 9d. a dozen.

Q. Thank you. I am not going right through, but I want to show one or two of these cases Mr. Robb has touched upon and explain them. Now, as a matter of fact, sir, I can go through the whole lot and answer every one, and, sir, if I am challenged, I will do so with your permission.

(*The Inspector.*) Ask him about Item No. 60.

(*Mr. Good.*) 60, sir, I was coming to 60, sir. But I am taking just one item before. I take 52, Mr. Pyle. The scissors, 9s. your price, I find the other rejected tender, Stephens', was 16s. 6d. That is considerably in advance of yours, and the rejected tender, Pryke & Palmer, was 6s. As a matter of fact, can you explain to me why in 1905 there was 9s. charged by you and in 1906-7 4s. 6d. was the charge. Was the sample the same?—Well, that is rather an ambiguous term—scissors. There are various sizes and I have to take one with the other. I consider 9s. was a fair charge, and I contend my price in 1907 ought to have been 9s. also. I believe all the scissors I supplied were worth quite 9d. each.

Q. Let me take 60.

(*The Inspector.*) Why did you put them in at 4s. 6d. Had you a stock in hand then?—I have a considerable stock.

Q. What is the reason in this particular case, why you drop the price of scissors?—I can please myself in regard to prices.

(*Mr. Good.*) As a matter of fact, in 1905-6 it is the ratepayers who get the benefit?

(*Mr. Robb.*) I must point out—

(*Mr. Good.*) I wish you would let me go on.

(*Mr. Robb.*) This statement involves serious charges against the guardians and the officials.

(*The Inspector.*) I cannot understand. Mr. Good is not appearing for the guardians, and it is within my knowledge that the guardians, or some of them, are in favour of going into the whole system.

(*Mr. Robb.*) The gravamen of the charge is that the guardians, although they altered some tenders, did not alter the specification of the tender, and it is alleged that they took a large quantity one year and a small quantity another.

(*The Inspector.*) Mr. Good is not appearing for the guardians.

Mr. Pyle.

16 July.

Mr. Pyle,
16 July.

(Mr. Good.) I am merely appearing for the contractor. The guardians are well protected by Mr. Grant.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Grant will make his own case later on.

(Mr. Good.) Take this Item No. 60—sad irons. Have you got it?—Yes.

Q. 112 lbs. the estimated quantity, although only 8 lbs. supplied. I really do not know what sad irons are?

(The Inspector.) Iron has gone up 10 per cent.

(Mr. Good.) Only 8 lbs. supplied, you know that?—Yes.

Q. Your price was 4d. I find another rejected tender, Messrs. Stephens', was 3d., whereas Pryke & Palmer's was 1½d. Is that a true price or not, Pryke & Palmer's?—They should be about 2d. a lb., I believe they cost them.

Q. What would your profit be on the 8 lbs.?—1s. 4d.

Q. 1s. 4d. Very well, that deals with that. You might get on. Let us take you to blind furniture, 72. Nine dozen the estimated quantity in 1905-6. Your tender is 10s., Stephens' rejected tender was 6s., whereas the rejected tender of Pryke & Palmer was 1s. 6d. Could they supply them at 1s. 6d.?—Decidedly not.

Q. You have the invoice showing the profits you made on that transaction?—Yes.

Q. What was it?

(The Inspector.) There could be no profit because none were bought.

(Mr. Good.) There were some bought in years gone by.

(The Inspector.) We are only talking of this year.

(Mr. Good.) Previous years indicate the price? What do they cost?—12s. a dozen nett.

(The Inspector.) Why in the world do you in the next year offer to supply them for 6s.?—I had several in stock, sir.

(Mr. Good.) As a matter of fact, if Pryke & Palmer supplied them at 1s. 6d., they would have made a very considerable loss?—10s. on each dozen.

Q. That is the rejected tender. Let me get to 103. Suffolk latches. Four dozen estimated; three dozen supplied, and I see you charge 12s. 6d., whereas Pryke & Palmer's charged 3s. Could Pryke & Palmer's have made a profit on that transaction?—They cannot supply them.

Q. You have an invoice, I think. Perhaps you will tell me what it costs you?—They cost me 11s. a dozen, plus the carriage.

Q. So your profit was extremely small?—Yes.

Q. It is suggested you made a tremendous profit out of that transaction. Was it 11s. nett?—11s. plus the carriage. 11s. nett.

Q. Locks, 104. Two dozen the estimated quantity; one dozen supplied. Your charge is 20s., whereas Pryke & Palmer's was 8s. Could Pryke & Palmer's have supplied at 8s.?—Decidedly not.

Q. Tell the learned Inspector what they actually cost you?—They cost me from the works 15s. a dozen.

Q. 15s. a dozen, whereas Pryke & Palmer's was 8s.

(Mr. Robb.) They are only galvanised padlocks?—They are galvanised, two lever padlocks.

(The Inspector.) Pryke & Palmer may have had a lot in stock too.

(Mr. Good.) Very likely they had, and that is why it is kept low. It is nothing more or less.

(The Inspector.) Take care we do not throw imputations on Pryke & Palmer.

(Mr. Good.) I am not doing so. What he throws against me, he puts in Pryke & Palmer's and the others all the way through against me. I think it is an unfair test—absolutely unfair.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Good, I compared the two years, not one.

(Mr. Good.) I suggest that Pryke & Palmer's did not mind in the first year, because they could not ascertain the quantities. It is an absolutely unfair test.

(The Inspector.) What about the guardians?

(Mr. Good.) The guardians? I don't represent the guardians. They are ably protected by Mr. Grant. 121 pie-dishes, enamelled. I see three dozen the estimated

quantity; one dozen supplied. 20s. your price. I see Stephens' was 28s., 8s. in advance. Pryke & Palmer's was 6s. Could they have supplied them at 6s.?—No.

Q. You might go to copper pipe?

(Mr. Robb.) I want to clear up a point. In your examination you said the price of pie-dishes depended upon the size?—Yes.

Q. Who decided what size of pie-dishes should be ordered?—The board would decide that.

Q. The guardians?—They might order any size; I should have to supply it.

Q. It was a tender which varied in size very much?—Yes.

Q. What would be the cost of the biggest pie-dish?—The biggest cost £1 4s.

Q. And the smallest?—That would, I suppose, cost from 6s. to £1 4s.

(The Inspector.) That is a risky tender?—Take one with the other.

(Mr. Robb.) If you had the bad luck to have only big pie-dishes ordered?—I should have to supply them.

Q. Who has the ordering of these things?—They are ordered according to their requirements.

Q. The requirements of the officers?—According to the requirements of the kitchen.

Q. The guardians would not know themselves how many pie-dishes would be required?—I do not know whether they would know.

Q. Advised by the master or the matron?—Ordered according to what they wanted.

Q. From a specification from the officers?—I suppose so.

Q. In consequence the officers might put you to a considerable loss if they ordered big things?—Yes.

Q. Have you any articles of these various sizes?—One or two.

(Mr. Robb.) That is all I want to ask about pie-dishes.

(Mr. Grant.) It would clear up the thing if we knew what the procedure was.

(Mr. Lansbury.) There is a requisition to each house committee—a printed requisition.

(The Inspector.) It goes before the house committee?

(Mr. Lansbury.) And is passed by them; but with regard to the engineering department that requisition would come from the engineer through the master, and two people would estimate.

(The Inspector.) That is one of the reasons why some of the guardians were averse to the system.

(Mr. Lansbury.) It is an enormous difficulty in controlling the officers.

(The Inspector.) Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) You will find we made a definite representation to the Local Government Board, pointing out how vicious the contract system was, and proposing the establishment of a central system.

(The Inspector.) You see I cannot go into that now.

(Mr. Good.) 112, Mr. Pyle, 56 lbs. estimated; 35 supplied. Originally we had the figures 49 supplied. Your price, 1s. 6d.; Pryke and Palmer's, 4d. As a matter of fact, looking at the market price of copper, could they be supplied at that price?—Decidedly not.

Q. Or anything near it?—No.

Q. Can you give about the price?—The price, as far as I can ascertain, is about 1s. 0½d.

Q. So Pryke and Palmer's, if they had the contract, would lose considerably?—Yes.

Q. And being in the trade you are in the know?—The price of these things varies with the price of copper.

(The Inspector.) Copper piping?

(Mr. Lansbury.) That is a requisition.

(Mr. Good.) Let me take you to copper piping—133, 112 lbs. estimated; 351 purchased. Your price 2s.?—Yes.

Q. I see Stephens' tender was 2s. 3d., and the rejected tender of Pryke & Palmer 1s. 2d. Could Pryke & Palmer supply that at 1s. 2d.?—Decidedly not.

Q. I can go into a considerable number of others showing that Pryke & Palmer's tender is not a test tender, if I

may say so, and if one compared their tenders you would find my client is considerably lower. I am not taking these items by item, or I should take up the greater portion of the day.

(*The Inspector.*) The point of it all is that between the two years 1905-6, the rejected tender of Pryke & Palmer shows very little variation in the prices of articles. The majority of them are the same price as before. In the accepted tender the variation is quite considerable.

(*Mr. Good.*) I cannot quite agree, for this reason. If I call your attention to 93, there cannot be much variation in that. I find in 1905 Pryke & Palmer's price was 19s. 6d., and it drops to 17s. 6d. the next year. The next item to this is more forceful, I think. The price is 19s.; yet in 1906 it jumps to £1 6s. It is decidedly unfair. (*To witness.*) Mr. Pyle, to conclude, there have been charges made against you of obtaining secret information. Did you at any time obtain any information secretly?—Never.

Q. You have been charged with relations with Madeley which are not justified by business relations. Is that correct or incorrect?—Incorrect, most decidedly.

Q. You have been charged with receiving refreshments from Madeley. How many times have you received refreshments from Madeley during the whole course you knew him?—As far as I can remember, about a dozen times.

Q. How many years would that cover?—I believe I have been a contractor for the Poplar Board ten years.

Q. That would be once a year?—Yes.

Q. Very well. Now, then, you are also being charged with business relations with officers and guardians improper to a contractor. Is that correct or incorrect?—Incorrect.

Q. Let me take you to that dramatic incident that Mr. Robb put in—the brass tablet. As a matter of fact, regarding that patent, when was it taken out?—About ten years ago.

Q. When did it lapse. Has it lapsed?—It has lapsed.

Q. When did it lapse?—About five or six years ago.

Q. So we are going into ancient history. As a matter of fact, the article there was provided by the Local Government Board?—I believe so.

Q. Will you tell me what your profit was on that transaction?—A few pounds. I think, as a matter of fact, it came to 2s.

Q. As regards bribery, have you ever by goods or money attempted to influence any officers or guardians?—No. Mr. Greaves, the electrical engineer, who was put in the box the other day, I was astonished at Mr. Robb dealing with him. There were charges against me when I was not here.

(*The Inspector.*) That was the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum. It got in by mistake.

(*Mr. Good.*) I think you bought Mr. Greaves' business some time ago?—Yes.

Q. How much did you give him for that very substantial business?—I believe about £10.

Q. That is the business. No wonder the guardians—of course.

(*The Inspector.*) Do you want to ask any questions, Mr. Grant?

(*Mr. Grant.*) Mr. Robb will go on first.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I do not think there is much.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Just one question I have. May I go last?

(*The Inspector.*) Yes. This is rather a pertinent question. 139 in the 1905 tender. Estimated quantity £50 and you sell £279 worth to the guardians at a discount of 5 per cent.?—Yes.

Q. The next year—the proper discount being about 50?—Yes.

Q. Somewhere about that. The next year your 5 per cent. discount rises to 77½ per cent. Now, can you give any explanation of that extraordinary difference?—No, sir.

Q. And you would think the guardians were playing the game if they asked you to supply £300 worth more of brass work at 77½?—I should have to supply it.

Q. Would you think it fair?—I could not say.

Q. The guardians may say such an opportunity will not occur again, and proceed to lay in a store of brass work. Where would you be?—I should have to supply it.

Q. You take that as a fair business risk?—Yes.

(*Mr. Good.*) How much have you made out, during the year, of this contract?—That would be rather a difficult thing to say.

Q. Give me about how much you made?

(*Mr. Robb.*) I cannot—

(*Mr. Good.*) Yes, we can. I want to show the tremendous profit which it has been suggested you made, and which I have been endeavouring to meet.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I think it is fair to ask, after what you have already told us, what is your turnover per annum roughly?—Roughly speaking, about £8,000 a year.

Q. What is your net profit on the whole business?—I should say according to what I have been able to do, about £500—£400 or £500.

Q. That is 5 per cent. on your turnover?—Yes, that is the net profit, after deducting for rent, working, &c.

Q. Yes, of course. What are your total receipts on an average from the Poplar Guardians?—That I could not say from memory. I believe about—it varies—sometimes £1,000 a year. Sometimes less; sometimes a little more.

Q. Only one question about this bath. Did you fix the bath supplied to Mr. Madeley?—No, Sir.

Q. Did you supply the bath?—I supplied the bath, yes.

Q. Would you describe that as a very luxurious bath?—No, it was nothing out of the ordinary.

Q. What did it cost?—It was supplied by me to the Poplar Board of Guardians on the 21st June, 1898, and cost £29 2s. 4d.

Q. Is that what you charged the guardians?—That is what I charged the guardians.

Q. £30 13s., less 5 per cent. What did it actually cost you?—I believe, I made about 20 per cent. profit out of it. I could not say from memory.

(*Mr. Robb.*) One question on that. Of course, that was the cost of the bath without fittings or adapting the room or anything of that kind?—That was so.

Q. Have you supplied a bath of that character, costing £30, to anyone else in Poplar?—Not to my recollection.

Q. What can you buy a good ordinary bath, without these additions, for—a bath put in an ordinary workman's house or an ordinary villa—£3 or £4?—I should not think so. It would be ruined every year.

Q. I put it to you, you can have a good ordinary bath for £4?—I could not supply one at that.

Q. What is the lowest you can supply one at?—About £8.

Q. You can supply a good bath that would serve for ordinary purposes for £8. You can supply that good and hooded bath to serve for ordinary purposes?—It would not be a hooded bath.

Q. You can supply an ordinary bath without the hood?—Yes.

Q. But this bath had a hood, taps by which you turned on a spray, or douche, or needle bath?—I do not understand you. What is a needle bath?

Q. Well, it is a kind of spray. Had it these taps?—It had taps at each side.

Q. For douches and spray, and so forth?—Yes.

Q. Do you suggest that that was a necessary thing, when you can supply a good bath for £8?—Necessary?

Q. Has anyone else in Poplar had such a bath?—I could not say.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Tell me the kind of house into which this bath would be put?—It was a very nice house, sir.

Q. And, considering the house, the bath was in keeping with the surroundings and the house. Would that bath be put into an £80 house?—No.

Q. Or a £100 house?—No.

Q. What figure would you put it at?—About a £150 house.

Q. You know Mr. Madeley had a salary, his house, his rations, his coal, his water, his gas, and £200 a year?—No, I was not aware of that.

(*Mr. Robb.*) And various allowances.

Mr. Pyle.
16 July.

Mr. Pyle.

16 July.

(Mr. Grant.) I put this to you, Mr. Pyle. Was that at all an improper bath to put into the house of a man who had £200 a year pocket money besides that house and allowances?—No, I do not think so.

(The Inspector.) What is the next witness?

(Mr. Good.) I take it Mr. Pyle will now be released from his subpoena?

(The Inspector.) Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) One fact about Mr. Pyle I should like on the shorthand notes, if you will allow me. He has tendered 16 times to the guardians, and 14 times he has been the lowest.

(Mr. Robb.) On the face of it he has been lowest, but not in reality.

(Mr. Grant.) We will not talk about the face of things.

(The Inspector.) The system of tendering is most—

(Mr. Grant.) The whole board of guardians agree that the system is vicious.

(Mr. Robb.) It affects boards of guardians unless they take the pains to go into it.

(Mr. Grant.) Even if they go into every item they do not know. We want the facts of Mr. Pyle's tendering put on the notes.

(The Inspector.) I take it from you, and say that Mr. Pyle on 14 occasions out of 16 was the lowest.

(Mr. Robb.) *Ex parte*, was the lowest.

(The Inspector.) On the course followed.

(Mr. Grant.) On the estimated quantity, the figures Mr. Oxley has taken.

(Mr. Robb.) That is a very dangerous thing. Obviously it is not correct.

(Mr. Grant.) You can make any criticism you like.

(The Inspector.) It is a suggestion. It shows an abnormal skill in tendering.

(Mr. Robb.) It shows some inside information in tendering. It is not merely a vicious system in tendering; no one would dare to tender in that way unless he had a friend at court. I am told there may be something for Mr. Walton to clear up.

(The Inspector.) Are the other witnesses here?

(Mr. Walton.) They are here now.

(The Inspector.) Then fetch them up; let us have Miss Usher.

Miss Usher, Assistant Matron; sworn and examined.

Miss Usher.

16 July.

(Mr. Robb.) What is your Christian name?—Elizabeth Usher.

Q. And are you assistant matron at the workhouse?—Yes, sir.

Q. How long have you occupied that position?—Eleven years.

Q. Are you the assistant under Mrs. Madeley, the late matron?—Yes, sir.

Q. Now Mr. Walton, in the course of his evidence, told us that the matron kept her own stores, and her own store book?—Sometimes, sir.

Q. And he suggested that you could give us some information. Now, has everything connected with the matron's stores been perfectly regular and satisfactory?—Not always, sir.

Q. In what respects has it been unsatisfactory?—She very rarely attended the stores.

Q. What was the procedure adopted when goods were taken out of the store?—She did that, sir, when I was not there.

Q. Did that when you were not there?—I did not see anything come out of the stores.

Q. Was that so on every occasion?—Very nearly.

Q. Do you suggest that that was intentional?—Well, sir, I do not know, I am sure. I would be in the dining-hall serving the dinners, and she would come up sometimes of an evening.

Q. Do you suggest she would always get things from the store when you were absent?—Very nearly always.

Q. I ask whether, in your opinion, that was by design or accident?—Not accidentally.

Q. Did you complain about stores being missing on any occasion?—Several times.

Q. What did you find happen?—Do you mean what was missing?

Q. Yes?—Unbleached calico sheets and pillow cases and vallancing, and several other things.

Q. When was that?—Well, the sheets are missing since the resignation.

Q. Since the resignation; before Mr. and Mrs. Madeley left the house, was that?—Before Mrs. Madeley left the house.

Q. But after she resigned?—Yes.

Q. When were the other things missing?—Well, I have missed them since.

Q. Now these things that were missing, had they been booked up in the store book?—Not by me.

Q. By anyone?—I do not think so.

Q. Now, was the matron in the habit of making an entry in the store book when she took things out of the store?—Not always.

Q. What would she do then?—She would simply take them out and not book them.

Q. She would take the goods out of the store, and make no entry in the store book?—Not always.

Q. Have you actually found instances of that character?—Yes, sir.

Q. You have; will you tell the Inspector any particular occasion?—It was years ago. This last three years—I spoke to Mr. Walton—and the things have been booked better since.

Q. What did he say?—He never answered me.

Q. Mr. Walton did not answer. What did you say to him?—I told him we were taking stock. I said there were several things not right, and I said could it be right if things are taken and not booked?

(The Inspector.) Is one of the witnesses in the room?

(Mr. Robb.) I really do not know.

(Miss Evans at this point retired from the room.)

(Mr. Robb.) And you say Mr. Walton made no answer to that complaint?—No, sir.

Q. Did you miss anything about two months ago?—I missed sheets.

Q. How many sheets?—Eleven sheets.

Q. When was that?—I could not tell you the date.

Q. Did you look at the store book?—Yes.

Q. Had they been booked out to anyone?—I have not issued a sheet this year—officers' sheets I mean; I have not booked out sheets this year.

Q. Do you keep the store book?—Sometimes; sometimes the matron—not often.

Q. Did you look into it to see if anyone else had issued 11 officers' sheets?—Yes, sir; I did, and I could not find them.

Q. Could not find an entry?—No, sir.

Q. Did you look when you missed the articles?—No, sir; not then.

Q. When did you look?—Not till after this Inquiry was—

Q. Has any entry been made since you looked?—I do not think so.

Q. What became of those 11 unbleached officers' sheets?—I could not tell you what became of them, but Mrs. Monk was seen with some in her arms going along the corridor.

Q. Who was Mrs. Monk?—The matron's servant.

Q. Who was she seen by?—By the midwife.

Q. What is her name?—Nurse Renahan.

Q. Perhaps she had better be sent for. And Nurse Renahan made a statement to you that she had seen Mrs. Monk in the corridor with articles of the description that were missing?—Yes, sir.

Q. And you searched the book, and could find no entry of their having been booked out of the stores in the ordinary way?—No.

Q. Now, after that was some unbleached calico issued to the dressmaker?—Yes, sir.

Q. What was that for?—Sheets—to make sheets.

Q. That was properly issued, was it not?—Yes, sir.

Q. And entered in the book?—Yes.

Q. How many sheets did she make?—16, and 44 pillow cases.

Q. Were they brought back to the store?—Yes, sir.

Q. When were they brought back to the store?—About a week after issuing, I should think. I am not quite sure.

Q. About how long would that be?—Since the resignation.

Q. Shortly after they were brought back into store did you miss any of them?—Yes, sir.

Q. How many?—Six.

Q. Did you again look at the book?—Yes, sir.

Q. Did you ascertain in any way what had become of them?—No, sir.

Q. Did anyone make any statement to you as to those sheets?—No, sir.

Q. Now, how many persons had authority to issue goods out of the matron's store?—Only the matron and myself, and, when I am off duty, Miss Evins.

Q. We will have her. Now then, did you formerly keep the book?—Yes, sir, the last five years.

Q. The last five years you kept the book?—Yes, sir, and if I have issued anything I have entered it in the book.

Q. In the store book?—No, my own book, given to me by Mr. Madeley.

Q. You have a private book?—Well, it is a public book; it belongs to the institution.

Q. Have you got it here?—No, sir, it is in the stores.

Q. Let me understand: Why was a book issued to you—for your own private use—if there was a general store book kept?—It is the material book; when the material is issued it is put in the matron's material book, and she was in bed so much at one time that the master brought me the book.

Q. She was engaged?—No, sir; in bed so much. The proper material book they would not let me have.

Q. Why not?—I do not know why.

Q. Was it Mr. Madeley who brought you this book?—Yes.

Q. Brought you the special book?—Yes.

Q. To keep yourself?—Yes.

Q. Who had been keeping the proper material book up to that time?—The matron, who used to copy out of my book, or Miss Evins's book.

Q. Do not let us have any confusion about this. A private book had been issued to you. There had been a material book which it was the matron's duty to keep?—Yes, sir.

Q. And you were not allowed to have that book?—The first part of the time; I had it afterwards.

Q. Why was it taken away from you?—I do not know why.

Q. Had it been properly kept up?—By me, yes.

Q. By the matron?—No. She used to send for the book and my book, and copy from my book to hers.

Q. Did she make proper entries of her own transactions?—That I could not say, sir.

Q. Is it a fact that you used to help to keep the matron's book?—Yes, sir, I have always done that.

Q. The general material book?—Yes.

Q. And you were stopped in that five years ago?—Yes.

Q. And you were not allowed to keep this general material book, but given a little private book for your own use?—Yes.

Q. Which you still have. Has anyone been for the book recently?—The matron sent for it, and had it in her house.

Q. Mrs. Madeley? Mrs. Madeley sent for this private book. When?

(Mr. Grant.) It is not a private book at all.

(Mr. Robb.) Please do not interrupt.

(Mr. Grant.) I shall interrupt you when you are wrong.

(Mr. Robb.) That is the book issued to you. The matron sent for it?—Yes, sir, the Saturday before, or rather it was not sent to me; I think the matron went down herself and took all the books to her house.

Q. When?—On the Saturday before Whitsun.

Q. Has that book been returned?—Oh, yes, sir.

Q. Did she take the book of any other officer?—Yes, sir, Miss Evins.

Q. Has she returned that book?—No, sir.

Q. Did you hear any conversation between the matron and Miss Evins about that book?—No, sir. It happened in her house.

Q. Well, that Miss Evins will tell us about. Was the matron frequently absent from duty?—Yes, sir.

Q. For long periods?—Six or seven weeks at a time.

Q. Did that happen more than once?—Oh, yes, sir.

Q. How often should you say that happened?—Well, two or three times a year she would be off duty.

Q. Six or seven weeks at a time?—Yes, sir.

Q. When she was on duty how often did she put in an appearance?—Very rarely in the stores.

(The Inspector.) She was ill, was she not?—She was supposed to be ill, yes, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) And was it then that these irregularities in the store books commenced?—Yes, sir.

Q. At that time?—About that time.

Q. Have you missed any articles beyond those you have told us about?—No, sir.

(Mr. Grant.) Miss Usher, you said the matron was away, supposed to be ill?—Yes, sir.

Q. Do you suggest she was not ill?—Well, I used to think she was not, always.

Q. Do you know that the matron underwent a very serious operation involving the removal of a kidney?—Oh, yes, sir. I was present all that time.

Q. Do you know that that cost Mr. Madeley something like £200?—So he said, sir.

Q. So he said to you: Do you think it is quite fair, knowing that, to say that Mrs. Madeley was away, "supposed to be ill"?—She has been away since then, and before that.

Q. You are not answering my question. You were asked by Mr. Davy whether the matron was not away ill, and you said she was supposed to be ill. Knowing she had undergone that serious operation, involving a very serious illness, do you think it was fair to use the words "supposed to be ill"?—Because she recovered from that operation.

Q. You are not doing yourself justice. I am asking you whether you think it was fair to use the words, "supposed to be ill," when you knew that Mrs. Madeley had had that serious illness?—I do think so.

Q. You thought it was fair?—Yes, sir.

Q. Just to take you through your evidence, you have never had any other master and matron—never served under any other master and matron of a workhouse till Mr. and Mrs. Madeley?—Not a workhouse. have been at the sick asylum.

Q. Not a workhouse?—Not a workhouse.

Q. You say you several times complained of stores being missing. When did you first complain?—I have no dates, sir. I have complained often.

Q. I want years, Miss Usher. When did you first complain of stores being missing?—Nearly always at stock-taking time.

Q. I want it a little more definite than that. Have you complained one year ago or ten years ago?—Ten years ago.

Q. Eleven years. Would you say eleven?—No, sir.

Q. From the time you had been a year at the workhouse you complained of stores being missing?—Yes.

Miss Usher

16 July.

Miss Usher.

16 July.

Q. Who did you complain to?—Mr. Walton.

Q. But Mr. Walton was not your superior officer?—He took the stock, sir—

Q. Will you answer my question?—And I complained of things not being right.

Q. Was Mr. Walton your superior officer or Mr. Madeley?—He was the assistant master.

Q. I know that. Tell me, was Mr. Walton the proper person to complain to of stores being missing, or Mr. Madeley?—Well, Mr. Madeley, I suppose.

Q. You found stores missing ten years ago. Did you complain to Mr. Madeley?—No, sir.

Q. Did you find stores missing again nine years ago?—Yes, sir.

Q. Who did you complain to?—Mr. Walton.

Q. You did not complain to Mr. Madeley?—No.

Q. Did you complain 10 years ago to anybody else?—No.

Q. Or 9 years ago to anybody else?—No.

Q. Did you find it going on every year from 10 years ago?—Nearly always.

Q. Besides Mr. Walton, to whom have you complained about it?—Only Mr. Walton.

Q. To nobody else?—No.

Q. The whole of the 10 years?—No.

Q. Were the things that were missing serious?—Well, things were not booked; they were taken from stores and not booked—not always.

Q. Miss Usher, things being taken from stores and not booked is one thing—things missing from the store is another?

(Mr. Robb.) Oh, no, it is not.

(Mr. Grant.) I remain of my own opinion. You have said, Miss Usher, that from 10 years ago stores have been missing on stocktaking?—Yes.

Q. I ask you, were the things missing serious quantities?—Well, there were two or three things missing.

Q. Tell me—the first year—10 years ago?—I could not remember now. I have got no record.

Q. Can you remember anything that was missing 10 years ago?—I could not tell you.

Q. Tell me, what is the first year you can remember?—Well, 10 years ago.

Q. What were the missing articles?—I could not tell you.

Q. You know, I repeat my question—tell me the things that were missing that you can remember now—the first occasion on which things were missing that you can remember now?—Toilet covers.

Q. How long ago?—From the last years.

Q. We have 10 years ago; toilet covers were missing?—Yes.

Q. How many?—I could not tell you.

Q. Two or twenty?—There might be a dozen.

Q. In that nine years?—Other things were missing.

Q. What things were missing nine years ago?—Vallances and long curtains.

Q. Any toilet covers that year?—Not that I can remember.

Q. How many vallances were missing?—I could not tell you.

Q. I want a vague figure?—I could not tell you.

Q. Two dozen?—I could not tell you.

Q. You remember there were vallances missing. What else were missing that year?—Long curtains, but not in that year.

Q. I am asking you about that year?—I cannot remember.

(Mr. Robb.) It is obviously impossible.

(Mr. Grant.) Keep your mind to what I ask you, Miss Usher, and pay attention to the questions. You have told me that 10 years ago there were toilet covers missing. Is that correct?—Yes.

Q. Can you remember any other things that were missing in that year?—Not that year.

Q. Nine years ago, can you remember any things missing?—No.

Q. Were there things missing?—I do not know.

Q. Can you say in that year whether there were, or were not, things missing?—I could not tell you.

Q. Eight years ago were there things missing?—I could not tell you.

Q. When is the next year you can say things were missing?—Just recently.

Q. From 10 years ago until this year have there been things missing?—There have been, but I have not taken any record.

Q. Tell me the next occasion?—I could not tell.

Q. Wait a moment, I am not asking you to do something you cannot do. You have given me the articles missing 10 years ago. Coming down to the present time, I want you to tell me the next year?—I could not remember.

Q. Were any missing seven years ago?—I could not tell you.

Q. Six years ago?—I could not tell you.

Q. Five years ago?—I could not tell you.

Q. Four years ago?—No, I could not tell you.

Q. Three years ago?—No.

Q. Two years ago; what about that year?—I could not remember.

Q. One year ago?—I cannot remember.

Q. This year when was the stock taken?—It has been taken five or six times.

Q. When did it begin?—In March.

Q. Who took it?—The stocktaker.

Q. What is his name?—Mr. Maddams.

Q. Anybody else?—Mr. Walton. The matron prepared her material; she went into the material herself.

Q. Yes, and you, I suppose?—Not the material, no. I prepared all the stock for the stocktaker.

Q. I want all the people who last March were engaged in stocktaking. You say Mrs. Madeley. Was Mr. Madeley concerned in it?—No, sir.

Q. Mrs. Madeley, Mr. Walton, Mr. Maddams, and yourself. Anybody else?—No.

Q. Nobody else?—No.

Q. No other officers or inmates?—Oh, inmates were.

Q. Who were the inmates?—The woman in the store would help.

Q. Her name?—Quinton.

Q. Now that was last March, you tell us?—Yes, sir.

Q. Was anything missing from the stores last March?—So Mr. Walton told me.

(The Inspector.) So Mr. Walton said?—Yes, sir.

(Mr. Grant.) Was anything missing from your stores?—That is the stores I am working in.

Q. Very good; what was missing from your store?—I could not tell you. I did not ask Mr. Walton what they were.

Q. He told you there were some things missing?—Some missing and some things over.

Q. Did that happen ten years ago?—I could not remember, sir.

Q. Were there some things over ten years ago?—I could not remember.

Q. Is it not a very common thing, when stock is taken in workhouses, for some articles to be missing and some to be over?—I have never lived in another workhouse.

Q. Well, in your own workhouse?—Yes.

Q. Has it happened at every stocktaking?—Nearly always.

Q. Was there anything peculiar about the stocktaking last March?—No.

Q. You found some things missing?—I did not. Mr. Walton did. Some things over and some missing.

Q. Did Mr. Walton find things missing?—He did not tell me. He has told me he did not know what things were missing.

Q. I did not ask you that. I asked you generally about it?—Yes, generally.

Q. Mr. Walton told you at the March stocktaking that some things were missing?—Particularly bedding.

Q. Particularly what?—Particularly bedding.

Q. And also told you there were things over?—No, I knew that.

Q. What were the things over?—Petticoats, and one or two articles over.

Q. Would they be made of the same material as the things that were missing?—Not long curtains, for instance, or valances.

Q. Would some of the things missing be made of the same material as the things that were safe?—No sir. The sheeting is kept specially. We have unbleached calico for underclothing—a different thing altogether.

Q. First answer my questions. Were some of the things missing made of the same material as some of the things over?—I do not know.

Q. Oh, come. That you must know?—I do not know.

Q. Is one material used in the workhouse for making two or three different things?—Underclothing. One of the materials is used for several different—

Q. You said just now you did not know. Tell me, now; underclothing made from one material—the different kinds?—Well, underclothing made of calico; underclothing made of flannelette; underclothing made of flannel.

Q. You are not doing yourself justice, Miss Usher; tell me the different articles which are made of the same material?—Chemises and drawers and night-gowns.

Q. All made of the same material?—Unbleached calico.

Q. For the women?—Yes.

Q. And men?—And the children.

Q. How many articles are there—chemises, underdrawers and night-gowns—anything else for the women?—And children.

Q. How many different articles would that cover. Would it cover only those three. Is there only one size of chemise made?—There are children's.

Q. There must be at least two sizes made. As a matter of fact, how many sizes are made in chemises?—Women's and children's.

Q. Only one size for the women?—Yes.

Q. And one for the children?—Yes.

Q. And that is all?—Yes, that is all.

Q. Does it mean that altogether there were six different articles made from the one material—three for the women and three for the children?—Yes.

Q. Or more?—No.

Q. Now, there might be some missing of one description—for instance, the chemises for the women might be short, and the chemises for the children in excess?—Sometimes.

Q. You say you spoke to Mr. Walton about things being missing, and you said: "How could the stores be 'correct' when things were taken out and not booked?" When was that?—Each time, very nearly each time, the stock was taken.

Q. When?—I could not tell that.

Q. Was it ten years ago?—It is all during the time I have been there, except the first year.

Q. Now, ten years ago, was it, you said it to Mr. Walton?—Eight, nine, or ten.

Q. And you have repeated it since to Mr. Walton?—Once or twice to Mr. Walton.

Q. Since?—Yes.

Q. Have you said it in years when anything was missing?—I have said it when I missed anything.

Q. Why did you not complain to the master?—Because Mr. Walton took the stock.

Q. But Mr. Walton is not your superior officer. Mr. Madeley was the head of the workhouse?—He never interfered with the stock.

Q. That does not matter; he was the person responsible. Why did you not tell Mr. Madeley the stock was missing?—Because Mr. Walton took stock, that is all.

Q. Did that satisfy you as a reason?

(*Mr. Robb.*) I have taken note, and this witness has answered that question six times.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Miss Usher, who was the person to whom you ought to complain of irregularities in the workhouse?—The master and matron, or the matron.

Q. Did you tell the master or matron of these missing articles?—Once I told the Matron, and she said she knew all about it.

Q. When?—Years ago.

Q. She told you she knew all about it?—Yes.

Q. That might be true?—Yes, she ought to know, at any rate.

Q. Supposing the matron had taken things out of the store to have them made up, or marked, or altered, and did not book them, and returned them to the stores; and she knew it; that would be correct, would it not?—Yes, I suppose so.

Q. And that might have happened?—Yes.

Q. Did it happen?—I could not tell you.

Q. Were articles taken from the stores?—She never satisfied me when she took things from the stores—where she took them to, or what they did with them.

Q. Miss Usher, that rather implies a reversal of your positions. Was it Mrs. Madeley's business to satisfy you in what she did?—No, sir; but I was in the stores, and wanted to know where things were going to. I issued them, and was there more than anybody else.

Q. The matron was responsible for the stores?—She was so seldom there.

Q. The matron was the person responsible for the stores?—Yes, I suppose so.

Q. And why say she never satisfied you?—When I asked, she said she knew all about it. I was in the store, and they might think I took the things.

Q. I want to bring to your mind—you say the matron never satisfied you with her answer?—No.

Q. Exactly. But what right had you to require to be satisfied with the matron's answer?—Because I was responsible for the stores whilst there, and if they were missing, they would ask me where they were.

Q. You have told me the matron is responsible?

(*Mr. Robb.*) The answer does not seem palatable to Mr. Grant. This lady is evidently under some stress. I thought she would faint just now, and I protest against witnesses being heckled. She has given her evidence fairly, and I think she should be allowed to answer, in common justice.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Miss Usher, may we get this cleared up. The matron, you say, was responsible for the stores?—I suppose so.

Q. Do you wish to adhere to that answer?—Well, she is the matron; we look to her to look after everything. She is responsible, or supposed to be, for everything in the stores.

Q. Now you say the matron never satisfied you?—If things were missing from the stores I should know where they went to.

Q. You only spoke to the matron about things missing once?—Only once; it was no use speaking to her at other times.

Q. And then she said she knew all about it and did not satisfy you?—Hardly.

Q. You say that Nurse Renakan saw Mrs. Monk with eleven sheets that were missed?—Yes, sir.

Q. When was that?—I could not tell you.

Q. Miss Usher, put your mind to it. Was it last year or this year?—Well, it was recently, since the resignation.

Q. When was the resignation?—Well, some time in April. I could not tell you the day.

Q. The tenth, I think. Where was Mrs. Monk seen with the sheets?—In the corridor.

Q. Is it that corridor where Crosbie's telephone box is?—Yes.

Q. The main corridor?—Leading from the stores.

Q. She was coming from the stores?—Yes.

Q. Where was she going to?—The matron's house and the master's house.

Q. But does that corridor lead anywhere else besides to the house?—Yes, to the matron's kitchen, the doctor's consulting room, the master's office.

Miss Usher.
16 July.

Miss Usher.

Q. And all the rest of the buildings?—The kitchen.

16 July.

Q. And all the rest of the buildings?—Well, yes, certainly.

Q. Was anything seen with Mrs. Monk when she was seen with the sheets?—No.

Q. What time was it?—I could not tell you.

Q. Who told you about it?—The nurse, the midwife.

Q. Renahan. When did she tell you?—Last week.

Q. Was that the first you had heard of it?—Yes.

Q. What, last week, did she tell you?—I could not tell you; we were talking about it, and she said she met Mrs. Monk with her old uniform and the sheets—the uniform that the matron had given her, which was against the rules.

Q. And in this uniform was a sheet or sheets?—No, not in the uniform. The uniform was tied in a bundle. There was some unbleached calico which looked like sheets.

Q. When did Miss Renahan tell you this?—One day last week.

Q. What day?—I could not tell you.

Q. Oh, come?

(Mr. Robb.) You have asked her that three times.

(Mr. Grant.) Just think of what you were doing that week?—I could not; I have so many things to think of.

Q. Yes, but your memory carries you back 10 years, and would cover last week. What day last week was it that Miss Renahan told you of that?—I could not tell you.

(Mr. Robb.) I object, there is a limit to this sort of thing.

(The Inspector.) I do not think it is material.

(Mr. Robb.) That fallacious and futile question has been put four times, and the witness has answered.

(The Inspector.) Please do not.

(Mr. Robb.) It is a gross waste of your time and mine, and public money and everything else.

(Mr. Lindsay.) You are getting something out now.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, you are helping us to get something out.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, Miss Usher, can you tell me, on your oath, what day it was that Miss Renahan told you that?—Well, I will not be on my oath.

Q. You are on your oath?—Yes, I know that far; but I will not be on my oath as to the day. She said she saw Mrs. Monk in the corridor with her old uniform and what looked like sheets of unbleached calico.

Q. What day was that?—I think she told me Friday evening.

Q. Friday, last week?—Yes, I am not quite sure; one evening one day last week.

(The Inspector.) She told you, to the best of your belief, on Friday, but you are not sure?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) It is very important. You will see why I am asking it in a moment. Did Mr. Marsh come to see you about this charge of missing articles?—Yes, twice.

Q. When was the first day?—That I could not tell you, sir. We were sent for in a hurry.

Q. This day three weeks?—I could not tell you. I think about a fortnight ago.

Q. The 25th June, I think, Miss Usher, is this day three weeks?—I could not tell you. Just recently, I know.

Q. As a matter of fact, I have got the date, thank you. Whenever it was, did Mr. Marsh—

(The Inspector.) When was it?

(Mr. Grant.) June 25th.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Marsh has got some information we ought to have had.

(Mr. Grant.) Did you make a statement to Mr. Marsh on the first occasion he came to see you about these unbleached sheets?—Yes.

Q. Is this correct. (Reading): "Miss Usher states 'that she has missed eleven unbleached calico sheets, 'sundry pillow cases, within the last ten weeks.' You have not said a word about pillow cases?"

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, she did, indeed.

(Witness.) I am not sure of the pillow cases, and did not say anything about them.

(Mr. Robb.) This morning you did; you mentioned the pillow cases this morning. Take it from me; it is on the note, and can be referred to.

(Mr. Grant.) Miss Usher says: "Miss Usher states 'that she has missed eleven unbleached calico sheets, 'sundry pillow cases, within the last ten weeks, and cannot say who took them. Also that from time to time she 'has missed things from the matron's stores, which do not appear in the book as issued, and that the only persons who had access to the stores were the master and 'matron and the assistant master'?'—That is right, sir. I had to borrow the keys every time I went to the stores.

Q. "Whenever she required stores she had to borrow 'one of the keys, but never went there by herself.' Is that true?—Oh no, sir; that is a mistake.

Q. That is a mistake of Mr. Marsh's?

(Mr. Robb.) I want to know why Mr. Marsh wrote to me after that interview saying he could obtain no information, because, in addition to that, he obtained some very important information about the missing book.

(Mr. Grant.) Will Mr. Robb be quiet?

(Mr. Robb.) It shows the character of the investigations.

(Mr. Grant.) I hope you will keep Mr. Robb quiet, sir.

(The Inspector.) Oh, yes.

(Mr. Grant.) If you told Mr. Robb he ought not to interrupt my cross-examination, I think he would pay attention to you. I do not attempt to keep him quiet.

(Mr. Robb.) I cannot refrain from comment when I am asked for information on this particular subject, and offer it, and then the solicitor on the other side makes investigations, and I am told, in effect, that those investigations had come to nothing.

(The Inspector.) Is that so, Mr. Marsh?

(Mr. Marsh.) The letter is on the shorthand notes; I will try and find it.

(The Inspector.) Is it on the shorthand notes?

(Mr. Robb.) The effect was that he could trace nothing, but he traced this: that a book had been burned, which I shall show presently. Mr. Grant said that he would put Mr. Marsh in the box to say these investigations had come to nothing. That is on the notes.

(Mr. Marsh.) The letter is on page 315. "71, East India Dock Road, Poplar, E. Dear Sir,—You offered 'to give the guardians all the information in your 'possession relative to the alleged removal of the 'guardians' stores from the workhouse by the late matron 'or late master, so as to enable the guardians to make 'full inquiry, and to take original—(that should be 'criminal)—proceedings in respect thereof, which they 'will do if the necessary evidence is obtainable for the 'substantiation of and proving such a charge. Will you 'kindly let me have the same, and the names of witnesses 'who can give the necessary evidence.—Yours truly, 'ERNEST J. MARSH."

(The Inspector.) That is not the letter at all.

(Mr. Robb.) It is the one after that.

(The Inspector.) It is alleged that after this letter, Mr. Robb gave what information he had.

(Mr. Marsh.) Mr. Robb, in reply to that letter—if you look further down—said: "If I made inquiries on the 'lines suggested by Crosbie's evidence I should get all the 'evidence I required.' The letter follows, sir:—'Sir,—I 'am in receipt of your letter of the 23rd. You appear to 'have overlooked the fact that as counsel representing 'the guardians did not acquiesce in the Inspector's 'suggestions, I withdrew my offer, and stated that I declined to enter into any compact. I am under the 'impression, however, that if the guardians will question 'their own officials and the inmates named by Mr. Crosbie 'in the Court and his evidence, they will have no 'difficulty in eliciting the facts. If, however, I have been 'incorrect in this surmise, and you will let me hear further 'from you upon the subject, I will, notwithstanding the 'fact that the arrangement was disclaimed by the 'guardians, take my clients' instructions upon the 'matter.—Yours faithfully, E. Elvy Robb."

(Mr. Robb.) I want your further letter and Mr. Grant's statement about putting you in the box.

(Mr. Grant.) It is on the same page.

(Mr. Robb.) My complaint is, you elicited that a book had been burned and told me, in effect, that your investigations had come to nothing.

(Mr. Marsh.) The book that was destroyed, I elicited, was a rough book, by Miss Evins, of material issued for the conversion of that into certain garments—

(Mr. Robb.) Destroyed by whom?

(Mr. Marsh.) I was told by her it was destroyed by Mrs. Madeley. It was a book from which was entered, in the materials receipt and conversion book, what became of the materials issued.

(Mr. Robb.) I complain strongly and bitterly that I was asked for full information. That information ought to have been conveyed to me, instead of which, in fact, I was told that the investigation had come to nothing, and that I had fallen on a mare's nest. I cannot find terms enough to express—

(Mr. Grant.) Try, Mr. Robb.

(The Inspector.) I ask, Mr. Marsh, do you think that the destruction of a book, although it was not one of the formally prescribed books, was an immaterial circumstance?

(Mr. Marsh.) I thought it was immaterial, because it was entered up from that book into the material receipt and conversion book. As a matter of fact, one item I have been asked about, I traced in that book, and found it was entered up there. It was a question of some calico which Mr. Robb referred to in a further letter; and I traced the entry there.

(Mr. Robb.) And this was the book destroyed by the ex-matron after her resignation, and it is not disclosed to me.

(The Inspector.) He says that, in his judgment, the book was not material to the investigation, and was in the nature of a note.

(Mr. Grant.) Simply a rough note.

(The Inspector.) Such books were commonly kept, and I regret that Mr. Robb was not informed of the circumstance in question, and that it led to misunderstanding.

(Mr. Marsh.) I was going, under the instruction of the guardians, to try and get sufficient information, if a theft or thefts of the stores had taken place by any person, to prosecute. I told each of the witnesses I went to that they had heard of the allegation, I had no doubt, and that I had come to get from them evidence to enable me to issue proceedings if evidence could be got.

(The Inspector.) I am quite certain that is the intention of the guardians.

(Mr. Robb.) What was the intention with regard to my clients. We were asked on the one hand to make a full disclosure, and on the other hand an attempt is made to drive us into a false position. How on earth it could have been conceived that a book belonging to another officer—a book sent for by the matron and destroyed after her resignation—how Mr. Marsh could have conceived it to be immaterial I am at a loss to imagine.

(The Inspector.) Did you receive any information as to why the book was destroyed?

(Mr. Marsh.) No, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) It was not a rough book. It was a detailed note.

(Mr. Grant.) Shall we rise for lunch now, sir?

(The Inspector.) Have you any more of this?

(Mr. Grant.) A great deal more. I shall no doubt spend the rest of the afternoon on Miss Usher.

(The Inspector.) I am sorry to hear it. (To witness): You are not to discuss your evidence with anybody.

(Mr. Watts.) Mr. Davy, I want to say a word or two to you. I believe you have expressed the idea or wish that the Inquiry might get on to what we call the real thing. The industrial condition of the borough. You have disclaimed a lot of this personal matter which has been brought into the Inquiry. I want to know why this is going on. Very possibly some of these things may be necessary, but the vast amount of personal matter that has been introduced does not make a halfpenny difference to the real issue you are here to inquire into. I hope you, sir, will put a stop to this as much as you can.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, Miss Usher, in your statement to Mr. Marsh on the 25th June you said that whenever you required stores you had to borrow one of the keys?—Yes.

Miss Usher.
16 July.

Q. And that you never went in there by yourself?—Yes. That is so.

Q. You never went in by yourself?—No, sir, that is a mistake. I always had a woman to help me in the stores.

Q. Who?—One of the inmates.

Q. Who was she?—Quinton.

Q. Who else?—Only a woman named Quinton.

Q. Very good. Anyone else?—No.

Q. Whenever you went into the stores you had Quinton with you?—Nearly always.

Q. Now besides the sheets and the things you mentioned are there any other things you missed in there?—No.

Q. Now, in regard to this material, was anything entered in this book except materials?—Yes.

Q. Mr. Madeley gave you the book?—Yes.

Q. What sort of book was it?—An old book, well—it had been used years before. There were insufficient entries for all the things. Others had to be printed in there. And the book was not much good at all.

Q. And you used it?—Yes.

Q. For entering material?—When the matron was not there.

Q. And the entries in this book were transferred to the matron's book?—She used to copy out of this book into her own.

Q. Did you check them to see if they were right?—No.

Q. Did she check them?—No.

Q. She did not check them?—I never troubled about it. It was her business and not mine.

Q. You did not look to see if she marked out anything?—No.

Q. How often did she enter them?—Very often.

Q. Once a week?—About that. But during the past few years she did not send for my book. She sent for Miss Evins'.

Q. Was hers also a materials book?—A small book—about that size. Everything was entered in that book.

Q. And you say she used to send for Miss Evins' book and transfer them from hers?—I do not know whether she transferred them. She sent for Miss Evins' book.

Q. She sent for it as often as she sent for yours?—She sent for Miss Evins, and has done so for the last two or three years.

Q. And Miss Evins would take her book to her?—Yes.

Q. Miss Evins will tell us what took place. Now, you told me of your interview with Mr. Marsh on the 25th June. Do you wish to add anything to that interview?—I have seen him twice.

Q. The first interview was on the 25th June. Do you want to add anything to what you have said about that interview?—No.

Q. When did you see Mr. Marsh again?—On Friday morning, I think, last week, but I am not quite sure.

Q. It is given me here as an interview on the 11th July. Was it the 11th?—I cannot tell you.

Q. Do you remember whether you saw Mr. Marsh on that date or not?—I could not say whether it was on the 10th or the 11th. It was one day last week.

Q. One day last week?—One afternoon last week. Last Wednesday after the board.

Q. That would be last Wednesday?—Yes.

Q. Before that you remember seeing Mrs. Cordery and Mr. Finden about three weeks ago?—Yes.

Q. Was that after a meeting of the settlements and prosecution committee?—That I could not tell you.

Q. You know that it meets?—Yes, but I have nothing to do with it.

Q. Is Mrs. Cordery chairman of that committee?—I could not tell you. I do not know.

Q. And Mrs. Cordery and Mr. Finden saw you?—They stood by the door of the old store where the bedding is kept, and the materials for the inmates' bedding.

Miss Usher.

16 July.

Q. Do you know anything about that?—They asked me whether anything was missing. I said, not here, in the other store.

Q. What?—In the other store.

Q. Just tell me what you said?—I do not know if there was anything else. "It would not be in this store" "that the things are missing, but in the other store." I think that was all.

Q. Is that all you remember?—I do not think they asked me what it was, but I said table-cloths, bath-towels, sheets, and pillow-cases. I am not sure about the bath-towels, but the table-cloths and the sheets, and the pillow-cases.

Q. Do you remember saying: "Is it not here that people feather their nests"?—I swear I did not say that.

Q. Mrs. Cordery and Mr. Finden are here?—I never said it.

(Mr. Robb.) Will you put Mr. Finden in the box?

(Mr. Grant.) Did you say: "It is not here that people feather their nests"?—No.

Q. Or anything like it?—No.

Q. What then?—"It is not here that things are missing, but in the other store."

Q. You see the expression is one that would be likely to engage the attention?—I did not say it, or anything like it.

Q. "It is not here that people feather their nests"?—I never said "feather their nests." All I said was: "It is not here the things are missing, but in the other stores."

Q. Did you say what had been taken away were serviettes, damask table-cloths and bath-towels?—I do not remember.

Q. They told me serviettes?—I do not remember.

Q. Did you say finger-cloths?—Damask table-cloths.

Q. And bath-towels?—I do not remember the bath-towels.

Q. And finger-cloths?—I do not remember them.

Q. Or napkins?—I do not remember.

Q. If both of them say you did say so?—I do not see how they could because there have not been any serviettes in the stores for two years.

Q. If both Mrs. Cordery and Mr. Finden say that you did mention these two things?—I do not remember.

Q. Have you a clear recollection of what took place on that day?—Quite clear, although I was busy with the stock. Stock-taking is taken four times a year, and they came right in the middle of it, and came to look in the stores. They said "How are you getting on?" I said "I am sick and tired of stock-taking." Mrs. Cordery said "Are there any things missing?" I said "I heard it" "would be in the other store where the things are missing." They asked me what, and I told them what I did.

Q. Nothing about feathering their nests?—No.

Q. By anybody?—No. It is all untrue.

Q. Mrs. Cordery did not say it?—No.

Q. Or Mr. Finden?—I do not remember him saying it.

Q. You do not remember Mrs. Cordery and Mr. Finden saying it, and they both swear you said it?—They must be speaking an untruth. I can swear I never said it.

Q. You said a moment ago that if anyone said it, they were speaking an untruth?—I never said anything about an untruth.

Q. You are not listening to my question. You said anyone who said that must be uttering an untruth, and if Mrs. Cordery said so, she must be uttering an untruth?—I do not remember.

Q. And Mrs. Cordery said you said it?—She is telling an untruth.

Q. If Mr. Finden said so too?—He is telling an untruth.

Q. They must both be telling an untruth?—Yes.

Q. Do you think they were making it up to cause trouble?—I do not know.

Q. Why should they tell untruths?—I cannot tell you why.

Q. Do you suggest?—I make no suggestion. I simply deny that I said feathering their nests.

Q. I ask you do you suggest?—I suggest nothing.

Q. Well, will you be good enough to listen to the question. Do you suggest that either of these guardians have any ill feeling towards you?—The very funny way Mrs. Cordery dealt with this question I should think she has. I do not see any reason why she should have.

Q. Do you suggest that Mr. Finden has any ill feeling towards you?—I do not see why he should have. I have always done my duty. Mrs. Cordery has known me for 20 years.

Q. Can you suggest any reason why these guardians should invent this story?—I cannot.

Q. They both say it took place. You say they are telling an untruth?—I say it is a lie.

Q. Now, then, you saw Mr. Marsh on the 11th of July, last Wednesday?—Yes.

Q. You said to him: "I have missed from the matron's stores the following articles—officers' unbleached calico sheets (11 in number) since the 5th of April. On the 5th of April 13 of such sheets were in store, and since then further calico sheets have been issued by the matron, Mrs. Madeley, which made 16 or 18, of which latter 6 or 8 are missing. I have not seen the same removed by any officer?"—That is correct.

Q. "Officers' unbleached calico pillow-cases I do not know of any of them missing. I only know that the bulk of them is not so large. I cannot swear as to missing anything else?"—That is so.

Q. "In reference to the serviettes, I have not seen any in store for the last two years until within the last two months?"—That is so.

Q. You did not see any until the last two months?—Until the last two months.

Q. But you did not say that?—Pardon me, I did say it.

Q. The shorthand notes will show. Mr. Marsh tells me I am wrong. Until a short time ago. In reference to the damask table-cloths and bath-towels, "I have been told that, at all events to my knowledge, that they have never been in store?"—I have never seen them, but was told about them.

Q. Then, Miss Usher, the articles which you say are missing from the store are down to 11 sheets?—And 6 or 8 of the 16 that were made after.

Q. Were these taken into the stores and recorded?—I put them in the cupboard myself.

Q. And entered them in the stores record?—That I could not say. The matron, Mrs. Madeley, was there in the morning.

Q. Do you know of any other articles except those you have spoken about?—No, sir.

Q. Well, now, you said that the matron was absent six or seven weeks at the time. Was she the only officer absent for a month?—The master has been absent too.

Q. Anyone else?—Several of the other officers at different times.

Q. Yes?—But not for so long, I do not think.

Q. May I suggest that one of the officers is Miss Usher?—That is so. I was ill, and I was laid by. Dr. Debenham attended me, and I am still under his care. I am able, however, to do my work.

Q. Do you suggest that there was any harm in that?—Any what?

Q. What happened to you?—A great deal of harm to me.

Q. What! A great deal of harm to the guardians?—They were deprived of my services.

Q. By illness?—This was the first time. I have been 28 years under the Poor Law, and this was the first time.

Q. And you say you could not help it?—No.

Q. And when Mrs. Madeley was ill she could not help it?—But she was ill three times a year. Away at the seaside three times in the year.

Q. How long?—Sometimes for ten days or a month. She would go away for a month, and ask for another week.

Q. I ask you what was the longest time?—Five weeks.

Q. She had the regular allowance for matron?—I could not tell you what she was allowed.

Miss Usher.

16 July,

Q. And you do not know whether her absence was regular or irregular?—She went three times in the year. She was not entitled to it.

Q. What was she entitled to?—Not so long as that. A month she was entitled to by the Local Government Board.

Q. You do not know?—I am not sure, but I think that is the time allowance.

Q. Do you suggest she was entitled to a month's holiday, and took a great deal more than she was allowed?—Yes.

Q. That is your suggestion?—Yes.

Q. And that has happened every year?—Until last year.

Q. Do you suggest that is in record in the books?—I could not tell you. I know nothing about the books.

Q. Do you suggest this was unknown to the guardians?—They were here very frequently. I think they would know about it.

Q. Guardians frequently in the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. Almost every day?

(Mr. Robb.) They have been—

(Mr. Grant.) Since 1892, when Mr. Crooks and Mr. Lansbury came on the board, has that been the practice of the guardians?—Coming in? Yes, sir.

Q. Does not that ensure pretty efficient supervision?—I could not say.

Q. Which would you sooner have, guardians there or not?—The guardians have a right to come in.

Q. I am asking you?—What?

Q. Which would you sooner have, guardians in or guardians away?—Yes.

Q. Guardians in. That would help efficiency in the workhouse?—It should do so.

Q. In the case of the Poplar guardians it has done so?—Yes.

Q. In your judgment, and you have been under the poor law 28 years?—Yes.

Q. What other workhouses have you been in?—Bethnal Green.

Q. How long were you there?—About a year and ten months.

Q. What were you there?—Girls' attendant.

Q. And the next?—Darenth Asylum, a year and ten months.

Q. What were you?—Charge assistant.

Q. The sick asylum?—14½ years as head nurse.

Q. And then the Poplar Union?—11 years as assistant matron.

Q. Assistant matron the whole time?—Yes.

Q. You have had some opportunity of forming some opinion of the administration of institutions under the poor law?—I suppose so.

Q. In your judgment was the Poplar Workhouse an efficiently administered institution?—In many things, it was.

Q. In many things it was better than most?—Yes, I think so.

(The Inspector.) Miss Usher. With regard to the material taken out of the store. Was it always booked in and booked out?—I do not think so.

Q. Would there be cases of material going out of the stores without being booked out?—I do not think so.

Q. You think not?—Oh, no.

Q. Not?—In the bulk you mean, oh no.

Q. Who keeps the clothing material for the stores account?—I think that is kept in the office.

Q. You have nothing to do with that?—Oh, no.

Q. Your book is merely a rough book?—Yes.

Q. Showing the amount taken from the stores?—Yes, sir.

Q. What material?—The rough clothing. The material book the matron kept for herself, and used to copy from mine.

Q. She kept her book from your book?—She copied principally from my book.

Q. How long would these books last you?—My book I have had for five years.

Q. The same book?—Yes.

Q. So that it is pretty full by this time?—No, sir. There is still room.

Q. Your book would correspond with the matron's and Miss Evins' book?—It should do so. She has lately taken Miss Evins' book more frequently than mine.

Q. But she must take up both books to make her own?—She has taken Miss Evins' book more frequently than mine.

Q. I suppose Miss Evins would take your book too?—Not mine. She would take her book.

Q. How could the matron make up her book unless she had yours?—She had the signatures.

Q. You did not make the same entries as Miss Evins?—Oh, yes, Miss Evins would have the same numbers and amounts.

Q. So that your book was a duplicate of Miss Evins'?—That is so.

(Mr. Grant.) And where are these books?—The book is burnt.

(Mr. Robb.) Your book would not show the articles made?—Only what I issued myself.

Q. Miss Evins' would show the articles made by her?—Yes, and would show what the matron issued.

Q. She and the matron issued?—Yes.

Q. So that her book would not be a duplicate of yours?—It would show what I issued myself.

Q. Mr. Corrie Grant asked you about the general efficiency of the union. Have you heard about this beer drinking and other things alleged to have taken place?—Yes, sir. I have heard about it.

(The Inspector.) You do not want to go into that again.

(Mr. Robb.) If Mr. Grant asks for a testimonial. Do you think that sort of thing conduces to discipline?

(Mr. Grant.) I object to that. This witness has not said she saw anything?

(Mr. Robb.) She says that was well known. Common talk among everyone.

(Mr. Grant.) Do you say so?—I have seen them going to the beer cellar, but as a total abstainer—

(The Inspector.) That will do.

Miss EVINS; sworn and examined.

(Mr. Robb.) Now, Miss Evins. What is your Christian name?—Rose.

Q. I think you are dressmaker at the Poplar Workhouse?—I am cutter-out and dressmaker.

Q. How long have you occupied that position?—Well, I should not like to say exactly. I should think since August, 1895.

Q. Yes, and who used to issue material to you for you to work upon?—Mrs. Madeley, the matron, when on duty. If she were not on duty and I wanted anything very particular, the assistant matron would do so.

Q. Miss Usher?—Yes.

Q. Well, now, did you keep a book of any kind?—Yes, I was almost compelled to put down the different items.

I did so as to give an honest account to the matron when called upon.

Q. When did you commence to keep that book?—From the time I really took over the office. I was compelled to do so for my own honesty's sake.

Q. Who issued the book that was kept?—I went to the office and asked for a book in which to keep this account.

Q. Just to keep a record to justify yourself if the necessity arose?—Certainly.

Q. When did you last have that book in your possession?—Well, I have one still.

Q. Yes, you have one. The first book you kept, when did you last have it?—I really forget exactly.

Miss Evins.

16 July.

Miss Evans.

16 July.

Q. Up to about a month ago?—I think the 2nd of June.

Q. And that contained practically a five years' record?
—That one did.Q. And you used to enter up everything you used?—
Certainly.Q. You wished to keep the book accurately as a record
of all the material issued by you?—Certainly.Q. What became of that book after the 2nd June?—
It went to Mrs. Madeley for her to enter in the last
piece of shirting. I had to give in a number of shirts.
She sent for me on the 2nd June to enter in that
number, and then she said she would keep the book; it
was her property.

Q. Yes, what did you do?—Nothing at all.

Q. Did you have any conversation about it?—No.

Q. Then or after?—No, I cannot call to mind that I
did. She was matron, and, therefore, I thought she had
a perfect right to take it.Q. Did she ever tell you what to say to the Inspector
if the book were asked for?—She said that if it were
asked for she would give an account of it.

Q. She would herself give an account?—Yes.

Q. When did she say that?—She told me that on the
morning I was sent for to go to her. She told me that
if they wanted the book they must see her about it.
They must ask her.Q. Can you suggest any reason why your book should
be taken away after five years?—I had no idea. I was
thunderstruck.

Q. You were thunderstruck?—I was.

Q. Before it was taken. On the 1st of June did you
have any conversation with anyone about that book?—
On the 1st of June? I do not remember.

Q. Or a day or two before?—I do not remember it.

Q. With anyone in the workhouse?—I may have done.
I could not say I have truthfully.Q. Have you spoken to Mr. Walton about the book?—
No. The only time I spoke to him was the morning
when I was sent for, and Mr. Walton said I was wanted
to go to her. I was surprised. He said: "Take your
book." I said: "You know, Mr. Walton, I have no
book." He did not know anything about it, and wanted
to know what I meant. He said: "You keep that book."
I said: "The matron has taken it from me." He said:
"Go for it at once." On going back the matron said:
"Fancy them asking for your book."

Q. Whom did you mean by the matron?—Mrs. Madeley.

Q. And did you meet Mr. and Mrs. Walton?—
Mrs. Walton and Mrs. Madeley.Q. The day you were ordered to give evidence?—This
was before I came.Q. And the matron said: "Fancy them wanting your
book." What else did she say?—She said: "If it is
wanted they must appeal to me for it," or words to that
effect.Q. And you said: "What explanation am I to give to
the Inspector if he asks for it"?—No, I did not say
that, because I thought Mrs. Madeley would come and
settle that business for herself.Q. And Mr. Walton knew then that you had not got
it?—I was not to know that he did. He was only acting
master at the time.Q. That book was a book the matron used to send for
occasionally?—She never sent for it. I always took it
to her myself.

Nurse RENAHAN; sworn and examined.

Nurse

Renahan.

16 July.

(Mr. Robb.) What is your Christian name?—Kate.

Q. And are you nurse at the workhouse?—Yes, sir.

Q. How long have you occupied that position?—Ten
years last March.Q. Now, Miss Usher, the assistant matron, told us
this morning that you had made a statement to her
about the removal of certain sheeting. Will you tell the
inspector what you know about that?—Three weeks
before the matron left I saw the matron's woman with
an old uniform and some sheets in her arms.

Q. Taking them from the stores?—Yes.

Q. You saw Mrs. Monk?—The matron's servant.

Q. How often?—That was all according. When the
materials were given out. I mean so long a time would
elapse and then the matron would send to see what I had
cut up. I had this book to give an account to her.Q. Were you sent for by Mr. Walton shortly after the
book was taken away to see Mr. Marsh, the solicitor?—
Shortly after.(The Inspector.) Were you sent for?—I have been
sent for.(Mr. Robb.) Where did you go to?—I could not
exactly remember. I have seen Mr. Marsh, but could
not say when. It might be a week or two ago.Q. Were you not asked to come to the stores?—That
was the second time Mr. Marsh came.Q. Were you questioned as to the amount of material
served out in April?—I was.Q. What did you say?—I could give no proper reply
to any amounts of materials or dates as I had not my
book, and therefore could not answer correctly.

Q. What did Mr. Walton say?—He made no reply.

Q. That book had the entries for five years, showing
not only the materials issued by you, but the number of
articles made by you from the materials?—Yes.Q. And you were entirely at a loss to understand why
it was taken from you on the 2nd of June?—Entirely.Q. That was four days before this Inquiry commenced?
—Yes.Q. Did you ever hear what has become of that book?
—No, I have not. I left it in the matron's hands, or on
her table.

Q. Is it in the workhouse now?—I could not say.

Q. And you have had to start a new book?—I have.

Q. Oh, one minute. I want to ask you this. Did you
ask Mrs. Walton, the acting matron, to book certain
articles and sign for them?—Yes, I did.Q. Did she do it?—No, she said it was not necessary
to. She had not done so, and she did not think it
necessary now.(Mr. Grant.) You saw Mr. Marsh on two occasions?—
I did.Q. I give you the dates. The first was the 6th June, and
the next a week after?—It might have been about that.
I could not exactly say.Q. And you answered the questions put to you. You
told him practically the story you have told to-day?—I
told him everything that went through my hands after it
was made was returned to the matron's stores. After it
went there I had no more business with it.Q. The matron delivered to you the material and you
returned it to her—the articles which were made from
the material?—That is so.Q. And your book was kept as a check against the
matron, was not that so?—I do not know as a check
against the matron. For my own honesty's sake, to let
the matron know what I had done with the material
entrusted to me.Q. Put it this way—it was intended as a protection to
you?—That is how I looked upon it. If I was called on
to show what I had done with the material.Q. If there was ever any question your book would
show how many yards of material had been issued to you,
and that you had returned to her the articles so many
yards of material would make up?—Certainly.Q. Would it be her duty to take sheets and other
articles to any other place but the matron's house?—I do
not think so.Q. She was employed solely to work in the matron's
house?—Yes.Q. Was there anything unusual about the circumstance?
—She had a uniform given back to her, and I thought
that rather strange, because we do not have our uniforms
given back.Q. Her uniform she had returned to the stores was
given back to her, and, that being contrary to the rules,
your attention was drawn to the sheeting, and so you
recollect the circumstance?—Yes, sir.

Q. Do you know anything about the dripping going out of the workhouse?—No, sir, I do not.

Q. Do you know what is done with the dripping?—I do not know anything about that.

(Mr. Grant.) Just one question. Where was Mrs. Monk when you saw her?—Coming through the messengers' rooms towards the matron's house.

Q. So she was in the corridor?—Yes.

Q. Going down the corridor was she. How far down?—Well, the other end. Near the store end.

Q. Had she got as far as Mr. Crosbie's telephone box?—Not so far as that.

Q. She was in the corridor?—Yes.

Q. In the mouth of the corridor?—Yes.

Q. You could not tell where she was going to?—No.

Q. When was your attention called to this matter?—About a week ago, when Miss Usher said she did not

know where the sheets were. I said: "See Mrs. Monk, she will tell you."

Q. And that was the first time it had been called to your attention?—Yes.

Q. And you did not say anything until Miss Usher asked about it?—Yes, I spoke to Mrs. Monk, and she said she did take some sheets, but did not want to give them away.

Q. Now did you not mention a list of articles in the master's house on the 24th June—8 new sheets, and 12 sheets in use, making a total of 20 sheets?—I do not know anything about that.

Q. Mrs. Monks seems to have thought they were stolen?—I do not know what she thought.

Q. By saying she was not going to give them away. But if the master returned eight after he left these might have been some of those?—Yes.

Q. And that would be a perfectly reasonable explanation?—Yes.

Mr. W. WALTON; recalled, and further examined.

(The Inspector.) You are on oath, Mr. Walton.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Walton, we have been told to-day by Miss Usher that she made complaint to you of shortages in the stock in the matron's store. Is that correct?—She has not complained to me. She has told me on one occasion that certain things had gone out of the stores.

Q. She says she has complained to you on several occasions, generally at stocktaking time, of a deficit in the stores, and I think she said you had not replied to her complaints?—At stocktaking times? Miss Usher had no occasion to complain to me.

Q. She said she did so, and I gather you admit one occasion?—Recently.

Q. What did she complain of?—On the last occasion?

Q. Yes. What steps did you take?—I advised the matron of the fact that she had complained.

Q. Then that does not quite tally with what you told us on the 15th of June last. "(Q) When are the stock books balanced up to?—At the end of every quarter. (Q) At the end of every quarter?—Yes. (Q) And then is stock taken by Mr. Maddams?—Yes. (Q) At the last quarter was there any shortage of stock on any item?—No, sir. (Q) Has any shortage of stock at any time come under your notice?—Not in my existence. (Q) You swear there never has been any discrepancy?—That is so. (Q) Never at any time?—Never at any time. (Q) You are quite sure of that?—Yes." Are you quite sure of that now, Mr. Walton?—Yes, when Mr. Maddams takes the stock the things are absolutely correct.

Q. At any time. You say you were quite positive. Are you as positive now?—When Mr. Maddams took the stock the things were there.

Q. When you heard of this Inquiry were you not trying to get information about them. A fair answer please?—I gave the answer according to the question put.

Q. At that time you knew that Miss Usher had complained?—I do not know that she complained to me.

Q. You admitted just now that she had complained to you of something?—That is since the last stocktaking.

Q. At any time. "Has any shortage of stock at any time come under your notice," and you swear there has never been any discrepancy?

(Mr. Grant.) If you will just look, Mr. Davy, at the shorthand notes, you will see that the phrase "at any time" was dealing with the stocktaking, and not in general: "When are the stock books balanced up to. At the end of every quarter?—Yes. (Q) And then is stock taken by Mr. Maddams?—Yes. (Q) At the last quarter was there any shortage of stock?—No, sir." Then follows: "Has any shortage of stock at any time come under your notice?"

(The Inspector.) I think it is probably a misunderstanding?—I think it is.

Q. Things may be lost, and yet when the stocktaking comes there may be no shortage?—There is no shortage when the stocktaking comes.

(Mr. Robb.) And why?

(The Inspector.) But there would be a shortage unless you had a preliminary stocktaking?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) And were the things altered to make them correspond?—They were.

(The Inspector.) You see it is a preliminary canter with the master, and when the stocktaking comes there would be the full quantity, even if there was a shortage before. That is not peculiar to the Poplar Union.

(Mr. Grant.) Take June, 1906.

(Mr. Robb.) Do not let us be taken off the track.

(Mr. Grant.) Sheets for instance. In store, 141. And on the book, 49. Practically it comes to this that when you are dealing with these thousands of articles you cannot help making some slips. That is what it comes to?

(Mr. Robb.) You were asked at the end of last quarter whether there was any shortage, and you said, "No." You were then asked whether there was any shortage at any time, or if any had come under your notice, and you said "No, not in my existence." Is that the correct answer?—I believe it was.

Q. It was correct to say that no shortage of stock had come under your notice?—But since—

Q. I asked at the end of last quarter was there any shortage, and then, was there any shortage at any time, and you said "No, not in my existence"?—It was—

Q. Is that the kind of answer a gentleman in your position ought to give at this Inquiry?—I was speaking about the stocktaking.

Q. You swear there never has been any discrepancy. Was that a fair answer?—At the stocktaking time.

Q. I was seeking information. Was that a fair answer for you to say there never has been a discrepancy at any time. You are quite sure of that?—Yes, I was only dealing with stocktaking time.

Q. And then I went on to say, "That has not been the case with regard to the out-relief distributors' stores." You said, "That has nothing to do with me." Was this a proper answer knowing that Miss Usher had just made a complaint about a shortage in the stock?—She had no stock to keep.

Q. I do not care whether she had any stock to keep or not. She alleged a discrepancy, did not she?—I cannot tell you if that was so.

Q. What did she allege?—I do not know that she had occasion to allege anything.

Q. What did Miss Usher allege when she came to you on the last occasion. Fourteen blankets missing. That was the alleged discrepancy?—That was recently.

Q. What did she allege before about the sheets?—I do not know anything at all.

Q. Come now?—I do not know that she said anything at all.

Q. Will you swear that she did not?—I will not swear so.

Q. Now did you have any conversation with Miss Evins about her book on the 1st of June, about that private material book she kept?—I cannot remember the date.

Q. When was it?—I have some recollection about asking her for the book.

Nurse
Renahan.

16 July.

Mr. Walton.

16 July.

Mr. Walton.

16 July.

Q. Did you tell her she had been warned to take care of it, and she tell you it had been taken away from her?—I do not remember anything.

Q. Did you have a conversation with Miss Evins about her book; about the beginning of June did you speak to her about her material book?—I cannot say if I did or not. On one occasion it was asked for.

Q. Did you, after that, go and see Mrs. Madeley?—Yes.

Q. You went and saw Mrs. Madeley and asked her for it?—Yes.

Q. Why did you go to Mrs. Madeley?—Because it had been sent for by the officers here.

Q. I mean on a date prior to the Inquiry. You know perfectly well. The 1st of June was prior to the Inquiry. I ask you about the 1st of June?—I do not know anything about it. It is since the Inquiry I went to Mrs. Madeley.

Q. Did you have a conversation with Miss Evins, and did Mrs. Madeley send to Miss Evins and secure this book?—So far as I can recollect the book was sent for.

Q. You know perfectly well—on a date prior?—I do not know of any date prior to that. When the book was sent for, I went to Miss Evins and asked her for it, and she said the matron had got it from her. I went to the matron and she sent for Miss Evins.

Q. What did she send for Miss Evins for if she had the book?—She sent for it on her own account.

Q. And what conversation took place?—I did not stop to hear.

Q. Why not?—The matron did not wish me to. It was a private conversation with Miss Evins.

Q. You are master of the workhouse. What happened to this book?—I believe the matron has got it now.

Q. Why did not you get it then?—It did not concern me at all.

(The Inspector.) It was sent for from the office?—I believe the matron said she had burnt it.

Q. And now you suggest she has got it still?—I do not know whether she said it was burnt. I did not stop there.

Q. What makes you think she burnt it?—I fancy those were the words she used. I found a book since. I do not know whether it is the same book or not. I found a book in a cupboard since I took office.

(Mr. Grant.) Where is it?—Over at the workhouse now.

Q. Have it sent for.

(The Inspector.) Did you think the matron said that in a fit of temper?—She was very much excited.

(Mr. Robb.) Why did you not follow the matter up at the time?—

(The Inspector.) You have given it back to Miss Evins?—It was her book.

The same book?—I am not quite sure.

(Mr. Robb.) And you gave it to Miss Evins?—It was a book I found in the matron's book case. It was hers by right.

Q. Whose right?—Miss Evins.

Q. And how long a period did it cover?—It dated back to April, 1892, I believe.

Q. 1892. And you say you have given it back to Miss Evins?—I gave it to her because it concerned her.

Q. When?—About two or three weeks ago.

Q. Did you tell Mr. Lough about it?—No.

Q. This was a book which had been mentioned in the Inquiry, and some one rang up and asked for it. This was the book which was referred to at the Inquiry, was it not?—I do not know whether it was the book or not.

Q. And you had not the book, but had gone to find it?—I said I did not know whether it was the same or not.

Q. Did you think it was the same book. Did you take any steps to find out whether it was the same book?—I showed it to Miss Evins, and she said it was not the same book.

(The Inspector.) There is only this about it. You knew charges were made as to the misappropriation of the stores, and you were the officer responsible, and I

should have thought the first thing you would have done would have been to take the book to the chairman or Mr. Lough?—It was only a private memorandum book.

(Mr. Robb.) A private memorandum book, and you took no steps to ascertain if it was the missing book, or any steps to communicate with Mr. Lough or the Inspector about it?—I went so far as to ask Miss Evins if it was the book and she said no, it was not.

Q. Why did you suggest it was the same book. You have been detaining us ten minutes over this book. You have allowed Mr. Grant to send for a book which was supposed to be the missing book, and now you tell us Miss Evins said it was not the book?—As far as I know about these two books—I do not know anything about them at all, really, except that the matron took one book away one day and the next day she took another one.

Q. Did not you think it your duty to mention that in the course of your evidence. Did not it strike you as being material at this Inquiry?—I could not express an opinion.

Q. You discussed this matter with Mrs. Madeley?—I simply told her the book was wanted.

Q. When?—When it was sent for from the office.

Q. What did she say?—I believe she said she burnt it.

Q. Have you made any further attempt to follow that up?—Follow which up?

Q. To follow up the point about the book. Have you made any further inquiry or attempted to follow the matter up?—I did not know it worth while following it up.

Q. Mr. Grant suggested new sheets were found in the master's house. Is it usual to issue new sheets between the resignation and the person leaving?—That I cannot say.

Q. You generally leave the issue of new sheets until the new man is in, do not you?—I do not know when they were sent down there.

Q. It would be a little unusual, would it not, while the resignation was pending to issue new sheets at that time?—I should not do it myself.

Q. The master was not there at the time, was he?—I do not know what day it was.

Q. Have you examined Mrs. Monk. We have heard her name a good many times. Have you spoken to her?—I have had occasion to speak to her recently.

Q. What did she tell you about these allegations?—She said she did not know anything about them, except that the new things are there.

Q. Who was present when you saw Mrs. Monk?—Mr. Lansbury and Mr. Marsh.

Q. I want to clear up the point about the dripping. Did you use all your own dripping in the workhouse?—A good proportion of it.

Q. How much?—I cannot tell how much. There were different quantities each week.

Q. How much did you sell every week?—We sold all the surplus.

Q. Then Mr. Grant was not right when he said you would tell us it was all used in the workhouse?—The dripping.

(Mr. Grant.) I said Mr. Lansbury would tell us.

(Mr. Robb.) How much dripping did you sell to Mr. Griffiths?—We do not sell any dripping at all, except a little bit we have left over.

Q. What do you mean. How much do you sell every week?—We sell fat, not dripping.

Q. How much do you sell of fat?—About 130 lbs. a week.

Q. Who do you sell that to?—Griffiths.

Q. What do you get from him for it?—£2 a month.

Q. Who pays?—He clears it up and keeps us clean at £2 a month.

Q. Including the bones?—The bones, yes.

(The Inspector.) Who pays the £2. Do you pay or he?—Mr. Griffiths.

Q. He pays you £2 a month?—To keep us clean, yes.

(Mr. Robb.) He takes all the fat, and dripping, and bones?—Not dripping.

Q. I suggest there is?—Well there might be a little bit of dripping.

Q. I suggest to you large tin baths full of dripping go out?—That is fat.

Q. I suggest to you it is dripping, and you know it is?—I do not know it is. It is the skimmings off the coppers.

Q. And that dripping is retailed at 5d. a pound.

(Mr. Grant.) You said something about the skimming?—That was the skimmings off our coppers after boiling beef, mutton, and pork. They are skimmed off and put into these baths and sold.

(Mr. Robb.) You sell it to Griffiths, and he retails it at 3d. to Mr. Arthur Elliott, 26, High Street, and Mr. Arthur Elliott retails it again at 5d.?—I do not think he would get that, not as it is when we sell it to him.

Q. Probably not, it would have to be refined?—Yes.

Q. But you are sending out every week a large quantity of a valuable commodity. Who weighs this dripping, and fat and so on when it goes out?—It is not weighed.

(The Inspector.) He pays the £2 and takes the lot, whatever it might be?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) I will leave it there.

(Mr. Grant.) It is the swill tub, is it not?—No, sir.

Q. It is the skimmings off the coppers, with loose fat as you cut off the joints before you cook them?—There is no loose fat. It is all skimmings off the top of the coppers.

Q. Is there nothing else but that?—And the fat we clear up out of the sinks and drains. He takes all that away.

Q. And the bones?—And the bones, yes.

Q. What bones are they?—The bones we have used. We have a double use for them.

Q. First of all you boil it to get the meat off, and then it is used for broth, and what is left we sell to Griffiths with the skimmings of the coppers?—Yes.

Q. And for these skimmings off the coppers he pays £2. Does he get anything else?—He has the rags.

Q. Of what?—Small cuttings of rags from making the clothes.

Q. And for the whole of these he pays monthly £2?—Yes.

Q. And grease in the sinks is cleared out, and he takes that?—Yes.

Q. That is what Mr. Robb calls dripping?—I do not know whether he calls that dripping.

Q. I want to ask Mr. Walton—I am not entering on my general cross-examination; I am only dealing with this point now. I want to ask him upon the general question—

(Mr. Robb.) You have cross-examined him generally.

(Mr. Grant.) I think not.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) Well, I want to ask him one or two things.

(The Inspector.) What have we got next?

(Mr. Robb.) I had finished last week when I called Mr. Broodbank, and it was arranged these witnesses should come up. I finished with Mr. Broodbank.

(The Inspector.) Do you want to examine the relieving officers?

(Mr. Grant.) Yes.

(The Inspector.) What shall we go on with now?

(Mr. Grant.) Anything to finish the Local Government Board Inquiry, sir.

(The Inspector.) Unless you want to ask this witness any question—

(Mr. Grant.) Not now, I do not know whether I shall want him again.

Mr. Walton.

16 July.

Mr. J. S. OXLEY; recalled, and further examined.

(Mr. Grant.) I only want to ask you one or two questions.

(The Inspector.) There is one point I would like to put right. Some of the tenders were rejected as informal; will you tell us about those?—I only discovered it when I was going through for this other information. Any tender that does not include every item is rejected as informal. Of course the result of that is, if a manufacturer tenders for his own manufacture only, and does not go in for the other things, his tender is rejected as informal. I will give an instance of this—the British Thompson Houston Company, Limited, tendered for their own lamps only, price 8s. 6d., but it was marked "informal." There was one other instance, I think, in 1905 or 1903, ironmongery, one man tendered for anything except the "percentage off any makers' list," and he wrote a foot-note—"this is too general, but I will allow a reasonable discount," and that was marked informal.

Q. That was all I wanted?—I have been through the 1903 tenders.

Q. Have you handed this in yet?—I received that from the guardians. In the 1903-4 tenders I compared the accepted tenders with the rejected tenders. This has been done in the office here, and I received a copy on Saturday night. I found if the lowest tenders had been accepted in that year, in the gross, there would have been a saving of £1,682 7s. 6d. In addition there would have been a saving of 2½d. a gallon on out-relief milk. A tender at 1s. was accepted and 9½d. were the two lowest ones.

(Mr. Robb.) On the tendered quantities?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Did you go into the question of what would be saved if the lowest tenders were split?—Shall I run through them? If you will take the figures down: Blott, the butcher, the lowest, a large item. Yeast, lowest tender accepted. Milk, of course, you could not split.

(Mr. Grant.) Why have you missed the first one?—Because there was no item. Owing to no tender being received, the guardians decided to re-advertise the tender for flour, and subsequently a contract was entered into

with the Sun Flour Mills, and there was no other contractor mentioned, so I could not make a comparison.

Q. The total was £2,437?—Yes.

Q. You could compare it with other years?—Yes. Milkman: The Dairy Supply Company was accepted at 9d., and the Eastern Dairy Company was 7½d. The saving on that one would have been £359 7s. 6d.

(Mr. Robb.) Is that in addition to the £1,682?—Oh, no, that was included. I find that the grocer I cannot split, because I find that the saving was pretty equally spread over every item and there would have been no difference. And the same for the poulterer, £92. The mealman, of course, would be the same, £22, and the cheesemonger, £190 above the lowest. The earthenware, the saving included in the £1,682, was £2 19s., and would have been £42 2s. 6d. if the tenders had been split.

(Mr. Grant.) Why have you not given the others?—Because they are hardly tenders you can split.

Q. There is the brewer?—I do not think you could split the brewer. I have only gone into those that, from a demonstrative point of view, could conveniently have been split. The ironmonger—Pyle got it and Pryke & Palmer were rejected—the lowest rejected. The saving was £11 13s. 8½d., included in the £1,682, but if they had been split the saving would have been £22 2s. 8d. Electrical goods, the lowest was rejected. The saving was £7 16s. 10d. on the gross, and, if split, the saving would have been £8 14s. 10d. Officers' uniforms, of course, could not have been split. You could not get trousers at one place and coats at another. Children's underclothing seemed too small to split. The clothier I did not split because there were only two items, in which the rejected tender was not the lower. The draper—£225 10s. 1d. was saved on the gross. If split the saving would have been £300 3s. 10d.

(Mr. Robb.) Who was the draper?—Cartwright, I think. He was rejected for one, and this is the other. Cartwright got the drapery, and Watts was the lowest tender. Haberdashery—Watts got it and Cartwright was rejected.

(Mr. Grant.) Watts got the tender?—Yes.

Mr. Oxley.

16 July.

Mr. Orley.

16 July.

Q. Although he was not the lowest tender.

(The Inspector.) Have you any other instance? No, that is the only one which I thought could be usefully got out as to haberdashery.

(Mr. Robb.) And all that is on the tendered quantities?—Yes.

Q. You have not yet worked anything out on the basis of the deliveries?—No.

(Mr. Grant.) Just one or two questions. You were called to the bar in 1884?—1884-5.

Q. And from that time to last year you were practising your profession?—Yes.

Q. Any special experience in workhouse affairs?—No.

Q. When were you appointed to the Local Government Board?—November.

Q. Of 1905?—Last November.

Q. Is this the first piece of work you have ever done?—No, I have been working since November.

Q. When did you begin this?—What do you mean by "this?"

Q. Poplar Inquiry?—I suppose really the first thing I did was the inspection I made at the workhouse.

Q. Poplar?—Poplar Workhouse.

Q. When was that?—It must have been early in the year—January or February.

Q. And after the inspection of the workhouse, have you been engaged more or less on this Inquiry?—I have done other work as well.

Q. Will you answer my question. Have you been engaged on this Inquiry more or less since?—No.

Q. How much of the time since last November have you devoted to the Poplar Inquiry?—Not a great amount at the beginning. When these contracts came up, I devoted a good deal of time.

Q. Are these all the results of your personal investigations?—Oh, I am wrong. I worked out a lot of the figures of that Memorandum.

Q. Are the contracts all the results of your personal investigations?—With the assistance of the clerk.

Q. I mean, have you simply gone through the accounts, and if there was something you wanted to comment on you told the clerk to put down so and so. And has the clerk worked and you supervised?—I had a clerk here. I did not want to take any of the accepted tender forms away. And the clerk was here every day copying out the figures. I do not think you want to work out on one year the difference that the accepted and rejected tenders would have made.

Q. I want to know if the tables you have given are the results of your personal investigation?—Yes, except the clerical figures of the splitting of the 1905-6 tenders; those are the clerk's handwriting.

Q. Those are merely clerk's work?—Yes.

Q. As to the Memorandum. How much of that are we to credit to you?

(The Inspector.) It was prepared under my direction.

(Witness.) I think I did most of the charts.

(Mr. Grant.) Did you prepare the Memorandum?—No.

Q. The calculations in the Memorandum?—They were from charts and tables.

Q. Will you answer my question. Take the calculations on the first page. Are those yours?—Those were mine, yes.

Q. All of them?—I took them from tables A and C.

Q. And the calculations on the 3rd page, were those yours, E—page 5 I think?—Well that is got from their own books.

Q. This summary on page 5, is that prepared by you?—No.

(The Inspector.) Which: these (referring to document)?—You mean that?

(Mr. Grant.) Yes?—I don't think it was.

Q. Whose was that?—Mr. Lough's.

Q. In the last paragraph "Tenders taken in bulk and last quarter day in 17 cases, out of between 30 and 40 tenders, the lowest were not accepted." Is that your statement?—Yes.

Q. What does that mean?—On the gross.

Q. What does it suggest?—The lowest was not accepted.

Q. What do you suggest, the guardians did take the lowest tender?—That they have not.

Q. What more?—Nothing more. I have stated the fact.

Q. Do you know you can state a fact so as to convey a suggestion. Was it intended to suggest the guardians had not done their duty?—It was intended to suggest there would have been an apparent saving of £1,500.

Q. If they had taken the lowest tender everywhere?—Yes.

Q. Do you suggest boards of guardians everywhere always take the lowest tenders?—No, that would be very foolish.

Q. Anybody would be foolish to take all the lowest tenders?—Especially if there was a reason against doing so.

Q. When you drew up that statement, did you inquire whether there was any reason for the guardians not taking the lowest. Take it generally, do I take it from you in dealing with all these matters, tenders, contracts, tables and so on, you have asked for no explanation at all from any officers or guardians. Whatever you found, whatever discrepancy there was, whatever fact you thought ought to be pointed out, you asked no single question by way of explanation?—No.

Q. You went raking through these accounts, and put down everything you thought wanted explanation, but you never asked for an explanation?—I do not think I did.

Q. You must know?—I may have casually asked Mr. Lough if so and so was a misprint, or would he verify that figure, but practically, no.

Q. Let us just test that statement. Have you had any large experience of accounts?—Not particularly large.

Q. Have you had any?—No; not as an accountant.

Q. Have you had any experience of books in a large commercial undertaking?—Not a commercial undertaking, except in one or two references where you sometimes have a good many books to go through.

Q. Let me test it in this way. Do you know what E. & O. E. means?—I do not.

Q. That shows the extent of your experience. It is a common term added by accountants to books when they have examined them—errors and omissions excepted.—I know what "errors and omissions excepted," means, but not E. & O. E.

(Mr. Robb.) I am afraid Mr. Grant is quite unwarrantably calling accountants to book.

(Mr. Grant.) I can show accounts I have in my possession for a company, employing chartered accountants, dealing with hundreds of thousands of pounds a year, and every one of the accounts is marked at the bottom E. & O. E.

(Mr. Robb.) They are not certificated accounts; chartered accountants would not certify an account with E. and O. E. on it.

(Mr. Grant.) May I sum up what I have been asking you, in this way: You, a barrister, practising your profession, have been examining the guardians' accounts without any previous experience of accounts, and asking for no explanations from the persons who kept the accounts. Is that correct?—I do not think without any experience of accounts.

(The Inspector.) It is not accounts at all, Mr. Grant. It is statistics.

(Witness.) I think so.

(Mr. Grant.) You mean a man may understand accounts and yet not understand statistics. Is this the first time you have ever drawn a chart?—Oh, no.

Q. Tell me other matters in which you have drawn charts embodying the results of tables and figures?—I always use a chart—

Q. Have you ever drawn a chart before you went to the Local Government Board?—Yes.

Q. Where?—I used to keep a chart of many private matters. I am very fond of doing charts. I took a degree in mathematics at Cambridge, and I rather keep it up.

Mr. Oxley
16 July

Q. Am I to take it you are responsible for the charts here?—No, I am responsible for some of them, and I am responsible for turning some of the figures into charts.

Q. These figures on pages 6-19; are you responsible for them?—No.

Q. Who was responsible for the accuracy of them?—It was done in the office.

Q. Then you do not verify these?—No.

Q. Table A 6 and 7, table H 22-26, are any of those your figures?—I think page 17 was mine, and subsequently checked. I did the original and it was subsequently checked, and a few mistakes in my multiplication corrected.

Q. I am sorry to hear there were mistakes in your multiplication. As to the charts?—As to No. 18 and 19, that was done by me.

Q. Table E was done by you?—Table E, I think I said, was not done by me. It was taken from the guardians' own accounts.

Q. You did not take it out?—No, I think I marked the things to take, and went through it, and made one or two suggestions and alterations.

Q. I mean if there are errors here I cannot hold you responsible?—I do not think you can.

(The Inspector.) That was a table on which you saw, Mr. Lough?—Yes, I took out one or two things with him, and I think as a result of my conversation with him figures marked with a dagger were altered and explained, and I think the asterisk note was made. We could not make the figures come quite right, and I asked Mr. Lough one day when I was here—I think that was so, but I am not quite certain—and he explained to me the guardians met the county rate.

Q. Table H you were not responsible for?—Not Table H.

(Mr. Robb.) Would not the shortest way be for us to know what the alleged inaccuracies are. We seem to be going through a tremendously long performance.

(Mr. Grant.) I have not the slightest objection to Mr. Robb conducting his case, and I surely am entitled to conduct my own.

(Mr. Robb.) My clients are paying Mr. Grant as well as everybody else. The ratepayers are paying for this, and I object to Mr Grant putting unnecessary questions.

(The Inspector.) He said he asked Mr. Lough at a very early stage, and I think I am right in saying he said they were all right. We are anxious these should be correct.

(Mr. Grant.) I do not agree. We have not had a proper opportunity to check them.

(The Inspector.) If they are not correct I think they must be clerical errors, because they were taken straight from the returns.

(Mr. Grant.) They must be thoroughly checked, sir. The Local Government Board are not giving my clients a fair opportunity of dealing with all these statements. (To witness.) Now, Mr. Oxley, about the charts. Is chart H yours?—Not mine.

Q. Whose is that?—Done in the office.

Q. Who is going to take the responsibility?

(The Inspector.) I take all the responsibility of those.

(Mr. Grant.) And the charts?

(The Inspector.) Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) Then sir, I shall want you in the box. You see, I want to cross-examine about it, and I want somebody in the box who takes the responsibility.

(The Inspector.) Here are the figures taken out of the Local Government Board statistics. They are printed alongside.

(Mr. Grant.) You see, sir, here is a document which is called a memorandum, which is really an indictment. (To witness.) You agree, Mr. Oxley?—Certainly not. It is a table of the Poplar figures.

Q. Let me read the first line of the Memorandum:—"Indoor pauperism in England and Wales grew steadily with the population up to the year 1900, since which date it has risen sharply. This rise is more marked in London than elsewhere, and is greater in Poplar than in the rest of London." Would not you call that an indictment?—It is a fact.

Q. A fact can be an indictment?—It may or it may not. I should certainly not call that an indictment.

Q. Is not this Memorandum the case which the guardians have to answer?—It is a Memorandum as to pauperism in Poplar.

Q. It is not published at large?

(The Inspector.) Yes?—Yes, I believe so.

(Mr. Grant.) You did not publish it in order that it might be republished in the Times?—I did not publish it at all.

Q. It was published with an object, was not it?—I do not know, I am sure. I suppose so. It was published in order to help the guardians with this Inquiry.

Q. Are you quite serious in telling me that?

(The Inspector.) Mr. Oxley cannot possibly know.

(Mr. Grant.) Then let Mr. Oxley say he does not know. If he says he does not know I will take his answer. (To witness.) Your idea was that it was published to help the Poplar guardians?—The guardians in this Inquiry.

Q. And if it was published with the object of helping the guardians in this Inquiry why was it delivered to them on the morning the Inquiry opened?—Because it was not ready before.

Q. We got the type written copy of the Memorandum, I think Mr. Lough tells me, on 24th May. We got on the morning of the Inquiry the printed document for the first time. If that was to help the guardians I want to know what sort of help it was?

(Mr. Robb.) I want to point out the figures Mr. Broodbank put in last Friday have all been printed this morning by the guardians.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Robb again intervenes to prevent me getting an answer to my question. Mr. Oxley, do you think it helped the guardians to deliver to them the morning the Inquiry opened, for the first time, this printed document?—I think it could not be given them before because it was not ready.

Q. If we had not had it all there would not have been any case to answer. If there had not been any memorandum we should have had to deal only with Mr. Robb?

(Mr. Robb.) Quite enough for you.

(Witness.) I do not know, I am sure. I think the blue book showed sufficient. This is only a blue book in a short form.

(Mr. Grant.) Was it fair to hand to the guardians on the morning the Inquiry commenced, for the first time, this printed document?—If we had not done it before, I suppose the next thing was to get it as early as possible.

Q. Are you acquainted with the practice of the Local Government Board with inquiries of this kind?—I do not know that I am really.

Q. You know there was an Inquiry here in 1892?—I have heard. You told me, I think.

(The Inspector.) What was that?

(Mr. Grant.) The one by Colonel Lockwood on charges made by Mr. Lansbury and other persons. That was on a claim by Mr. Deason, the previous master, for a pension, and it was an Inquiry conducted by Colonel Lockwood. On that occasion Colonel Lockwood inquired if persons who were attacking Mr. Deason had stated exactly what were the charges made, with particulars and dates, before the Inquiry?—I am afraid I have not seen the Inquiry.

Q. Surely you have read the papers?—I have not seen the papers. The first I heard of it was when you brought it up in cross-examination. Personally I had not seen the file.

Q. Do you mean to say that was the first you heard of it?—That was the first I heard of it.

(The Inspector.) With regard to this Inquiry about Deason, I had not heard of it.

(Mr. Grant.) I am surprised the Local Government Board should send you down to hold an Inquiry like this and should not have given the papers to you. I assumed you knew all about this Deason Inquiry.

(The Inspector.) I did not know.

(Mr. Grant.) When we started you did not?

(The Inspector.) No.

Mr. Oxley.

16 July.

Mr. Grant.) But, Mr. Oxley, I may put it to you, not only from the point of view of the Local Government Board Inspector, but from the point of view of judicial experience, do not you think it is fair that persons who are going to have charges made against their administration should have details of the charges before they are called upon to answer them?—Yes, as far as possible, but I have always looked upon this as an Inquiry to find out the cause of the high rates. I had no idea whether the guardians were at all responsible. The idea was to find out the cause of the high rates. Outside the Local Government Board that was my own personal idea.

Q. I am asking you as a citizen and a lawyer of experience?—It is not like a criminal trial or anything of that sort, but an endeavour to find out the cause of the high rates. That is my own personal idea.

Q. Which way would you sooner be tried, supposing you had a charge made against you: in a criminal court, or a Local Government Board Inquiry?—I think if I were innocent I would sooner be tried by a Local Government Board Inquiry. If guilty, perhaps by a criminal court.

Q. I agree with you, because here you get hearsay evidence which might help you?—You get that and get things followed out which may be technically shut out by rules of evidence at a criminal court.

Q. May I put it to you the procedure here has been the French procedure, and supposed to be English?—I am afraid I have never seen a French trial.

Q. You know under French procedure they allow anything they possibly can against anybody?—I do not know it is quite so vague as that.

Q. You know it is possible in a French court for a man to come in and say, "In my opinion the evidence given by Mr. So-and-So is false, because I have known Mr. So-and-So—"

(Mr. Robb.) I object. If Mr. Grant will go into the box I will cross-examine him on that—in French, if necessary.

(Mr. Grant.) If the guardians are innocent you think they ought to prefer this method of trial, because everything in this method would come out?—You asked me which I would prefer.

Q. If you were a guardian of Poplar you would prefer to be tried by this method of Inquiry rather than by the criminal trial, because everything would come out and ultimately you would be cleared, if innocent?—I should prefer to be tried—I won't say tried—to have the matter investigated by a tribunal that would go outside the strict rules of evidence and hear all there was to say.

Q. That has the disadvantage of putting the man to be tried through a very long process of torture before his case is heard?—I do not care for that word "torture."

Q. Well, if you use a word to cover the situation, I will accept it. Let us have "Inquiry"?—Yes, "Inquiry."

Q. It does expose the person being inquired into to a long process of investigation, often very painfully, before they have had any chance to be heard?—That would depend on the length of investigation.

Q. Well, from the 6th or 7th June to the end of July is long enough?—I think it could be done quicker.

Q. It exposes a woman, as in this case, to the risk, the danger of hearing for the first time a charge of continuous adultery, through the newspapers?—Of course that was an incident that was rather sad.

Q. You call it an incident?

(Mr. Robb.) Which Mr. Grant called out.

(Mr. Grant.) You call it an incident?—What would you like to call it?

(Mr. Robb.) Is it not a fact that Mr. Grant insisted upon having that evidence brought out?

(Mr. Grant.) I did not bring it out.

(Mr. Robb.) There was a long discussion about it, and it is all on the notes.

(Mr. Grant.) I expect, however necessary, it was an unfortunate incident, and a painful incident for the persons concerned?—I think that has very little to do with the cause of the high rates.

Q. While you and Mr. Davy were wanting to institute a perfectly cold, accurate, statistical examination of the causes of the high rates, you were being assisted by a gentleman who was not quite so anxious for that, but was anxious for something else?—I do not know.

Q. Have you heard Mr. Robb's speeches and cross-examination in this court?—Yes, mostly.

Q. Can you say the whole of it was directed to assisting the Local Government Board?—I suppose I should say a great deal of it was directed to bring what might or might not be abuses to the notice of the Inspector.

Q. And when abuses are being charged, Mr. Oxley, the persons who are to be held responsible for those abuses ought to have details of them beforehand, ought they not?—Yes, it is always an advantage.

Q. It was not done in this case?—I do not know, I am sure.

Q. Well, you heard it?—There was the letter Mr. Robb sent.

Q. Did that contain any details?—It contained certain charges.

Q. Did it contain any details?—You heard the letter. You have read it two or three times.

Q. I will read the letter, if you have any doubt?—Oh, it is not a detailed charge.

Q. If you had had that supplied to you as a statement of claim, would not you have asked for particulars of it?—Then it would be under the strict rules of evidence.

Q. If you had had that supplied to you as a statement of claim, would not you have at once asked for particulars?—One always tries to get particulars.

Q. But if Mr. Robb had these particulars in his possession do not you think it would have been fair they should have been supplied to the guardians beforehand?—Of course, I do not know what Mr. Robb had or had not.

(Mr. Robb.) I am going to suggest—

(Mr. Grant.) Are you objecting?

(Mr. Robb.) I am objecting because I think these questions ought to have been put to the secretary of the alliance, Mr. Broodbank, who would have told Mr. Grant this information was obtained from the guardians' own officials in the box and was not in our possession at the time of the Inquiry. That should have been put to Mr. Broodbank and not Mr. Oxley. All the charges have been made by officers of the guardians in the box, not by me or my clients at all.

(Mr. Grant.) They had either been obtained by a fishing cross-examination of Mr. Robb, not knowing what he was going to ask, or by information supplied to Mr. Robb beforehand. If it was a fishing cross-examination of course he could not supply particulars. If it was facts he knew, I ought to have had the particulars.

(Mr. Robb.) I should have declined on an *ex parte* statement from anyone to put a charge in writing until it had been verified upon oath.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Crooks just reminds me that on the opening day that very thing was asked for and refused. Mr. Crooks said, after some other observations: "May I at this stage, with a view to getting proper procedure 'rules, ask you to decide how far these gentlemen are 'adjuncts of the Local Government Board, because we 'are here, at the request of the Local Government Board, 'to answer certain specific questions. These gentlemen 'come as representing another body which is quite outside 'the Local Government Board. There are certain 'questions, and certain charges which are put in cold print 'against us; we shall ask them to present evidence in 'support of such charges. We shall then claim the right 'of cross-examining their witnesses, and, in so far as they 'are concerned, we cease to acknowledge them in any shape 'or form.' (To witness.) There is one point I want to put to you before we rise. I want to know about these prices. You said if the lowest tender had been accepted in every case, apparently a saving of £1,507 would have been effected?—Yes, I can explain that at once. That was a paper Mr. Lough sent me, and if you notice there are two figures bracketed for each of certain contractors. They are cases when they gave alternative tenders. There was nothing on the paper to show it was an alternative tender, and they would be taken as one. That just made about the difference of £500.

Q. I have said nothing about the difference yet?—No, it is a difference of about £500. Mr. Lough spoke to me about it, and that is how it is. It is all here, I think.

Q. In the butcher, Packman, you find him bracketed?—Take the one with the red tick against it, and the one with the cross against it.

Mr. Oxley,
16 July.

Q. That is the case of the lowest and the accepted?—Yes.

Q. Now the British New Zealand Company, which was the lowest tender, not Cartwright's, 1906-7, was put down as £13,017 5s. 9d., and £12,101 15s. 9d. bracketed, and Mr. Blott's, which was accepted, is £13,065 14s. 8d. and £12,513 2s. 2d.?—Yes.

Q. You find against each of these two tenders two sets of figures?—Yes.

Q. Did you ask for an explanation?—Not then.

Q. What did you do?—I added the two figures together.

Q. Which, top or bottom?—The two bracketed figures in each case.

Q. You took the British New Zealand Company, the £13,017 and the £12,101, and added them together?—Yes.

Q. Did you divide them by two?—Oh, no, I did not know what the figures were.

Q. Why did you add the figures together if you did not know what they were?—Because they were returned in that form.

Q. Where is the reason for adding them?—Because they were bracketed together.

Q. That is the only reason?—I think the only reason.

Q. You put down as the butcher's tender, British New Zealand Company, £25,118 1s. 6d.?—Whatever those two come to added together.

Q. And then having done that, in your Memorandum, you stated if the lowest tender had been accepted in every case apparently a saving of £1,507 would have been effected?—Yes.

Q. Now you are told by Mr. Lough what the explanation is. What is it?—That they were alternative tenders.

Q. And the real fact is your Memorandum, instead of saying if the lowest tender had been accepted in every case apparently a saving of £1,507 would have been effected, it should have read, if the lowest tender had been accepted in every case, apparently a saving of £1,001 12s. 4d. would have been effected?—I think that is the figure.

Q. I mean that little paragraph of yours dealing with £1,500 was wrong as to £500?—It was wrong as to £500, and we corrected it the first day.

Q. I beg your pardon. I have not heard of any correction to this date?—It was the first day, I think, we put it right.

(Mr. Robb.) The real saving might have been £1,700, so he was too conservative for us.

(Mr. Grant.) I hope you will not interrupt, Mr. Robb. Was a copy of this Memorandum sent to the *Times* by the Local Government Board?—I am sure I do not know.

Q. Do you know if it has appeared in the *Times*?—I saw it in the *Times*.

Q. Official documents which go to the *Times*, usually go there through official sources, do not they?—I suppose so.

Q. Do not you think when there had been this blunder, the correction should have been sent to the *Times* as well as the original document?—I thought I would publicly be asked about it, and I really did not think much about it. I told Mr. Davy of the blunder directly I found it out.

Q. I know you did, but, as a matter of fact, this document having been sent to us on the 7th June, and put previously in the *Times*—

(The Inspector.) No, no, it was sent you on the 24th May.

(Mr. Grant.) What we got on the 24th May were type-written sheets, and we got also—

(The Inspector.) Mr. Lough, what did you get on the 24th May. Was it a type-written copy?

(Mr. Lough.) A type-written copy.

(Mr. Grant.) What we got on the 24th May was a type-written copy of the Memorandum, and then we got some loose sheets of tables. I think I am right in saying we did not get the charts.

(The Inspector.) Some of those charts were shown to the board of guardians when I attended a meeting here, I think it was in February the first time.

(Mr. Grant.) My complaint against the Local Government Board is that they have not handed to us this printed document until the day when the Inquiry opened. On the face of it there is a gross blunder as to £500 out of £1,500 in a charge made against us, known to Mr. Oxley and known to you, which has never been corrected at all in public, until I get it out of Mr. Oxley to-day.

(Mr. Robb.) If it is to be publicly corrected, let the addition be made that the real saving might have been £1,700.

(The Inspector.) When did you know this mistake was made?

(Mr. Lough.) The first day of the Inquiry.

(Mr. Grant.) Why was I not told. I was told nothing about it until this afternoon. Here is the letter of the 24th May:—"Dear Sir, Herewith I forward you a short memorandum with charts and tables showing the figures, as far as I have been able to ascertain them, which bear upon the pauperism of the Poplar Union. I shall be obliged by any corrections or suggestions. I will have copies printed and circulated as soon as possible. Among the points into which I shall inquire are the following:—1. Causes of rise of indoor and outdoor pauperism. 2. Causes of disproportionate expenditure on in-maintenance. 3. Comparison of Poplar with the neighbouring unions. 4. Explanation of the out-relief given to able-bodied men in the winter of 1904, and since. 5. Causes of increase in cost of indoor pauperism, especially in the workhouse (Chart F). 6. Causes of cost of increase in Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum, as shown in the statistical statement of the guardians. 7. Figures of Poplar pauperism between 1895 and 1905 as contrasted with the figures for all metropolitan unions (Table G.) 8. Explanation of the outdoor relief figures for Poplar and Canning Town (Chart H). 9. Why lowest tenders are not accepted, and why tenders are not divided, as is done at Lambeth and other places. I shall call some of the Relieving Officers as to the distribution of the out-relief, and shall take some evidence as to the administration of the workhouse and other institutions as affecting their cost. I should be obliged if you would suggest a convenient place for holding the Inquiry. It will open on Thursday, June 7th, at 11.30 a.m. Yours very truly, J. S. DAVY."—I think that letter asks for any corrections Mr. Lough had to make. He did not make any correction about that £1,500, or we would have spotted it at once.

Q. I can only say, as far as I am concerned, the first we heard about this £1,500 was since we came into this room?—It was a pure accident.

Q. I want to know how many more pure accidents there are in the course of this Memorandum?—Only this one, I think.

Q. Now, Mr. Oxley, with your experience of the Local Government Board, do you think anybody could have prepared an answer to those nine heads in the time between the 24th May and the 7th June?—This is the 16th July.

Q. I did not ask you that. Do you think anybody could have prepared an answer on these nine heads between the 24th May and the 7th June?—No.

Q. And since then the Inquiry has been going on, Mr. Oxley.

(The Inspector.) It will perhaps shorten matters if you ask some of the guardians what happened at the meeting which I attended in February.

(Mr. Grant.) Very well, I will. But I want to know. I have merely Table B, and no marked chart, Table B?—Mostly the charts were those following the table.

Q. Return C—I want to ask you about that presently—return C, and the unmarked chart, I suppose, becomes Chart C. Return D and Chart D. Statistics relating to Poplar Union are printed. These are not charted at all. Can you tell me why?—Two or three copies of those some time back were sent to Mr. Lough.

Q. That does not explain to me why they have not been charted?—They are charted here.

Q. Will you just follow the printed memorandum with me. The Poplar Union—Chart A corresponds to Table A?—Yes.

Mr. Oxley.

16 July.

Q. Chart B corresponds to Table B?—Quite right.

Q. Chart C?—I see what you mean. Why there is no chart to correspond to that table. Because it would almost be impossible to draw one. You must reduce things to a common denomination, and some of these are prices and some pounds. You could not possibly get a chart that would show anything.

Q. Did you try?—Yes, I did one or two things to try, and it would not come to anything.

Q. There is no Chart G, may I ask also why there is no Chart H?—Yes, there is a Chart H.

Q. I find two charts missing?—There is a Chart H.

Q. There is Chart A, Chart B, Chart C, Chart D, no Chart E, Chart F (three charts), no Chart G?—No.

Q. Why not?—Well, you see, if you want to make a chart of that you would have to have four lines for every union in London. It would be rather more like a maze than a chart. I do not think you could do a chart usefully with figures like that.

Q. Let me suggest to you you could do four charts very usefully?

(The Inspector.) I am trying my level best to get some sort of chart as this for London, but it is very difficult.

(Mr. Grant.) How many days, sir, are you going to sit this week?

(The Inspector.) I cannot sit on Thursday, but I should like to sit on Friday, and four days next week.

(Mr. Grant.) It may be the case against us will be closed earlier than Friday in this week, and if it is so, I shall ask you to adjourn until next Monday.

(The Inspector.) You have got to cross-examine four relieving officers?

(Mr. Grant.) Yes, I shall not be very long with the relieving officers. As far as I can see we ought to finish to-morrow. As far as I can judge from a rough estimate, I should say one way or the other we will fill to-morrow, but I don't think we shall go beyond it, and then I shall ask you to adjourn till next Monday.

(The Inspector.) I do not think we ought to do that.

(Mr. Grant.) When Mr. Robb wanted to consider his position you gave him an adjournment of nearly a week.

(The Inspector.) It was on a different ground, but you must remember while I am at work here I have no time for my office work.

(Mr. Grant.) What I propose to do is this: To bring the Inquiry, so far as the Local Government Board and Mr. Robb are concerned, to a conclusion this week—it has been shortened much more quickly to-day than I thought it would—and then adjourn till next Monday. On next Monday I propose to lay before you and other persons the case of the guardians, and then put Mr. Crooks, Mr. Lansbury, Mr. Ford, Mr. McCarthy and other guardians in the box, and I hope to do the whole of that in four days next week, and then I ask you to adjourn for the vacation in order to enable us to examine and tabulate all these statements.

(The Inspector.) I will not do that without express instructions. I think if we adjourn for the vacation it would be little short of calamity. I will not do it.

(Mr. Grant.) I am not concerned with that. What I am concerned with is the guardians' case. I am not asking you to adjourn for the vacation. It is you who say you would not sit in the vacation.

(The Inspector.) I said I find it practically impossible to sit in August.

(Mr. Grant.) That is not our responsibility. We are prepared to go on.

(The Inspector.) Then I cannot allow any adjournment at all.

(Mr. Grant.) Then I shall decline to open the guardians' case next week. I have never yet had an opportunity of thoroughly mastering the guardians' case. I cannot present it until I have had an opportunity of consulting Mr. Lough, or Mr. Marsh, or the guardians on a number of points. I have had proofs supplied to me of their evidence, and I have had all their proofs sent back with a series of observations on which I wanted further information. I am not going to open the guardians' case until I have everything. If you ask me

(Mr. Grant.) I am approaching this from the attitude of a simple-minded enquirer, and I find there are charts applying to certain sections of tables and no charts to other sections?—If you turn to Chart D for a moment I will explain the reasons. Chart D is a chart for five unions. If you made that 30 sets of lines it would be almost unintelligible.

Q. If you could not get all the comparisons on to one chart you could put them on to a series of charts in which you could present this series of figures?—Yes, but if they are on different papers the lines would not compare.

Q. My only answer to that is that you ought to have the lines on the same?—They would be too crowded.

(The Inspector.) I think there is an additional reason. In the first place the figures for central London are quite misleading, and the other thing as to the charts is this: Some of the unions in London present an almost horizontal plane. They do not either go up or down. It is of not much use taking the out-door pauperism of Whitechapel. The variance is so slight.

(Mr. Robb.) I would like to hear from Mr. Grant how he would do it?

(Mr. Grant.) My task is too heavy, without attempting to educate Mr. Robb.

to do so I shall reply on behalf of the guardians that I cannot fairly do it.

(Mr. Robb.) On behalf of my clients, although I agree it may be desirable Mr. Grant should have some short adjournment in some way, I do suggest now that he should go on from day to day as I intend to do until we finish.

(Mr. Grant.) I said I am prepared to do it.

(The Inspector.) I thought you were asking for an adjournment for the vacation.

(Mr. Grant.) No, I said I was prepared to go on, but you said you would not sit in the vacation, and, therefore, I propose to go on daily in July with our case and then adjourn for August or September, or whatever months you want, and we should employ the interval in preparing. I do not believe the guardians' case can finish in five days, when the case for the Local Government Board has taken from the 7th June till the 16th July.

(The Inspector.) I am sure Mr. Crooks will be quite prepared to go on now.

(Mr. Grant.) I am not prepared to let him.

(Mr. Robb.) I strenuously oppose any adjournment for the vacation. It has been quite evident, I think, since Mr. Grant came into the proceedings, that he was by no means in a hurry. If Mr. Grant chooses to take his cross-examination and the whole of the proceedings in a leisurely way no doubt he has some reason for it, but this is becoming a serious thing for my clients. I am told already £500 has been paid to Mr. Marsh on account of the guardians' expenses. My clients are having to defray the whole of that, and their own expenses in addition, and it is becoming an exceedingly serious business. Moreover, I am instructed it has been stated outside this hall that the guardians, as a matter of policy, were going to play for an adjournment until November for a specific reason. I strongly protest against that.

(Mr. Grant.) Whoever stated that must be a client of Mr. Robb's.

(Mr. Crooks.) We are responsible, and we certainly never said anything about it.

(The Inspector.) I should not have thought that it would have paid anybody to say it.

(Mr. Robb.) I should never have thought it would, but the matter is intelligible to me in the light of something else.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Oxley's evidence was very much prolonged, I should think, simply for the reason that Mr. Grant has not been properly advised as to what has happened. He did not know that I had attended the meeting of the guardians, he did not know I had the charts—

(Mr. Grant.) Some of the charts.

(The Inspector.) He did not know that figure was corrected on the 7th, and because he did not know there

facts we have wasted absolutely a couple of hours. It is not right to the people who have to pay.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I won't say what I have just been told about these charts. If what I have been told is correct what you say is not fair.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) It is abominable. I know that I was not there, but I am chairman of the board, and I ought to have known.

(*Mr. Grant.*) You just see the unfairness of it. You bring these charts down to a private meeting of the members—

(*The Inspector.*) Not a private meeting.

(*Mr. Grant.*) It was not a meeting of the board. A few guardians were brought to you and no public meeting was summoned, and at this meeting you showed these charts. Mr. Crooks never knew of their existence until he heard it here. I must say the Local Government Board have behaved during the whole of this Inquiry—I have never in my life met with anything like the way the Board has conducted this Inquiry.

(*The Inspector.*) We will go on to-morrow and get as far as we can.

FIFTEENTH DAY.

Tuesday, July 17th, 1906.

(*The Inspector.*) Mr. Robb is not here, but he asked me to go on.

(*Mr. Grant.*) There was one thing I wanted to mention with regard to the evidence, but perhaps that being so,

we might leave that until Mr. Robb comes. There were one or two things I wanted to mention with regard to the evidence, but perhaps we might leave that until Mr. Robb comes.

Mr. J. S. OXLEY; recalled, and further examined.

(*Mr. Grant.*) There is one question I want to ask you, Mr. Oxley. Have you made yourself acquainted with what I might call the literature of the Poor Law since you have been with the Local Government Board?—To a certain extent.

Q. You know there was a document issued from the Local Government Board in regard to contract systems. Have you read that?—I do not know it by your definition. Will you show it to me.

Q. The unfortunate part of it is that my clerk is not here with my papers, and it is amongst them?—Show it to me presently.

Q. I will, yes. Practically that is what I want to ask you about. You spoke in your examination of the tenders of the guardians. You have spoken in every case of the savings which would have been effected if the lowest tender had been accepted?—Yes, the lowest upon the estimated value.

Q. Yes, the lowest on the estimates. Do you suggest that is the proper way of conducting business, to take the lowest tenders in every case?—I think I answered. It was in answer to a question you asked me yesterday. I think if you have a reason for not taking it—

Q. I put it to you, would it not be more fair for you, as an official of the Local Government Board, before you produced all these statistics of the alleged saving that might have been effected if the lowest tender had been taken, to have enquired of the guardians the reason why they did not take the lowest tender?—I think that would almost necessitate a kind of second inquiry. One would have to hold an enquiry almost because you would immediately come to considerations whether there were reasons sufficient, and I was simply endeavouring to state the facts.

Q. Obviously, Mr. Oxley, that enquiry has to be made, has it not?—Yes.

Q. If you go through. You have gone through our tenders now altogether for three years, have you not?—Yes.

Q. And throughout them you have said if you had taken the lowest tender you would have saved so much?—Yes.

Q. You admit that to take the lowest in every case would be un-business like?—Yes.

Q. Then your figures about the lowest tender in holding the Inquiry here, are not put as reasons why in each case the lowest tender was not taken?—If there are reasons for not taking the lowest tender it is for the guardians

to say. It seemed the most convenient form to put the figures or to place our facts after the list had been taken, and if there were reasons to the contrary it would reduce those figures by so much.

Q. But you are applying tests to the guardians' figures never applied in fact?—I hardly think that. I simply stated facts on the tenders given me.

Q. Can you suggest any board of guardians in the country that habitually take the lowest tender and the lowest only?—I think a good many take the lowest tender except for very special reasons.

Q. That is what I am asking you. The test you have applied to the tenders of the Poplar Board of Guardians is to ascertain the difference between the tender accepted and the lowest tender?—Yes.

Q. And you applied that throughout?—Throughout.

Q. And then you said, if instead of taking the tenders they did, they had taken the lowest tender in every case, they would have made a saving of £1,500?—Whatever the figure is—

Q. £1,500—it was your figure in your memorandum?—It was £1,000.

Q. It was £1,500, which on cross-examination was reduced to a thousand?—Oh, no, not reduced to £1,000. I looked it up, and I made that correction on my evidence on the first day. It is hardly fair to say what you did.

Q. Totally fair, because what you said had missed me altogether, and I had no idea until Mr. Marsh handed me the figures of £1,500 and £1,000?—I do not think that was my mistake. I think the document sent to me justified it.

Q. That may be, but a man with more experience of contracts might have known there was an alternative tender, and not added them together?—I do not think so on the paper that was sent to me.

Q. That is a matter of opinion. Let me keep to my point. The test that you had applied to the Poplar tenders—as you say, if the lowest tender had been taken in every case, there would have been a saving of so many pounds—is that a test that could be applied fairly to any board of guardians in the country?—Yes, I think so.

Q. Which?—Because I should think the amount that would have to be deducted for a tradesman who is not proper to be accepted, would as a rule be small, and the figures, not perhaps exact, would be a general indication.

Q. Which board of guardians do you suggest in regard to their tenders followed the policy of accepting the

Mr. Oxley.
17 July.

Mr. Oxley. lowest tender?—Well, the one I have got here, (I think they accepted nearly every one of the lowest tenders), is Bethnal Green.

17 July.

Q. What year, Bethnal Green, are you taking?—I will not say. Every one, practically.

Q. Just go through them, will you, and tell me any cases where the lowest was not accepted. Is this Lady Day?—Last Lady Day.

Q. Lady Day, 1906?—It is best to take the last.

Q. Take whatever you have in hand?—The year ending Lady Day, 1907.

Q. Therefore the contracts are for the year?—It is so in Poplar, you know.

Q. Just give out the figures of the tender, and whether the highest or lowest?—Would you like me to read through them?

Q. Please?—Boots and slippers, the lowest. Leather, no other tender, a single tender. Brushes and brooms, the lowest. Chimney-sweeping. That is a three years' tender and is simply put down as current because it expires in 1908.

Q. We may leave that one out?—Coal and coke. They accepted two tenders, but it only gives the price of the accepted tender there, so it is impossible to say.

Q. Put that one aside then?—Then coffins and shrouds; that they only give the accepted price. Clock winding, the lowest was accepted. Now drapery. They split it and accepted Cartwright for the lowest items only, and the Hospitals and General Contracts Company, Limited, for the lowest only.

Q. You may call that fairly two contracts of which they took the lowest. They divided the drapery into two parts and took the lowest?—They split it between the lowest.

Q. I think I am right. They split the drapery into two parts and gave Cartwright that part of the contract for which he was the lowest, and the other people that part of the contract for which they were the lowest?—Yes, they split it on the items.

Q. It is fair to count it as two contracts of which they took the lowest tender in each case?—It is a contract of which they took the lowest tenders and split it.

Q. What I want to get out is that there was a particular case in which they took the lowest tender, and it seems to me it is fair to count the drapery contract as two contracts, not as one?—Hardly that, because it is split. It is really one better than the lowest.

Q. Well, in that sense, I want to say—what I am testing you in this is to see really how many of the contracts were the lowest. For that purpose I count drapery one or two, just as you please?—Count it as two if you like.

Q. Yes, I think that is fair?—Very well, these are the facts: In the drugs they accepted the one that allowed the highest discount. In the druggists' sundries—

Q. Drugs is the lowest, is it not?—The druggist that allows the biggest discount. Druggists' sundries they did not accept the lowest.

Q. What was the difference there?—Three and a-half per cent.

Q. What was the amount?—I cannot say in the druggist. They cannot estimate the quantity of these sundries. It is the discount off the list prices.

Q. Yes; but do not they put against it the estimated quantities?—They cannot, of course, tell what the dispenser would want. Earthenware, they accepted the lowest. Caps, clothing, &c., they accepted the lowest. Hardware and cutlery, they accepted the lowest. Horse hire, they were both equal, and they accepted one of them. Now oilman's goods. There were three tenders: Jones, Middleton and Medhurst. They split it between the lowest and the highest, taking the lowest items on each of them, and they have got this note against the tender: "A few items here lower than others, consequently divided these items between Middleton and Jones." Printing, part I., that is agenda, there are no prices given, because it is only at per page. They accepted one of five. Part II., printing, books, binding, &c., they accepted the lowest. Part III., printed forms, they accepted the lowest. Part IV. is again one where it is at per 50. The estimated quantity is not worked out.

Q. There again you cannot take the lowest?—You cannot say what they estimated, because the estimated quantities are not worked out.

Q. We can strike that one out?—The same remark as applied to that would apply to part I., that I gave you, the agenda. In stationery they accepted the lowest. Tin ware, they accepted the highest of two, the difference being 7s. Apparently they accepted the man whom they did not accept for the ironmongery. That is the look of it. But there is only 7s. difference between them.

Q. Wait just a moment?—Provisions—

Q. I was just going to ask you if you would mention provisions?—They are in a different book because they are half-yearly. These are for the half year ending Michaelmas. Corn-chandlery, they accepted the lowest. Cheesemongery, they accepted the lowest. Rabbits, they accepted the lowest. Margarine, they accepted the lowest. Eggs, they accepted the lowest. Fish, they do not give the estimated quantities, they only give the price per pound. And they accepted one of two.

Q. And the same price?—They do not give the price. They give details, but there is no gross value worked out.

Q. Not at the price per pound?—I tell you they do not give the price of the other one where there is no gross estimated quantity worked out.

Q. They only give the price of the tender accepted?—In this case they only gave the price of the accepted tender. That is exactly the same as the agenda one I told you about just now. Poulterer, they accepted the lowest. Flour, they accepted the lowest. Greengrocer, they accepted the lowest. Grocery, they accepted the lowest. Meat, they accepted the lowest. In the milk they accepted 6 5-8d. for the workhouse and infirmary, and 6d. for the schools. It is at a price as per sample.

Q. That shows, Mr. Oxley, does it not, that at Bethnal Green they almost invariably accepted the lowest tender?—Yes.

Q. Is there any reason for that?—I suppose they had no reason against the tradespeople.

Q. Have you inquired the reason for it?—I have been told by some of the guardians in this room, they had a black list on which they put tenderers not likely to suit.

Q. A black list on which they put?—I have only been told in this room.

Q. I have been told too. I suppose we may take it as correct?—I do not know. Probably I was told by the same source as you. I have not the slightest reason for doubting it.

Q. We will ascertain and make sure it is quite correct, that the reason why Bethnal Green took the lowest tender is that they first of all excluded a number of the tenderers on the ground that they were undesirable firms, either because of their standing, their business standing, or because the experience the guardians have had of them not carrying out their contracts properly, or for other reasons which may be obvious?—Yes, but I think I notice in this list I have given you some names rejected at Poplar are accepted there.

Q. Really I have not looked at it?—Yes, I mean, just look if they are there.

Q. I do not know. For instance?—Pryke and Palmer I notice.

Q. Is Bethnal Green Union a trade union workhouse. I mean do the guardians there insist upon the trade union rate of wages?—I do not know, I am sure. If it is, it is in the conditions of the printed form. The tender would be according to the form. They agree to abide by the particulars.

Q. Have you got the tender forms?—No. I believe I have. Yes, I happen to have one, the tea tender, and in that the persons tendering "hereby bind themselves to pay the persons employed on this work such trades union rates of wages as are current in the district." As it is on one, I think we may fairly assume it is on the others.

Q. I have a letter here, of the 1st June, from the clerk of the Bethnal Green Board of Guardians, which I think clears up this point:—

"Dear Sir,—In reply to yours of the 31st ult., I beg to send you herewith a set of our tender forms, and to inform you my Board accepts not only the lowest tender as a whole, but the lowest item in each tender. In such cases they usually pass a resolution as follows:—'Resolved, that the tenders of Messrs. "A," "B," and "C," be accepted for the lowest items in each tender."

"An endorsement is then made on the contract indicating the items accepted in such tender.
"My board rigidly excludes all contractors who are on our 'black list.' That confirms exactly what I heard.

Q. That justifies my statement. Well now, the Bethnal Green Board, then, pursue the policy of what you call split tenders?—Yes.

Q. Is that the general policy of guardians?—No, but it is done by a considerable number of unions.

Q. When you say a considerable number, how many do you mean?—I have not made an inquiry for the whole of London, but I gave the list in my evidence on the first day of those I have inquired into. There are thirty unions in London.

Q. Well, I have not had that?—My own half of London is mostly south of the Thames, and the inquiries I made were chiefly south of the Thames. There were a few north.

Q. Do you consider the system of splitting tenders advisable?—It is better than not splitting them.

Q. Do you adhere to that answer?—Of course, there are some tenders which cannot be split.

Q. Where you cannot?—Where you cannot split them.

Q. Take ironmongery?—I certainly think that could be split. Of course, there might be some articles you would have to go to one man for, but putting it generally it is—

Q. You would probably give one man all the forks?—Something of that sort, all the knives, forks and spoons.

Q. When you have split the tender and notified the contractor you are going to split it, what happens if he refuses to accept the tender?—That is a legal question. That rather depends on the statement on the tender sent to him. I think many tenders have a note on the top that the guardians do not bind themselves to accept the whole of the tender, but may take any items, and if the tenderer accepts with that condition on I take it he would be bound by it.

Q. You attach it to that year. Do you attach it to the next year?—If he tendered, yes.

Q. Do you really think that?—How do you mean?

Q. If you simply take the lowest items. First of all, you say you are going to split them and then you do split them and take the lowest items all through. Does it not occur to you that in all probability the contractor will lose on the tender?—Not if he knows it is going to be done, and if he knows it is carried out he will take very good care he gets a fair profit on any article selected, and I suppose that is what the guardians would say.

Q. Undoubtedly, but if that were so the system of splitting would be general in London?—I do not quite follow that question.

Q. I mean, the way you put it sounds perfectly reasonable. The contractor has to put a certain amount of profit on to each article he may be able to sell at below market price because he has got it in stock and so on; but in this tendering he will see to it that he can sell a single item out of 400 of these tenders at a profit, if it is accepted, and therefore it does not matter to him whether the guardian split it or not?—Yes.

Q. And taking it as far as that it sounds reasonable, but how would the split system work out on that basis of contracts worked out on the estimated quantity?—But they are worked out.

Q. Yes, as they are here. The effect of that then would be that a man who might have estimated—whose contract might be passed as a whole, might yet be higher than a man whose contract worked out lower?—Of course, if you get people that are putting in things at very low prices and the estimated quantity is absolutely different from the quantity purchased, of course the tenders would work out different.

Q. Does not that strike you as a reason why your theory about splitting has not been generally adopted in London?—I cannot say it is.

Q. Do you know whether splitting is generally adopted in London?—I should think it is about half and half. I do not know. It is simply speaking of the places I have enquired about as a sample. I will tell you places I have enquired about.

Q. I have got all the replies here. I will read it through, and if you can supply anything I have not got we shall get on?—I can only supply those given in my evidence.

Q. May I just read them as I have got them there. "Bermondsey, drapery and coal accepted on items. "Bethnal Green, the lowest item in each tender—black listed firms rigidly excluded. Camberwell, the tenders "not divided beyond specific headings." No, Camberwell is blank?—I can supply Camberwell—Camberwell do not split.

Q. "Chelsea, tenders not divided beyond specific "headings." That is as we do here?—I am not quite sure that the specific headings when they put it like that, do not mean some special heads in the tender, but it is a very small point, and hardly worth following up.

Q. This is what Chelsea says:—Mr. Dowling writes—"Dear Sir,—In reply to your letter of the 31st inst., I "beg to send you a set of tender forms. The guardians "do not, in accepting tenders divide the tenders beyond "the headings specified in the forms"?—They may mean special headings in the forms.

(The Inspector.) What is the date of that letter?

(Mr. Marsh.) 1st June, 1906.

(Mr. Grant.) "Fulham, woollens, carpets, linen, cotton "leather, sub-divided; St. George's East, blank; St. "George's West, tea only sub-divided (officers and in- "mates); St. Giles, do not make a practice of sub- "dividing; Greenwich, never sub-divide; Hackney, occa- "sionally sub-divide; Hammersmith, no special division "on general tenders; Hampstead, never sub-divided as "yet; Islington, sometimes a tender is sub-divided; "Kensington, the lowest price accepted, linen, drapery, "clothing, leather, boots"?—That means sub-divided. I have seen them, Mr. Corrie Grant. I have seen it in the minutes.

(Mr. Grant.): "Herewith enclose a set of tender forms "in use in this parish. It is the practice of the guardians "to accept the lowest prices for the items in the liner, "drapery, clothing and leather and shoe tenders." And so it means they do split it?—Yes, I saw it in the minutes.

Q. "Lambeth, tenders for drapery in bulk." Give me the letter from Lambeth. "1st June, I may mention "that the tenders received are usually opened at a meeting "of the board on a Wednesday, and decided upon at an "adjourned meeting on the Friday following; in the mean- "time lists of tenders (see enclosed) are printed for the "use of the guardians. With reference to tea, tenders are "not advertised for, but invited from 12 firms only—with "the consent of the Local Government Board." And then I have "There are three classes of tenders (1) Tenders "on estimated quantities"—this is a memorandum of a message on the telephone, Mr. Lough tells me—"Tenders on estimated quantities (chiefly perishable "articles), these are accepted in bulk from grand totals. "(2) Tenders to samples submitted (grocery). These are "accepted having regard to quality of samples and price. "(3) Tenders for definite quantities to be delivered im- "mediately upon acceptance. (Soap, hardware, drapery, "&c.) The total quantities required for the year are "advertised for, and these definite quantities supplied. "The lowest tender for each item in this class is generally "accepted"?—That, of course, is the clerk's. There are three pages of the ones they split on.

Q. "Lewisham, not sub-divided as a rule; City of "London, occasionally, but very rarely accept portions of "a tender; Marylebone, no return; Mile End, no return; "Paddington, not sub-divided as a rule; St. Pancras, "drapery and coals, usually split up; Shoreditch, the right "to divide tenders has been exercised; Southwark, no "information as to sub-division"?—Southwark I have. You have got the information. I think I mentioned in my first evidence—

Q. Southwark merely sent us an abstract of the tenders?—I can give you Southwark. Southwark split.

Q. "Stepney not usually sub-divided; Strand, not the "practice to divide; Wandsworth, rarely sub-divide; "Westminster, not the practice to sub-divide; White- "chapel, not the practice to sub-divide; Woolwich, not "sub-divided." Mr. Oxley, that return, which covers all but two or three unions, shows that the general practice of London is not to sub-divide?—Yes.

Q. In putting to us what the results would be if we split tenders, you put upon us what was not the general practice in London, and what was the practice we never adopted. That is so?—Yes.

Mr. Oxley.

17 July.

Mr. Oxley,
17 July.

Q. And which we had a discretion as to whether we would take or not?—Oh, yes.

Q. So in these two cases—first of all you put the lowest tenders upon us, which is not the general practice?—Well, I think you can say it is the general practice, with exceptions.

Q. Did you put it to us with exceptions?—Well, your exceptions are so great.

Q. You think so, but you have had no explanation of that. You put upon us, first of all, universal lowest tenders, which was not the practice, and then you put upon us split tenders, which is not the practice?—It is the partial practice.

Q. Not the general practice, and I think that caused you to put upon us a matter which is entirely within our own discretion?—Yes, I am only stating facts.

Q. I know you say you are stating facts, but you may state facts in such a way as to convey a very wrong impression?—I do not think I do.

Q. That is quite possible, is it not?—Yes.

Q. And when you say the Poplar Guardians have not accepted—in the Memorandum you say the Poplar Guardians—?—It is not my Memorandum.

Q. Well, we will call it Mr. Davy's Memorandum?

(The Inspector.) That will do.

(Mr. Grant.) Let me take this sentence out—"Tenders are taken in bulk and at the last quarter day in 17 cases out of 30 or 40 tenders the lowest were not accepted." Would it not be fair to add "I can find no instance in London boards of guardians, where the lowest tender is accepted in every case"?—It would not have been quite true.

Q. Can you find the case of a board of guardians who accepted the lowest tender in every case?—Bethnal Green, for instance.

Q. Bethnal Green is a strong case against you because Poplar Guardians accept general tenders from contractors and exclude those whom they suspect. Bethnal Green Guardians exclude from the right to tender men they suspect, obviously getting the highest class of tenderer, and more liberty to choose the lowest. If you issue your tenders and then say: "These we exclude as undesirable, because they have not kept to their tender contract, or are men we know to be on the verge of bankruptcy," and then say "We now take the lowest tender." You will find the comparison between us and Bethnal Green is much more?—Some you have rejected Bethnal Green have accepted.

Q. Again do not you think you ought to have said that in your figures. Here were figures which had not been examined by the guardians, and were figures which you had taken out without explanation?—I do not think so.

Q. But the rest of your figures, Mr. Oxley?—Which figures are you speaking of?

Q. The figures in paragraph 10 of the Memorandum?—Do you mean that figure—the difference in the tender.

Q. I mean this figure about the £1,000?—That was sent me by Mr. Lough, so I took it as correct as coming from the guardians.

Q. The figure £1,500 in your calculation; that figure was sent you by Mr. Lough?—Yes.

Q. He did not send you the £1,500?—He sent me figures which enabled me to arrive at it.

Q. You made a mistake?—No, it was proved to be a mistake owing to the way the figures were sent me.

Q. You did not know what the figures meant. That is correct, is it not?—I took them to mean what they appeared to show.

Q. As a matter of fact they did not mean what you took them to mean. That is so, is it not?—That is so.

Q. And if you knew anything about alternative figures you would have known what the figures were?—When they are alternative tenders it generally says so, and in this case it did not say so.

Q. A man with a larger experience of Poor Law work would see when he saw these two columns of figures, that these were alternative tenders?—No, they might have been half-yearly tenders.

Q. When you reported it to Mr. Davy and he approved it, it would have been fairer to say "these are figures

"which I have taken out of the guardians' accounts. They are made up subject to revision for errors and omissions"?—I had nothing to do with writing the paragraph. I simply gave Mr. Davy the figures.

Q. You divided the responsibility?—I know nothing about responsibility. I take the whole responsibility for my figures.

Q. Then you take full responsibility. Do not you think, as the figure is yours, you ought to have said: "These are figures which I have myself taken from figures supplied to me by the guardians. There may be explanations which will alter the figures"?—I did not think that was necessary.

Q. You see it is necessary now?—Directly Mr. Lough pointed the correction out I made it.

Q. You see this printed document is still on sale at the King's printers. It has been circulated through the Times all over the country, and neither in the document or the document in the Times has the correction been pointed out which you pointed out to me yesterday. Anybody buying the document to-day from the King's printers will find that wrong figure of £1,500?—Yes.

Q. That figure ought to be £1,000?—Yes.

Q. Do not you think, when you were submitting those figures to Mr. Davy, for inclusion in this Memorandum—you ought to have said there might be a possible explanation as to that tender?—I simply gave the figures as to the difference between the accepted tenders and the lowest tenders, as submitted to me by Mr. Lough.

Q. Very well, but what I am going to put to you—Mr. Oxley, what I want to get an answer from you on is, you were applying to these tenders of the Poplar Board of Guardians what is not applied anywhere else in London?—I do not agree with you.

Q. Tell me any union in which it is applied. It is put in the Memorandum that their total contracts come to £45,000. Would it not have been fairer if you had said on £45,000, by taking the lowest tender they might have made a saving of £1,500. The thing would not have appeared so gross as saying simply a saving of £1,500 if they took the lowest tender?—I do not know. I simply got the facts.

Q. You said you accepted the responsibility for the figures?—So I do.

Q. Very well, let us stop at that?—It is so obvious what happened.

Q. I want to put to you what the Local Government Board has been doing in dealing with us. It has applied to us a test which is not applied to any other board of guardians in London. There is no other board of guardians which accepts the lowest tender with an open contract field, is there?—Not that I know of, but that is the second part of your question. You asked me two questions in one. In the first you said I applied a test that is not applied to any other board of guardians. I think it is. It is one that ought to show to us what the guardians are doing.

Q. But where the guardians have an open field for tenders is there any board of guardians in London that throughout any one half-year have accepted the lowest tender?—I cannot do any more than give the answer I have already given.

Q. May I take it the answer is no?—The answer is, I do not know. I cannot say one way or the other.

Q. Now let us carry it one step further and finish it. Why did you apply to the guardians a test that has never hitherto been applied to any board of guardians?—I do not think I did.

Q. Very well, the facts remain. Now, then, tell me this: Why did you submit these figures to Mr. Davy as figures on which he might prepare a memorandum without submitting them to us first and asking us whether we had any corrections to make?—I simply gave Mr. Davy information he wanted. They are figures supplied to me by Mr. Lough.

Q. That is not correct. You keep on saying that. It is not correct. Mr. Lough supplied you with a number of figures. Upon those figures you made certain calculations. Those calculations you submitted to Mr. Davy for inclusion in his Memorandum?—I submitted them to Mr. Davy. I did not know what he was going to do with them.

Q. You do not suppose he was going to put them on the fire?—I did not.

Mr. Oxley

17 July.

Q. They were submitted to him for some purpose?—I gave him the information he wanted.

Q. Looking back on the past, and knowing the situation as you knew it, do not you think it would have been wiser of you if you had asked Mr. Lough to criticise these calculations before you passed them on to Mr. Davy?

(The Inspector.) Was that paragraph 10 in the Memorandum on the 24th May? (The document was handed to the Inspector.)

(Mr. Grant.) When did you supply the figures upon which this paragraph 10 is based?—I am sure I cannot remember.

Q. Can you give me a date at all?—No.

Q. March, April, or May?—It was March, April, or May, I should think. I do not think it was February.

Q. And then this typewritten Memorandum was sent to us on the 24th May with a letter asking us to make any observations or suggestions, and then on the 7th June it was sent to us printed?—I think so.

Q. Do you think, considering the amount of work you did on those figures, a fortnight was sufficient to check them?—How do you mean—to check them—to check a thing like this.

Q. To check the Memorandum?—It is more than a fortnight since that Memorandum has been there.

Q. I did not ask you that?—You mean between the typewritten one and the printed one?

Q. Yes?—I think it was rather pressed on because the guardians were anxious to have it.

Q. You have not answered the question. Do you think the typewritten Memorandum, which had some of the figures, not all, and some of the charts, not all, sent to us on the 24th May, and the printed one issued to us on the 7th June.—Do you think between the 24th May and the 7th June we had an opportunity of checking thoroughly all the figures and charges contained in that Memorandum?—No, I do not think so, but I think you could take them pretty well as correct, because they were from blue books and things of that sort, except the one I took, which was from the guardians. I think the table that was from the guardians' own books was sent much earlier for them to look at, and was altered in consequence.

Q. Mr. Lough is quite right; I am giving the date the letter was written instead of the date it was received. It was written on the 24th May, and we received it on the 25th. Thereon Mr. Davy says: "I shall be obliged for any corrections or suggestions. I will have copies printed and circulated as soon as possible"—I do not think there was any letter asking for time to verify.

Q. Mr. Lough says he had no figures at all sent to us?—Oh, I gave Mr. Lough that chart.

(Mr. Lough.) Chart E, yes?—Not chart, Table E. I left my own copy with Mr. Lough.

(The Inspector.) Do you remember I suggested to you these lines had been knocked out of a number of papers, because I could not make sense of them?

(Mr. Lough.) Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) I ask you one question about Table E, I think it is. That was submitted by you to some meeting?—I showed it to Mr. Lough.

Q. When was that?—I cannot remember.

Q. Is it February or March?—Mr. Lough will know.

Q. I have got the exact date here somewhere?—I will take whatever date you say.

Q. What was the date, Mr. Lough?

(Mr. Lough.) I think it was the 3rd April.

(Witness.) I have got a recollection of the first or second visit made. We were looking into the relieving officers' books. I showed Mr. Lough a draft of it in rather a rough state and asked him to account for the difference on the Metropolitan Poor Fund. It was some time even before that.

(Mr. Grant.) There was one occasion on which you met the guardians and submitted the figures and an error was pointed out to you at once?—Oh, yes; that was one of the figures, when I showed that rough draft to Mr. Lough, and I was pointing it out as rather a high figure, and he explained at once, and I saw what it was. I saw the two half-years had been added together, and the inmates overlapped for the two half-years. We had counted them both.

Q. That was a figure which, if it had not been for Mr. Lough's criticism, I suppose, would have gone on your own memorandum?—Oh, no; because it was also pointed out to me by someone, who did not hear what Mr. Lough said, directly afterwards.

Q. It was one of the guardians?—Oh, yes.

Q. The criticism came entirely from Poplar?—It came quite spontaneously from Poplar.

Q. I agree; but did not your experience when, at a very early period of your investigations, having a correction of that kind pointed out to you by one of the guardians, make you think it would be well that you should have supplied your other calculations to the guardians before you gave them to Mr. Davy?—I do not think so. I gave a lot of my figures to Mr. Lough.

Q. I agree on the 24th May?—No, no, I mean an earlier date, 3rd April.

Q. That was one table, was it not?—The table or figures that came from the guardians' own books. The others were from the blue books, and they were checked by an accountant clerk.

Q. Now, I have not got the documents I want to ask you on, but I think they are here, and I will put them to you as soon as I get them.

(The Inspector.) What are they?

(Mr. Grant.) Various blue books issued.

(Mr. Lansbury.) There is only this about these provisions. We really—in fairness to us, after the statement you have made, it ought not to have been kept out—here Bethnal Green are supplying these people with the best cocoa, the best of everything as a matter of fact, and sometimes above our prices. It ought to be shown other workhouses do feed paupers as we do.

(The Inspector.) No, not at all, and I think I ought to say some of the guardians of Poplar are protesting against the present form of contracting.

(Mr. Welch.) I may have one or two questions.

(The Inspector.) It would save trouble, Mr. Lough, if you would give us the history of that proviso in your tender form which says that unless all the items are contracted for the tender is lost. Can you give us that?

(Mr. Lansbury.) I have the tender form.

(Mr. Lough.) The guardians state in the conditions of tender, that they do not bind themselves to accept the lowest or any tender, and they reserve to themselves the right to accept a tender for any one or more articles, without contracting for all the articles included in such tender.

(The Inspector.) Is not there a clause or regulation, that unless the contractor tenders for all the articles, his contract is not accepted?

(Mr. Lough.) No, sir.

(The Inspector.) I think there is a misunderstanding on the notes.

(Mr. Grant.) Those are the conditions which are submitted to the contractors?

(Mr. Lough.) Yes, sir.

(Mr. Grant.) And the board makes a practice, I think, of rejecting any tender which is not priced for all the articles under the heading?

(Mr. Lough.) Generally, that is so.

(The Inspector.) They insist on having a tender which prices every article in the particular kind of tender.

(Mr. Lough.) That would apply generally to the annual contracts, but not the special tenders for coal.

(Mr. Grant.) I see in looking through the books, I see a tender marked "informal," and signed with the chairman's initials. That would mean—

(Mr. Lough.) That the tender was not carried out in all the items, and therefore the tender was not comparable with the other totals given.

(Mr. Grant.) These tenders were not put in the list, and were rejected at once. I see on the shorthand notes that mention is made of Mr. Madeley's receipts he has handed in. May I see those? We have not got them on the notes. I just want to identify them.

(The Inspector.) What is that?

(Mr. Grant.) Only for the shorthand notes; we might just as well do it now. I understand Miss Evins' book has been handed to you. May I see it?

(Mr. Marsh.) It is in the outer office.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Marsh has got it.

(Mr. Grant.) May we have Miss Evins' book. Mr. Marsh says it is outside.

(Mr. Oxley.) When you said the informal tenders were not included in the list, which list did you mean?

(Mr. Grant.) I meant in the books of the guardians.

(Mr. Oxley.) I thought you meant the list sent to me?

(Mr. Grant.) Oh, no. Might we have the evidence to tell us?

(The Inspector.) What shall we do about that book?

(Mr. Grant.) Both Mr. Lansbury and Mr. Marsh say that they were satisfied that this book of Miss Evins is not the book which she spoke of in her evidence. For my part, I should sooner she said so than even that Mr. Lansbury and Mr. Marsh should say so. This book goes back to 1898.

(Mr. Lansbury.) She must have had two books.

(Mr. Oxley.) Had not we better have her here?

(The Inspector.) Oh, yes; telephone down to Miss Evins, and ask her to come up after luncheon.

(Mr. Grant.) There is a witness, Palmer, whom you called, sir. I have to cross-examine him.

(The Inspector.) We will wait till Mr. Robb comes back; he should be available shortly.

(Mr. Welch.) Mr. Robb understood, rightly or wrongly, that Mr. Corrie Grant would cross-examine the relieving officers, and that it would take a couple of hours this morning.

(The Inspector.) Very well, Mr. Grant, we will send for Palmer.

(Mr. Grant.) You spoke of calling Pyle, Eaton, Pocock, and Whitlock. Pyle we have had, and Eaton, I have offered you a proof of his evidence.

(The Inspector.) Cartwright will be left; I do not want him myself.

(Mr. Grant.) I think we had better leave that to Mr. Robb.

(The Inspector.) I should suggest leaving it. I will call him if you want him.

(Mr. Grant.) I think we ought to have him here. I will think it over. Looking at the notes, I saw that letter of yours, and saw we only had Pyle.

(The Inspector.) We had Percival, you know, one of them.

(Mr. Grant.) Oh, yes, I remember. I was out of the room when he was called. Perhaps we had better go on now.

Mr. F. A. BERRY; recalled, and further examined.

Mr. Berry.
17 July.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Berry, I think you wrote a letter to Mr. Davy in regard to the meeting of the relieving officers you were asked about. May I suggest, Mr. Davy, that that be read.

(Mr. Turner.) I have sent it to the Press.

(Mr. Grant.) I have not had one.

(The Inspector.) It has escaped my mind entirely. I am told that letter is on the notes?

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Turner, I think that is a copy of it. I just want it read through, sir. "28th June, 1906.—Sir, I beg to report to you that after having given my evidence I was reminded by a brother officer that I had attended a meeting of R.O.'s. This was on the occasion of the announcement of your public inquiry, and we met and discussed probable queries, as was natural. It was left to me to draw up certain heads for future discussion, but nothing further ever came of the meeting—we have not met since. The only other meeting of R.O.'s that I remember was in 1904 when we decided to apply to the guardians for assistance. Mr. Robb's form of question put me off. He said 'meetings' within the last few months, and, I think, connected Mr. Lansbury's name with the questions. I have to say that at no time have I discussed our probable evidence with the guardians. I am, Sir, yours obediently, FREDK. A. BERRY. J. S. Davy, Esq., C.B."

That is your correction. In addition to the ordinary practice in regard to relief, did the Local Government Board issue a special order in regard to the Poplar Union?—Yes.

Q. In 1905?—Yes.

Q. I think that was in 1905, was it not?—I believe it was, sir.

Q. It is dated February 3rd, 1905. It authorises the guardians, during the operation of the Order, to relieve out of the workhouse the wife and family of any able-bodied male person who is relieved in the workhouse?—Yes, sir.

Q. Under these conditions:—“(2) An able-bodied male person who is relieved in the workhouse, while his wife and family are relieved by the guardians out of the workhouse, shall not be absent from the workhouse more than once in any one week, nor for a period exceeding 12 hours, nor without the consent of the guardians. (3) Any such able-bodied male person who is absent from the workhouse without any contravention of subdivision (2) of this Article may be relieved by the guardians during his absence from the workhouse without being set to work during the time or any part of the time of his absence.”—Do you remember receiving a copy of the temporary order?—Yes.

Q. And you acted upon it?—Yes, that had reference to Laindon.

Q. That order is limited to the guardians of the poor of the Poplar Union?—Yes, I believe so.

Q. So that the Local Government Board drew up and issued a special order authorising one of the terms of the experiment which was being tried at Laindon?—Yes. They recognized the special set of circumstances for the time being, I take it from that.

Q. Just one question as to the special pressure in the winter of 1904-5. Did the Local Government Board send down assistants to help your officials in the distribution of relief?—Yes, I believe they sanctioned the appointment of visitors.

Q. What was the work of the visitors?—To visit homes and to enquire into the statements as regards employment of the applicants as far as possible.

Q. That ordinarily would be the duty of the relieving officers?—That is so.

Q. And an important part of their work?—Yes, sir.

Q. And the Local Government Board, in order to help the guardians, sent down special persons who were to assist the relieving officers in their duties?—Yes, sir.

Q. Have you ever known that done before?

(The Inspector.) We did not send down anyone. We authorised the appointment of assistants; the guardians appointed them.

(Mr. Grant.) It comes to the same thing.

(The Inspector.) No, because we have not sent down anybody.

(Mr. Grant.) I was not exactly sure of the point. Mr. Davy says that the Local Government Board did not send down assistants, but especially authorised their appointment?—Yes, by the guardians.

Q. Was that not in consequence of the sudden pressure and the poverty of the district?—It was in consequence of the number of applications we were receiving. It was recognised that we could not possibly deal with them personally.

Q. The relieving officers could not possibly deal with them. You told us in your evidence that that was the worst winter you had known in Poplar except the great frost of 1895?—That is so.

Q. What was it that made the great pressure of the winter of 1904?—The Russian war was in progress. There was no grain or oil coming into the docks, and there was a general depression in trade all over the

country. I know that tradesmen in Poplar were complaining of the slackness of trade generally, and I am perfectly satisfied it was a very bad time indeed.

Q. And do you know whether there was or was not the usual amount of work in the docks?—I do not think there was anything like the amount of work in the docks that there is at present.

Q. Was the result of that depression that you had persons coming to you for relief who ordinarily would have been at work and maintaining themselves?—Well, yes.

Q. One other question—about the labour yard in 1894. Do you remember that yard in that year?—Yes, I do.

Q. Was that a success?—No. I should not like to repeat the experiment personally.

Q. Will you put it shortly, Mr. Berry. Was it specially opened because of the distress?—Yes.

Q. Were the men employed in breaking stones?—They were.

Q. How many?—I cannot remember the numbers. In my district, which was one of the roughest in the union, I suppose there were from 80 to 100 men per day.

Q. From your district alone?—Yes.

Q. And how long was it open?—About three months, from recollection.

Q. In your judgment, was that effort a failure?—It was.

Q. You would not wish to see it repeated?—No.

Q. Now, as to interference by individual guardians, you have been asked about instances of it. Have you given all the instances you had in your experience of interference by guardians with particular cases of relief?—Yes. Of course there was a sort of court of appeal. They said if they did not get relief they would see someone else. That did not affect me personally, as I have explained.

Q. The people who came to you for relief and were refused would say they would see somebody else?—Yes.

Q. They usually say that anyhow?—Yes, all sorts of things.

Q. And they do not affect your mind?—Not at all.

Q. I put this directly to you—have the guardians habitually interfered with you in the administration of relief in your district?—I should say decidedly, not at all; not in my committees, the committees I have had to deal with.

Q. The guardians here do devote a very great deal of time to the examination of the conditions of the poor people in the district?—Oh, yes.

Q. And many of them, at any rate, are absolutely in touch with the poorest in the district?—Very much so.

Q. And is it true, what one of the witnesses said, that "the guardians sometimes knew more about the cases than I do"?—That would not apply to myself.

Q. It might be true of another relieving officer?—Yes, I should hardly have admitted it, if I had been the officer in question.

Q. At this particular time, when this great pressure existed, would it be true to say that the guardians knew more of particular cases that came on?—It might of particular cases.

Q. Prior to their coming to the committee, they might know more of individual cases than the relieving officers?—Yes.

Q. And you were never asked to do more than relieve the cases until the meeting of the relief committee?—That is so.

Q. Which takes place, how often?—Weekly.

Q. And at this time were the relief committees sitting oftener than weekly?—Twice a week.

(The Inspector.) Is that all?

(Mr. Grant.) Yes, sir.

(The Inspector.) When the labour yard was closed was there instantly a drop in the relief?—Yes. We met the position in this way. When the labour yard was closed, we told them that that closed the relief for the able-bodied, and we offered admission to the workhouse in every case; and therefore the applications ceased.

Q. And the numbers in receipt of relief decreased in a way which may be compared to the decrease now?—Yes, I should say.

(Mr. Grant.) May I ask you, Mr. Berry, when the frost broke up in 1895, is it a fact that the labour yard and the stone yard were then closed?

(The Inspector.) I just put it—the relief dropped.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Berry, after the labour yard was closed, was there a riot, and were not these offices attacked by the persons who had been receiving relief?—I believe Mr. Crooks was very much brought into question over the closing of the stone yards.

Q. So that he knows more about it than you do. And the drop in the relief that took place suddenly was due to the frost breaking up and ships getting into the docks?—Yes.

Q. And, I presume, because of the delay of the ships, there was a tremendous rush of work?—Yes.

Q. Every man who could get employment wanted it?—But it did not stop the applications for relief.

Q. I ask you now whether it is true that in the winter of 1904-5 the out-relief was indiscriminate and wasteful. What is your opinion on that?—It had to be indiscriminate to a certain extent. Men got relief who would not have it at any other time. Known bad characters came up and we had to relieve them, because they came through want of food.

Q. This was a case where you were simply overwhelmed by applications in consequence of the abnormal want of work in the docks?—Yes. We knew there was a great depression in the district, and admitted the principle of relieving the people, so that a great many trooped in who would not have come at other times.

(The Inspector.) We rather had that before, Mr. Grant. On June 22nd he told us about that.

(Mr. Grant.) Yes, I am referring to a passage in his examination by Mr. Robb, asking him about it. (To witness.) Do you suggest when this sudden great demand for relief sprung up that the guardians deliberately wasted the rates in relief?—No, I do not suggest that at all.

Q. They did the best they could under the circumstances?—Under the circumstances.

Q. With a very wide knowledge of the absolute poverty in the district for the time being. And did a similar state of things exist at West Ham?—Yes, and in the West End unions, too. In Kensington, I believe, they had to make some provision.

Q. Which was it the *Daily News* had a fund for. West Ham?—Yes.

Q. And they raised something like £12,000 to relieve the distress among the dock workers?—Yes.

Q. There was no such fund raised in Poplar. As to the relief committees, Mr. Berry, Mr. Diamond stated that relief committees' cases were not properly investigated. So far as your experience goes, is that true?—All cases for permanent out-door relief are very much gone into. The others are more or less left in the relieving officer's hands.

(The Inspector.) What is the next witness?

(Mr. Grant.) There is Mr. Deason, Mr. Comfort, or Mr. Law.

Mr. Berry.

17 July.

Mr. A. LAW; recalled, and further examined.

(Mr. Grant.) There are only two questions I want to ask you. In your evidence here you say:—"Q. When a man got his relief, and the end of the week came, his case was off?—Oh, he came up again each week. Q. Yes, but did he make another application to you?—Yes. Q. Always another application each week?—Yes.

"Q. And each case was mentioned to the committee?—"Yes, it was reported each week to the committee. "Q. Was it written out fresh each week?—Copied out "each week." A man came to you originally for relief, and you gave it. Then the case went before the committee?—Yes.

Mr. Law.

17 July.

Mr. Law.
E.
17 July.

Q. And did the committee see on your book what your notes were in regard to the case?—Yes.

Q. And if they wanted to know anything about it they asked you?—That is so.

Q. What happened?—People applied again.

Q. When the case was so submitted to the committee, and they saw your book, and asked questions about it, was the man put on for relief or not, according to the judgment of the committee?—No.

Q. What happened?—The cases were approved by the committee, and the man would probably make another application.

Q. But supposing the case was disapproved by the committee?—In that case nothing further would be given.

Q. If the case was approved by the committee, then the man would get relief?—He would make another application.

Q. And if it were disapproved by the committee, he would not get relief if he had applied?—Certainly not, if the committee disapproved of it.

Q. Now just tell me, I think you have had a long experience as a relieving officer?—Not very long, since 1897.

(The Inspector.) You told us all about that.

(Mr. Grant.) I was going to ask him about 1894?—I was an assistant then, sir.

Q. How long have you had experience in relief?—Since 1897, at relief.

Q. What were you in 1894?—Assistant general relieving officer, dealing with lunatics and various other matters.

Q. When did you first begin to deal with giving relief to applicants?—September 22, 1897.

Q. So that, when there was this heavy time in 1895, you were not actually concerned in giving relief?—No, sir.

(The Inspector.) Have you many examples, as a relieving officer, where the guardians objected to the relief of able-bodied men?—I had some cases, but not in my present district. On the one I am superintendent of, I had a few cases brought up.

Q. To which the guardians refused to give relief?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) Excuse me, Mr. Law, did you, some time before this Inquiry, go to one of the guardians, and consult him about the Inquiry?—I should like to make a corrected statement in regard to that. When Mr. Robb put his question to me, on June 29th, I was under the impression that he meant, had I visited guardians' houses since the Inquiry had been held. I misunderstood the question then. I had been to a guardian previous to that, but I could not give you the date.

Mr. A. C. DEASON; recalled, and further examined.

Mr. Deason,
17 July.

(Mr. Grant.) You, I think, have had a very long experience as a relieving officer?—No, sir.

Q. You told us in your evidence that you had had some previous experience at Bethnal Green?—That is right, sir.

Q. For how long?—I was there about three and a half months.

Q. And from there did you come here?—No, I was printer's overseer for three years in between.

Q. Were you appointed here out of a number of applications?—Yes.

Q. How many; do you remember?—I could not tell you, sir.

Q. You were asked by Mr. Robb whether you were compelled to relieve in any case against your judgment, and you said in one or two instances. Except for the cases you mentioned in answer to Mr. Robb, have you been compelled to relieve against your judgment?—Do you mean generally?

Q. Yes?—Certainly not.

Q. Do the guardians know a very great deal about the persons who apply for relief?—Sometimes.

Q. Is it sometimes the case that on the first occasion a guardian knows more about it than the relieving officer?—I should say no.

Q. It was before the Inquiry happened?—Yes, that would be so.

Q. You went to see one of the guardians?—Yes.

Q. Did anybody else go with you?—Yes.

Q. Who else?—Two of my colleagues.

Q. Their names?—Mr. Gard and Mr. Deason.

Q. Who was the guardian you went to?—Am I compelled to answer that?

Q. Of course, there is not the least objection?—Mr. Lansbury.

Q. Why did you go?—We went to him for advice.

Q. Why did you want advice. You knew the Inquiry was coming?—Yes.

Q. Did you want to consult him about that?—Yes.

Q. Did you go to Mr. Lansbury's house?—We did.

Q. In St. Stephen's Road?—Yes.

Q. And you saw him?—Yes.

Q. Who was spokesman, you?—I think Mr. Gard did all the talking.

Q. What was said—tell me in short?—We asked Mr. Lansbury what line of action we ought to take up in the matter.

Q. What did Mr. Lansbury tell you?—We had a long conversation, and he gave us a lot of advice; I cannot think of all he said.

Q. What was the gist of it—the point of it?—Mr. Lansbury said: "We were dealing with those cases under sudden necessity, and considered we did the right thing. The men were out of work and wanted food."

Q. And he said that, above all things, you were to speak the truth?—I believe he did.

Q. That was a part, and an important part of the conversation?—Quite so.

Q. Did he impress that on you?—Yes.

Q. Above everything else, take care and speak the truth in the evidence you give?—Quite so.

(Mr. Welch.) I do not know whether Mr. Robb would wish to cross-examine Mr. Law upon this. This interview with Mr. Lansbury is important.

(The Inspector.) The point is this. Mr. Law made a statement, and wished to correct the evidence he gave on a former occasion.

(Mr. Welch.) The point is that it is fresh evidence.

(The Inspector.) Don't go away, Mr. Law.

(Mr. Welch.) We want to know what that advice was.

(The Inspector.) The advice was, tell the truth.

(Mr. Grant.) Perhaps Mr. Law will wait while we go on to Mr. Deason.

Q. Never?—He might if he lives next door to him.

Q. That is the case. The guardians live among the poor and are in constant touch with them, and know a great deal about the cases?—Yes.

Q. And any information they readily give to the relieving officer?—Sometimes I find it useful.

Q. In the winter of 1904-5 you gave a very great deal of relief?—In 1905, sir, yes.

Q. Was that relief given indiscriminately?—Well, I cannot say that. I had a great number of people on my books and could not give them the attention I should have liked.

Q. You gave all the attention you could?—Yes.

Q. And were visitors appointed to help?—He was appointed before I was appointed.

Q. You found a visitor there when you went?—Yes.

Q. And he helped to inquire into the cases?—Yes.

Q. Was the relief given wastefully?—It might have been on one or two occasions.

Q. Generally not?—Generally no.

Q. With such a rush of applicants there must have been some cases where people got more relief than they would have got if you had had time to investigate?—There was a great deal of destitution.

Q. A great deal of destitution?—Yes.

Q. That was most unusual, was it not?—I should say it was. The year 1905 commenced with almost unprecedented stagnation of trade.

Q. Was it a fact that the grain ships from the Baltic could not get to the docks because of the war?—I could not tell you; I did not deal with the docks.

Q. Did not you have a dock district?—No, sir.

Q. In the cases where relief was abused did you report it?—Every case.

Q. And did the guardians investigate it?—Yes, and the relief was stopped.

Q. And men were prosecuted where the facts justified it?—Yes, certainly.

Q. Which was the committee you attended; which was your committee?—No. I relief committee.

Q. Who was the chairman?—Mr. Watts.

Q. Was that the committee Mr. Diamond attended?—Yes.

Q. So far as your experience of that committee went, were the cases properly investigated by the guardians?—I should say so, yes.

Q. Did Mr. Watts himself make considerable inquiry into the cases?—He did.

Q. Did you go with Mr. Law and Mr. Gard to see Mr. Lansbury just before the inquiry?—Yes, sir, we did.

Q. What was your reason for going?—To get a little advice.

Q. When you got there, what did you ask Mr. Lansbury?—What he thought the Inquiry would carry us into, and what scope it would take.

Q. Tell me the conversation as nearly as you can remember?—I could not tell you.

Q. Give me the points?—It was a general conversation; nothing very important was said.

Q. What did you ask Mr. Lansbury's advice about. Did you ask him what you were likely to be asked if you were called as witnesses?—No, because we could not contemplate what we should be asked.

Q. Did Mr. Lansbury tell you what you should do if you were called?—He told us to speak the truth, whatever we were asked.

Q. And impressed it strongly on you?—He did.

Q. Now, I only want Mr. Gard on the conversation; that is all, if you think it necessary to carry it further.

(The Inspector.) It is very necessary in the case of the first man, but not with this one.

(Mr. Grant.) May I have Mr. Comfort?

(The Inspector.) Where is Mr. Comfort?

(Mr. Grant.) There are one or two notes on his evidence—I want to ask a question about the waste, a question about dietary.

(The Inspector.) Call Mr. Comfort. Oh, Miss Evans is here.

(Mr. Grant.) Well, call her.

(The Inspector.) Perhaps I had better examine her.

Mr. Deason,
17 July.

Miss EVINS; recalled, and further examined.

(The Inspector.) Will you look at this book. What is that book?—This is a book that I kept to give an account of the names of the officers' uniforms and the month they would be required in.

Q. This is not the book you were talking of yesterday?—Certainly not.

Q. Look at the other end?—This is the record at the other end that I kept years ago before I handed the work over to the officers. Now I hand the work over to the officers in charge of the different departments where I send the work. At one time I used to hand it in to a woman I could depend upon.

Q. It is all the same sort of thing; you merely change the formula?—But the book missing is the material book.

(Mr. Grant.) The book missing did not contain entries such as are in that book at all?—No.

Q. It contained entries of material which you received from Mrs. Madeley?—Yes.

Q. Unmade up?—Certainly.

Q. And then it also showed you got, for instance—would it be 100 yards—of calico or something?—At different times.

Q. And on the other side of the book you would show what it had been made into?—The number of articles it was cut into and the names of the articles.

Q. 100 yards of calico would cut into so many sheets?—Yes, that would be entered.

Q. On the other side?—Yes.

Q. And those sheets you would hand to Mrs. Madeley?—Certainly.

Q. Would she send for them?—No.

Q. What proof had you that the sheets had gone back?—Simply by them being there to take out when required.

Q. But you do not follow me. You put into your book the fact that you have received 100 yards of calico from Mrs. Madeley?—Certainly.

Q. That entry in your handwriting charges you with the receipt of 100 yards of calico?—Certainly.

Q. Against that you put how many sheets out of 100 yards of calico?—That is according if it is officers'; $3\frac{1}{4}$ yards each.

Q. Say, roughly, cut into 20 sheets; say, roughly, about 99 or 96 yards of calico, you put in and received from Mrs. Madeley, and against that you ought to hand out about 30 sheets, you say?—About that, at a rough guess.

Q. You put in the book 30 officers' sheets, showing that these 100 yards of calico had been made into those sheets?—Certainly; but I have a small book outside that I have started since Mrs. Madeley has given up. It will show you exactly.

Q. You put into it that has been manufactured into 30 sheets?—Just so.

Q. Was there anything in the book to show you returned the 30 sheets to Mrs. Madeley?—I asked Mrs. Madeley if she would kindly receive my work, so that it should be straightforward, and she said there was no necessity whatever. She had every faith in me.

Q. The book was simply a record of transactions between you and Mrs. Madeley and had nothing to do with the official working of the union; it never formed part of the books of the union?—I had to take it every time Mrs. Madeley wanted to know how many articles I cut out of the material issued to me. I was forced to take the book to give her the correct amount. I had so many yards—sometimes a thousand yards at a time—it would be impossible to remember otherwise than by booking up.

Miss Evans,
17 July.

Mr. R. W. E. COMFORT; recalled, and further examined.

(Mr. Grant.) I want to ask you about the waste in cutting up the joints. Your waste in cutting up meat delivered to you by the contractor?—Yes, sir.

Q. How do you get meat from the contractors. Would it be in big pieces?—Yes, sir; pieces averaging, I should think—well, according to the size of the piece.

Q. I mean, would they be quarters of beef?—No, sir, middle ribs.

Q. With the bone taken out?—Yes.

Q. What would a piece like that average?—It would average, I should think, about five stone.

Q. That would be 40 pounds, or 70?—84.

Q. It is 14 pounds to the stone?—Yes, sir.

Q. 70 pounds?—Yes, sir.

Q. They would average between 67 and 75 pounds?—Yes, sir.

Mr. Comfort,
17 July.

Mr. Comfort,
17 July.

Q. So that one piece, you would have to cut the meat which was to be delivered to the persons who were to have it?—Yes, sir.

Q. What would be the amount they would receive—what is the smallest amount?—We often have to cut 75 joints out of 100 lbs. of meat. For instance, we often cut 50 1-lbs. and 25 2-lbs., so I have to turn the scale 75 times to every 100 lbs. of meat. There is a loss involved of quite 2 per cent.

Q. In so cutting up big joints, must there invariably be waste?—Yes. I have been cutting up meat for 12 years, and I have not been able to do it without yet.

Q. If you had a 75-lb. lump of meat and had to cut it into 75 1-lb. portions, could you do it?—It would be impossible to get the weight.

Q. In your evidence, you spoke—you said, I think as a practical man, you will find that 5 per cent.—?—Yes, sir; of waste. I find I have already reduced the waste meat for the Lady Day quarter by 419 pounds.

Q. Was that by a new system of dealing with the cutting up?—Only by a stricter supervision of the meat, but cutting more up myself.

Q. That is to say, a man skilled in cutting up would get less waste than a man put at it for the first time?—Yes.

Q. A man who had not had experience could not cut to half an ounce?—No, sir.

Q. What is the nearest, on an average, a man cutting up could go to?—An experienced man cutting up a large quantity could, I suppose, do it under five.

Q. I mean, you have that middle-rib piece weighing 75 lbs. You want to cut it into 75 1-lb. portions. What is the nearest you will get. Will there be some of them 15 ounces?—No, sir. If you turn the scale every time—

Q. I see; if you cut off exactly a pound, and enough to make the scale turn—?—And remain down.

Q. And remain down: You will lose 5 per cent. on the whole joint?—I do not say you will always lose 5 per cent. on the whole joint, but 2 per cent. on the scale: you would lose 2 lbs. on every hundred.

Q. Besides the turn of the scale, which you say is 2 lbs. in a hundred, is there also some loss in actual cutting?—If you leave five stone of meat over from one day to another, it loses in hanging. If I had six or seven stone of meat on Saturday to be kept till Monday, and that is hanging, I necessarily must trim it up before it is fit for consumption, and that involves a loss on five stone of meat of about 14 or 15 lbs.

(The Inspector.) Taking 14 lbs. to the stone?

(Mr. Grant.) You say, in answer to Mr. Robb, that you have been able to go away from complicated prices and introduce a uniform price, which works out at 10s. overcharge on every £1,000. Will you explain the system upon which you are working?—Of course, I have had different contract prices. Under the new contracts I had different prices to work upon.

Q. Do I follow you correctly; a list is delivered to you of the persons who are to receive certain goods?—No, sir, we receive a ticket, in the nature of an order, from every applicant.

Q. The relieving officers give the tickets to the applicant, and the applicant comes with the ticket?—Yes.

Q. And that says he is to receive 3 lbs. of meat, and so many pounds of flour, and so much bread, and so much sugar, and so on?—Yes.

Q. How do you deal with that?—It is followed out, and I have to submit to the relieving officers a price list every quarter; in fact, my object is to keep the price as near as I possibly can to contract prices.

Q. I don't see that quite. Why do you send prices to the relieving officers?—He would not know what prices to carry out his items on.

Q. I see, in order to see what his relief is costing the guardians, you supply him with the contract price?—Yes, sir, and I give the price as near as possible to contract price.

Q. Why not give him the actual contract price?—I could not do that without introducing fractions in the relief lists, and that you cannot do.

Q. And you have got as near to the contract price as you can?—I could not possibly get any nearer. I had saved 10s. on £1,000. I worked it out and found it now works out lower—8s. on £1,500 overcharge; giving the relieving officers a uniform price to work upon.

(Mr. Grant.) There is a report of the general purposes committee referred to by you, sir; but I thought you would give me the date of it. I have not got a reference to it. Would you look it up, sir.

(The Inspector.) You say you made a considerable reduction in the waste?—Yes, sir.

Q. And that you did that by exercising greater care?—Yes.

Q. Then I gather from that that before you took charge there was a greater waste than was necessary?—I do not say that exactly; but I certainly thought the waste was rather large.

Q. You say you reduced it by 464 pounds?—419 pounds.

Q. Would that be for the current quarter?—For the Lady-Day quarter.

Q. And is that diminution of waste going on still?—Yes, I can reduce it somewhat.

Q. The main cause of the waste is keeping the meat?—Yes, sir.

Q. It dries up?—Yes, sir.

Q. Do you get your meat delivered more often than formerly?—No, sir, the same daily deliveries.

Q. Would it be true to say that the proportionate loss in weight to a large quantity of meat is greater than that on a small quantity?—Yes.

Q. So that in times of pressure, when you have to get out large quantities of meat, your waste is greater than when you get a smaller quantity or none?—Yes, sir.

(Mr. Grant.) Will you tell us what are the arrangements for next week?

(The Inspector.) Would it not be better to wait until Mr. Robb comes? Miss Grant is here. Can we not take her now?

(Mr. Grant.) We might take her at once, and then Mr. Mosley, the rector of Poplar.

MISS GRANT; sworn and examined.

Miss Grant,
17 July

(Mr. Grant.) Your name is Miss Clara Ellen Grant?—Yes.

Q. You are head mistress of the infants' department of the Devons Road County Council School, Poplar?—I am.

Q. And have you held that position for the past six years?—Not in that school but in previous ones six years.

Q. In this district?—Yes.

Q. And during that time have you been living in Fern Street?—One year in Fern Street and five years in Campbell Road, close by.

Q. Yes. And both these streets are in the heart of the poor district of Poplar?—Fern Street more especially.

Q. During these six years have you visited the homes of the children who are in attendance at your school?—Yes, very frequently.

Q. Can you tell me why you visited them?—In the first place I believe in teachers taking a personal interest in their children, and in closer touch between the school and the home. In the second place these children required a certain amount of relief, and it is only right that those who give relief should enquire into the conditions of those they relieve so that it should not be given indiscriminately or wasted.

Q. When you are speaking of relief, is it a fact that almost as soon as you came here you found the condition of the children so poor that some help was necessary?—Yes, I found that so at once.

Q. Yes, and amongst your own friends and philanthropic persons you raised a small fund or one was placed at your disposal?—Yes, I have an annual sum, not a certain sum. Sometimes I have money donations, and sometimes gifts in kind. These gifts are sold cheap to the parents.

Q. But whether we call it money or kind it was a relief fund of which you had the distribution?—Yes.

Q. And in distributing it you have gone to the homes of the children?—Yes.

Q. Well, altogether, how many homes have you visited?—It would be impossible to say, perhaps this year it would be about 300.

Q. I wanted the broad figure?—On taking over the larger school, I made a special inquiry into the circumstances of the children then on the register, so that when the relief work properly commenced I should be able to take it up.

Q. Now, in the course of these hundreds of visits, Miss Grant, have you been able to classify the causes of poverty you found amongst the population?—The chief cause, or, rather, the first cause, is unskilled labour, which the people are capable of, and in the second place the great scarcity of labour or the precariousness of that labour. Unskilled people earn but little when they are at work—too little to save for emergencies, and they are hit by emergencies first. In the third place it involves a great deal of women's labour, which has always a disastrous effect on the home and on the children.

Q. You have not mentioned the cause which usually is the first assigned by ignorant people as to the cause of poverty, and that is the drink?—In my experience I should say that the drink evil is no greater in that section of people than in any other. I should not lay down the rule that no poor man should not have a glass of beer at all, but I should say that the number who drink to excess is comparatively small.

Q. Amongst those you visited?—Amongst those I visited. I know, of course, several cases, where the father does drink and a few where the mother does. In these cases we have laid it down that the children are not to go without relief.

Q. But in the hundreds of cases you have visited you do not find drunkenness prevail: or drunkenness as the chief cause of the poverty of the people?—No, I did not. In no case should I expect the height of self-control from people living in the depth of poverty. Considering their position, I think their virtues are really great on the whole.

Q. Is one of the chief causes of distress among the people the high rents they have to pay?—Most certainly. Poor people pay a far larger rent, including rates, in proportion to their income, than do any other class of the community. It has been proved, has it not, that 1d. in each shilling paid goes to the poor rate, and if we take 6s. as the average rent for my people, they are paying 6d. a week to the poor law, or 26s. a year. This is, moreover, the first payment they have to make. They must pay their rent before they pay for their food or clothes.

Q. Or else they would be turned out into the street?—Yes.

Q. The winter of 1904-5. Was that a winter of exceptional distress?—I considered it so. I consider that winter very distressing. I should not say such a very great difference.

Q. Whatever the cause, you still find the people in the same condition?—They are certainly in a worse condition, speaking generally. Things were made more sensational in the winter.

Q. Do you have many children going to school who are suffering from being ill fed?—Yes, a large number. We have in three departments between 300 and 400 children.

Q. And if they are ill fed it follows that they are ill clothed?—Yes.

Q. Or else they would pawn their clothes to get food?—Exactly. They are not able to profit by the instruction, and certainly are more behind in their mental development.

Q. The children are below the average level?—Yes.

Q. What have you done out of your poor relief fund?—Amongst the children we have provided meals. Sometimes they have had two meals a day, according to the necessity of the case. In others, one. The breakfast meal was entirely provided out of my own fund, and the midday meal provided by other associations.

Q. Other agencies?—Other agencies.

Q. Now, did the parents pay anything towards the breakfasts of the children?—One association which gave meals insisted on payment from the children. I, there-

fore, had to make a special plea to parents for 1d. or ½d. a week. I have repeatedly made appeals but I have always insisted that they should on no account keep the children at home from that cause. They are on the whole very independent, and if they could not save 1d. or ½d. they would keep the children away. Only a few, 10 per cent. of the total number, were able to pay. I have a statement here about the actual money. Families fed: 85 families. Payments for meals made by 40 families, approximately. Total payments varies from 1d. to 8d. When I had to meet the claim of the societies for payment I had to give work out to the parents. In some cases they did the work which paid for the breakfasts.

Q. Then you had to give work out to secure payments?—So that I might establish a precedent.

Q. Now, I think, you can tell me a little of the investigations you made into the circumstances of 200 families. What result do they show?—The result shows—

Q. Will you just read that statement you have prepared?—I investigated roughly 200 families. Out of these ten were shopkeepers. Out of these again five were fairly successful. Of course, I made no enquiry into the circumstances of these.

Q. You found them satisfactory and passed them over?—The other five were doubtful. It is never safe to assume that tradesmen in a poor district are well off. If trade is poor profits cannot be obtained. Then 20 men were in regular work, earning from 25s. per week, and 20 others in regular work earning from 20s. a week. Then we have 90 families with the men in irregular work, then 10 widows or husbands physically unfit, and 50 families very uncertain of work and rather difficult to classify, but certainly poor.

Q. Now, you have a record of the names and addresses and employments, the wages they receive, the number of their children, and the rooms they occupy, occupied by 95 per cent. of the families you quoted?—Yes, I have, out of which I made a special investigation of 109 I considered poor. Of course, the 200 included some better off.

Q. Now there are some cases I think you have taken up yourself?—Yes.

Q. I will just read them?

(*Mr. Welch.*) I am sorry to interrupt. Have you a copy of the statement?—You can have a copy giving particulars of the 109 cases. If Mr. Grant likes to call on any particular number, I will give him the necessary particulars.

Q. It will save time if we can have a copy of the statement.

(*Mr. Grant.*) As a matter of fact, I have not the copy, but only the six typical cases. I just want to take these typical cases. A man, labourer, wife and two children, pay 3s. 6d. per week rent and live in one room. In the last 28 weeks he has only had 20 odd days' work at about 4s. a day. Man, wife and six children living in four rooms, rent 10s., sublet 5s. Full week's wages, £1 2s., occasionally short time, very thrifty?—Yes, that is so. Not one of the 109 cases.

Q. Widow, three rooms, 4s. 9d., was having relief, but would not give her children up. One son at work, gets odd days at the sick asylum, but very irregular. Takes in washing, mangling, and needlework. Man, wife and five children, two rooms, 4s. 6d. a week rent, no work, husband very deaf. Man, wife, seven children, only odd days' work for three years, except once when sent to the farm, two boys in irregular work, wife takes in needlework. Now you put these cases forward as a fair representation of the whole of the cases in your record, of which you have spoken. Take two cases quite at random, which you will read out. Take case 19?—This is a widow. She has 6s. a week in Poor Law relief. She earns 7s. 3d. per week in school cleaning. Her grandfather lives with her, and has 3s. 6d. a week. They live together; she has two children at school. Three rooms at 5s. a week rent.

Q. It is a family of four, widow, two children, and grandfather?—Yes.

Q. How much rent?—5s.

Q. So that out of a total income of 16s. 9d. per week, 10s. 9d. is Poor Law relief?—Yes.

Q. And out of a total income of 16s. 9d., she pays 5s. a week rent. This leaves 11s. 9d., out of which four people have to be kept?—Yes.

Miss Grant,
17 July.

Q. Well, now take 55, will you?—Quite a young strong couple. The man had a long illness, and has never had regular work since. Two young children, living in one room, and paying 5s. rent. The mother sent a child away to the aunt's for a few weeks because she could not support it. She has now returned. A clean tidy home. In bad straits.

Q. Is this a case where you had to help the children?—I only came back this week.

Q. What is the income?—The man has had no regular work since his illness, so that it is impossible to say what the regular income is, whenever they had two or three days' work. The average labourer's wage is 4s. to 4s. 6d.

Q. In cases of this kind do you find that the poor people are very ready to help one another?—Most ready; and this is an additional cause of the poverty. They not only have their own claims to see to, but also those of their neighbours.

Q. And if they do have a good time at all?—They often share it. That I would say most emphatically.

Q. In the cases you specifically know of is there anything of the beggar spirit among these people?—Only in a very few. Certainly not among the people I have known for the last six years. I find on the whole that they care much more for work than they do for gifts. They are exceedingly loth to enter the house. I did not know of a person who did not look on the house with loathing.

Q. Miss Grant, it has been heard over and over again in the course of this Inquiry, that the workhouse is made so attractive and so comfortable, that people prefer going into the workhouse to trying and earn their own living. Now, did you find anything in your experience which justifies that?—No, I never did. I may say that the poor people were almost forced to go into the house. When I came back from my holidays a woman implored me over and over again to get her out of the house. Mothers even will not give up their children when threatened with the loss of their out-relief.

Q. In regard to out-door relief so far as your experience goes in your district, has that out-door relief been given indiscriminately or wastefully?—I should say that the great fault with Poplar is that not enough relieving officers have been appointed. They have not been lavish enough. I do not know of one case where they have given wrongly, but I do not say there are none. I speak from my own experience. I have heard over and over again people say that they will not go for it. Several mothers have told me that if their husbands only had two days' work a week they would not apply for relief. I know a man who looked into the place five times one day, and would not go in. He said "I will chuck myself in the Cut rather than go in." There are six children and they now have 10s. a week.

Q. You think that more relieving officers would not mean more relief, but more discrimination?—Yes, and therefore less relief.

Q. Go on?—I should also like to see women relieving officers in order to obtain information as to the condition of the homes. They could do this better than men.

Q. Women would make inquiries much more carefully and thoroughly than men?—They would catch the characteristics of the homes better, and I would have the relieving officers resident where the poor people are.

Q. That is hard. There are a great many school teachers who would not accept that. When I was living in the East End I found that hardly any teachers lived here. They went to Chingford, Loughton, and a great proportion of them, board school teachers, did not live in the district?—But still their work on the whole does not entail a knowledge of homes, but it is different with relieving officers.

Q. Are you not a little hard. Relieving officers have to work among the poor all day, and then you want them to live in the district. They would be exposed to the strain of business all day and all night?—I do not think that. The work is so full of human interest. It is to the prejudice of Poplar that people move away.

Q. Who move away?—The better class people. When one good person moves out, two come in. So that with an increasing number of poor people there are only half the number to help.

Q. And have you read Mr. Martley's letter?—I did, and I agree with a great deal of what Mr. Martley says. He is right when he says that Poplar has made a definite effort to provide work. I believe work is the only remedy of the present state of things. I do not believe in out-door relief. I believe in a definite effort to provide work, and failing that, then out-door relief. Out-door relief is much cheaper than in-door relief. It is absurd to throw families in the house and to break up their homes in times of crisis. I should only recommend the house for chronic distress.

Q. You mean to say, that when work is slack at Poplar through no grain ships coming from Russia, you would give out-door relief. As soon as the docks were working again the men would be willing to go back to work, and you have their homes ready for them, whereas if they were forced into the workhouse you make permanent paupers of them?—Yes. I do not think that moral. Surely they cost more in the house than outside. Moreover, to send them into the house would destroy the home and all its responsibilities.

Q. With regard to the schools, do you find that the poverty in Poplar is a very extravagant thing as regards education?—Most extravagant. I am perfectly willing to do all in my power for my children, but I do say it is a costly waste. Children who are in want cannot profit by the instruction given. In the second place, many teachers are spending many hours trying to ameliorate this condition, because on the whole the guardians have not been lavish enough.

Q. The result is that numbers of trained teachers are spending a large proportion of their time on work which is not of ultimate benefit to the children?—Quite so.

Q. Work which does not belong to their department at all?—Yes.

Q. But which it is necessary to do?—Quite necessary. We render the children a little better fit.

Q. By giving the relief you have spoken of?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) I understand you to say that you do not personally know of any cases where relief has been wrongly given?—I can say that I have never been told of any particular instance.

Q. Do you think that more relieving officers are necessary in order that greater discrimination may be exercised?—Quite so. It would be correct to say that the enquiries I have made involve constant revision. The officers cannot deal with all the cases in Poplar.

Q. So that although you have not heard of any cases, you think it exists because you urge the necessity of further relieving officers?—I infer that. I do not say it exists.

Q. You infer that they exist?—That is a very obvious inference.

Q. Well, I quite agree with that inference. We have had a case mentioned in the course of this Inquiry which perhaps you have read of in the papers?—I read of one.

Q. Then I think you said that for every good householder who goes out of Poplar, two poorer ones come in?—I do not assert that in every case, but that is the tendency.

Q. Why is that?—Because of the removal away to the neighbouring districts of the better class residents. The district no longer attracts these people, but it does the poorer ones.

Q. And you think that casuals are attracted to Poplar?—I think poorer classes come to all neighbourhoods where the better class people go away.

Q. You think so. Why is that special to Poplar?—Because in many parts of London more expensive buildings are put up and attract the people, and poorer classes take their old houses.

Q. But I suppose you will agree that where the rates are very high the rents must be correspondingly high?—Exactly.

Q. I should have thought on the very face of it the poor would have gone where the rents are low?—They have less room here.

Q. And more relief?—No, I did not say that. They want less room.

Q. Why should they come here and get less room. What is there that attracts them to Poplar which enables

them to put up with less room?—They have to go where they can get rooms. Poor people have a great difficulty to get rooms.

Q. I quite agree. You agree with me that the rents of houses and rooms are high in Poplar because of the rates?—Comparatively high.

Q. Why come here when they can obtain cheaper rooms. They would not come here unless there was some benefit in other ways?—I do not think they do come here.

Q. But you told us that they did. Now at East Ham they can get rooms at about half the money they can in Poplar?—I do not know anything about West Ham.

Q. East Ham?—Many poor people I believe go from Poplar to East Ham.

Q. I was following up your evidence. I understood your evidence was that the poor were attracted to Poplar?—I do not think they are attracted to Poplar to any great extent; not consciously so.

Q. Are they sub-consciously attracted here?—Poplar may sometimes have to entertain people which other boards of guardians will not help.

Q. You mean that people come to Poplar to get relief which they cannot obtain from other boards of guardians?—That may be so. I know of no cases where this has occurred, but I should say it was possible. Every board of guardians should do their duty to their own poor.

Q. And your view is that because a stringent policy, or a hard hearted policy, is adopted by some of the boards of guardians, Poplar is saddled with an undue proportion of pauperism of the whole of London?—I know of no case. I should infer that it is so. I do not think that Poplar is worse than some of the poor districts in the south of London.

Q. And your view is that some of the pauper class are unable to obtain relief owing to the policy of certain boards of guardians—Stepney, for instance?—I have never found a case of a family coming to Poplar directly wanting relief.

Q. There was a case, you know, which has been mentioned in the press. That of a man named Baker, who came from Bethnal Green. Did you know that?—I did not know of that at all.

Q. It has not come under your notice?—No.

Q. You may take it from me that this is the case. The man was refused relief in Bethnal Green, and he came here and got it?—Very wise of him.

Q. That would be an example of the kind of thing you get here?—I should infer that in the case of a man in London wanting relief, some one should give it.

Q. I quite agree. I am not complaining. So that what we are suffering from here in Poplar is not merely local pauperism, but a portion of the pauperism from other unions in which the guardians do not do their duty?—But, pardon me. Is there not some law of settlement by which people may get relief?

Q. Do not let us go into such an argument?—I understood there was something by which such an emergency could be met.

Q. Do not let us go into that. I am not prepared, if you want to argue legal questions with me. I will retire from the unequal contest. I prefer to do that with Mr. Grant?—I have known cases refused relief because of their settlement. They had not been in the neighbourhood long enough.

Q. That is another question. You have known cases where they have come here and tried?—I do not say that. They have not come here and tried us. They come to do work. If they fail and come here they are told that they have not been here long enough.

Q. Then what do you base your opinion on that Poplar is suffering from the hard-hearted policy of other boards of guardians?—I say there may be cases of that.

Q. You told us—your own words were, that other boards of guardians did not do their duty, and, therefore, Poplar was saddled with more pauperism?—I inferred that this might be so. I know of no such case where people consciously came from other places, where they could not get relief, to Poplar to get it. If it is so, then Poplar ought to be commended.

Q. Just now you spoke of the crisis of 1904, and Mr. Grant suggested that the grain ships had not arrived.

Do you know that of your own knowledge?—I know we have been deteriorating since I have been here these six years.

Q. It was not a crisis, really?—Crises have become chronic here.

Q. This was not something sudden and abnormal. It has been gradually and steadily growing?—I spoke of my own experience. Other people may be different, and their experience may be wider than mine.

Q. We want the benefit of your own experience. And you say, do you, that there has been no crisis, but a steady deterioration for some years?—Each winter has been bad, and it has been bad ever since. More was done by way of charity to relieve it last winter, but I do not altogether believe with charity tackling the poverty question.

Q. More was given in relief?—Relief should be discriminate given. They have a legal and moral right to it. It is far better to give discriminate relief than it is to depend on voluntary charity if you cannot give them work.

Q. And have you considered the evil effects, not only on the pauper, but on the community, by giving out-relief indiscriminately?—Of course I have.

(*Mr. Grant.*) She said discriminate relief?—I said discriminate relief.

(*Mr. Robb.*) You do not think it has been discriminate, because you recommend more relieving officers?—I think the relieving officers are worried, and they make it hard for people to get relief. The remarks people say make me think so. They complain that they have to wait too long, and often lose the chance of a day's work, and women also have to wait. I do not think adequate relief is given.

Q. You know instances have been given in the course of this Inquiry of people obtaining relief under false pretences?—In that case efforts should be made to prosecute them.

Q. You know of instances?—Because of possible abuses you would not do away with a thing.

Q. Certainly not. Do you say things were as bad in the winter of 1905 as in 1904?—I think it was a bad winter. I think each winter we have had things have been in a bad condition.

Q. As bad last winter as the one before?—Yes.

Q. And the summers. Was there a great difference between the two summers?—I should say not. It was laid down in March that we should no longer feed the children, but it is absurd to say that children should cease to be automatically hungry in March. We still feed a large number.

Q. If the conditions have not varied how do you account for what has been alleged that the guardians are saving now £360 a week in out-relief as compared with this time last year?—That is very unwise of them, and very inhuman of them. It is quite possible that a board of guardians living under a cloud, as they are at present, should be more careful than they were, and, legally, I understand that relief should not be given to able-bodied poor except in an emergency.

Q. I would rather you keep out of legal questions?—A drop in relief does not mean a drop in poverty.

Q. Then you think the guardians have gone from one extreme to the other?—No, I do not say they have gone to the other extreme before. I think they are now refraining from giving this relief because of this trouble. They ought to have been more courageous.

Q. Then your view is, that the guardians are suffering from an excess of timidity at the present time?—It is only natural, is it not. They may have given their officers directions to be rather more stringent and that may press heavily on a deserving case. And you must give relief to deserving cases all the year round.

Q. A kind of old age pensions?—Yes.

Q. Poplar Guardians have really forestalled legislation in this respect—they have given old age pensions?—They have to the old people, and therefore they are right.

Q. This desirable thing—the Poplar Board of Guardians have been carrying out something which was mooted by Mr. Chamberlain years ago, but was never carried into effect?—I think honour is always due to pioneers.

Q. And you think honour is due to the Poplar Board of Guardians for having inaugurated a system of old

Miss Grant.

17 July.

Miss Grant,
17 July.

age pensions?—So far as it has been carried out, which I think has been to only a small extent, it is honourable.

Q. They have shown more courage than Parliament in this respect, that they have tackled the question?—They certainly have. We must remember this, that private employers and the nation have been unable to provide employment for the people, which is the only remedy. That being so you must turn to the next remedy.

Q. There is one other question. You know a great deal about schools, and I want the benefit of your experience just for a minute or two, about the Shenfield schools. Have you seen them?—No, I have not. I have no great experience of residential schools.

Q. Have you heard them described?—I read some description. Of a certain kind of tile and teak. I do not believe in luxuriousness.

Q. I want to ask you, assuming all these allegations to be correct, as to the luxury at Shenfield?—Will you be more definite about the luxury?

Q. It comes to this. A capital expenditure of £300 upon each child who is to be sent there?—It depends upon what they are provided for. It does sound very heavy.

Q. 8s. a week each child?—I do not think that is much for each child. You would not wish the guardians to take their standard from the low standard that prevails in Poplar.

Q. Then how can you expect children would prefer to remain at home, or their parents to keep them there, if they can live at a much higher standard in rate-aided schools?—But people will not prefer to send their children there, and the children have never heard of these luxuries. I say that, speaking generally. Of course unnecessary luxuries should be eschewed, but children under the Poor Law ought to have the utmost chance, far and away better than they get in Poplar, because they are the hope of the nation.

Q. I quite agree with you, Miss Grant, on that point, but I want the benefit of your opinion as to the future position in life these children are being trained to fill with surroundings of this character?—Would you please make it quite clear?

Q. Do you think the girls who have been dining in that hall, equal to one of the colleges at Oxford, and bathing in a bath which is tiled from top to bottom; do you say that with surroundings of this character they are being fitted for domestic service?—They would go into houses where these things exist.

Q. But would these things be placed at their disposal?—Speaking generally.

(Mr. Grant.) They would have the bath?—I will repeat that these children ought to have a reasonable amount of comfort.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you think it necessary to spend £165,000 to house 600 children?—I have no idea of the cost. I deprecate as strongly as anyone extravagance.

(Mr. Grant.) Do you know whether rents are higher in Poplar than in Whitechapel?—I understand they are.

Q. And the rates lower?—I do not know.

Q. You know the rents are higher?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Are you London born?—No, I came from the west of England.

Q. How long have you lived in London?—About 15 years.

Q. Have you lived in other places in London, besides Poplar?—Six years in Poplar. Six years in Wapping, and several years in Hoxton.

Q. Has Wapping as much poverty as Poplar?—I should say on the whole that Wapping is better off. They have many more agencies at work in helping the people. I mean St. George's-in-the-East.

Q. And you had a school there?—I was assistant teacher there.

Q. Has this relief been going on long?—For nine or ten years.

Q. Is it common for teachers to do that sort of work?—I only speak for myself. When I undertake a poor school I want to tackle all problems associated with it.

Q. So that this would not be necessary except in a poor district?—Certainly not.

Q. There was some investigation made by the London County Council as to underfed children, was there not?—Yes, we had to send in a return.

Q. It was included in that return?—Yes.

Q. Did they make any mention of your school?—In the number of children fed and the number of meals given by voluntary associations.

Q. No more than that?—No. We were asked last autumn to send returns of any voluntary associations which had worked on these lines.

Q. And so you continued to do the work so long as you had funds?—Yes.

Q. You say that Poplar has been going down hill since you came into it?—So far as my experience goes it has. I speak for myself.

Q. Do you think yours is the poorest part of Poplar?—I do not know. I should not like to make any comparison. I am told so by all others that ours is the poorest of all.

Q. You found, to sum up, that poverty is bad?—Pretty bad. Half to three-quarters of the people are in the same condition.

Q. I think you have said there is little improvement since?—For instance, I have in my feeding books in the school 100 names.

Q. Now in the last six years the number of persons receiving out-door relief has just doubled?—Yes.

Q. And the relief has gone up by one-third?—Yes.

Q. And still people are poorer?—On the whole I think they are poorer. A great many of the people will not come on the rates.

Q. If they had, I suppose the rates would have been still higher?—If they were granted it.

Q. What occurs to me is, that the extra relief given in Poplar has not been successful in relieving poverty?—That depends. You may give more relief indiscriminately, or you may give it carefully.

Q. At all events you have not succeeded in stemming the tide of poverty?—Out-relief cannot stem it. It represents only a temporary expedient.

Q. It is no remedy?—It is simply keeping people alive instead of allowing them to die.

Q. Do you think the increase of the rates has a bad effect?—No doubt.

Q. Someone must pay them?—6s. a week out of nothing makes a rather difficult problem.

Q. The increase in the rates to any great extent would be very harmful to the men?—The poor are paying for themselves.

Q. You are paying now. Now tell me whether supposing it were paid by the landlord that would be any excuse for the representatives of the ratepayers in wasting it?—Certainly, there should be no waste anywhere.

Q. You would not advocate anything like indiscriminate relief?—I am sorry I have not made it quite clear. I detest indiscriminate relief whether given by private people or public bodies. I believe in discrimination, although you would have to pay an administrative penny in order to spend a penny wisely.

Q. And to that extent you are a critic of the guardians' administration?—Of course, I was not here in Poplar until six years ago. I should say that the guardians have made a conscious effort to tackle the problem.

Q. And rather on your lines?—Yes.

Q. You admit that relief is not a final remedy?—Certainly.

Q. Just one more question. This case where there is 5s. rent, and the total income is 16s. 9d., leaving 11s. 9d. for food and clothing for four people; do you think this is enough?—Not enough. It is one of my poorest cases.

Q. It has been alleged that the cost of provisions in Poplar workhouse alone is 4s.?—It does not include establishment charges.

Q. Simply the cost of provisions?—I do not think food in a big institution ought perhaps to cost 4s. It was more than that in my home in Somersetshire, 4s. 4d. But this was a small workhouse. I believe the average workhouse is 2s. 9d. to 3s. all over England.

Q. You have made it quite a study?—I wanted to work scientifically.

The Rev. H. A. MOSLEY ; sworn and examined.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I understand you have a statement to make as to future proceedings?

(*Mr. Grant.*) I prefer that it should wait until we have dealt with Mr. Mosley. Mr. Mosley, you are rector of All Saints, Poplar?—Yes.

Q. And you have been there 4½ years?—Yes. Since 1902.

Q. When you left college, did you go to Trinity College Mission?—No, I went to Oxford House Mission, Bethnal Green.

Q. How long were you there?—I was there seven years.

Q. And then you went to Trinity College Mission?—After that.

Q. How long at that mission?—Three and a half years.

Q. And then you were appointed rector of Poplar?—Yes.

Q. Am I right in saying you have had 15 years' experience in the East of London?—Yes.

Q. And you have spent practically the whole of your life as a clergyman in the East End of London?—Yes.

Q. Now, during the four years you have been in Poplar has there been any unusual depression in trade?—I should say there has been. There has been a considerable amount of depression ever since I came to Poplar: I cannot tell what there was before.

Q. Has it been increasing or diminishing?—I should say that things are better now than they have been since I have been here. A little better.

Q. Have you here a very large class of casual labourers more or less unemployed?—Yes. It has always struck me that there is a large amount of distress owing to the amount of casual labour at the docks.

Q. That may be. There may be scores and hundreds of people waiting at the docks one day and there is nothing to do, and the next week there may be employment for the whole of them?—Yes.

Q. 1904-5, the winter of these two years was distinctly the worst time?—I should say that on the whole 1904 saw a large number of people out of work, and a better class of men out of work.

Q. Yes. You say the better class. Does that mean a class of men who were ordinarily in regular employment?—Yes. More of these men.

Q. And the want of employment would throw out of work some men who had hitherto been in regular employment?—Yes.

Q. Is there one part of your district, Grosvenor Buildings, which is occupied largely by people in regular work?—Yes, the majority of people living here are more or less in regular work, and they were more affected in 1904 than in any other year.

Q. In that district?—Yes.

Q. Did you investigate many of these cases that occurred yourself?—Yes.

Q. And in the majority of cases what did you find?—I think the majority of cases were genuinely distressed.

Q. Caused by what?—Lack of employment.

Q. In the last winter was it bad?—Not so bad as in 1904.

Q. Last winter there were still cases in what were called those in regular employment?—A few, but not so many.

Q. I think you are chairman of the Charity Organisation Society in Poplar?—Yes.

Q. So that you can speak from wide information as to the nature, extent and character of this distress?—Certainly.

Q. Now is not a good deal of this distress in Poplar a chronic distress, that always has to be dealt with in the summer and winter?—The greater part of it.

Q. Now with regard to the general policy of administration, you have only been here since the present guardians came into office?—Yes.

Q. When they turned out the old guardians in 1902 or 1903 you were not here?—No.

Q. Do you think that the guardians have been actuated by right motives in what they have done?—Certainly. I think their motives have been honest, and with a sincere desire to meet a difficulty. I do not commit myself to approve of their policy.

Q. So far as motives went. Mr. Martley is secretary to your committee?—Yes.

Q. Do you agree with him that if the labour party in Poplar had not taken up the work here it would have gone undone, or half done?—What do you mean, about the work?

Q. Mr. Martley says in his letter that the work of carrying on the administration of the Poor Law in Poplar had fallen on the Labour party, because the manufacturers of the district, who made their wealth here, lived elsewhere, and did not take any part in the public life of the district. Do you agree with him there?—Certainly I have never come across anyone but the Labour party and those on the guardians actively coping with the difficulty.

Q. You found no help coming from the rich men who made their wealth in the docks?—Not on the committee.

Q. I mean personal help. Giving gifts amounts to nothing. Personal help in the administration?—They are fairly represented on the Poplar Council and the union.

Q. They are not alive to their responsibilities?—It is not for me to say that. They don't appear to be so.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I suppose you are not able to say whether they are alive to their responsibilities or not?—No.

Q. I take it, from what you have seen of recent years, it would be very difficult for persons of that class to secure election?—I am inclined to agree with what Mr. Martley says. But if they tried I am inclined to think they would have been successful, and that they might have had more representatives than they now have.

Q. You are aware that the representation and the vote has been almost entirely confined to one class?—Yes.

Q. Don't you think, in view of events, that if these persons had come forward, election would have been a matter of considerable difficulty?—I would point out that there is a considerable minority on both bodies, who are not members of the Labour party, and, therefore, I think, that these men of more administrative experience would have had the same chance as others.

Q. The forthcoming elections will put that to the test. I gather that you are not here to approve in general terms of the policy of the guardians?—No.

Q. I take it that there are features of that policy of which you do not approve?—Certainly.

Q. Was it to yourself that the chaplain, Mr. Conoley, appealed on one occasion?—It was.

Q. What did he see you with reference to?—He saw me with reference to the master.

Q. Under what circumstances?—He reported to me what I believe is a matter of common knowledge, what you have already had to deal with here, the question of the relations between the master and a woman.

Q. Can you give me the date of that interview?—I am afraid I cannot.

Q. Can you fix it. Was it before Christmas?—I think it was.

Q. Before Christmas. Did he mention other matters to you at that interview with regard to the general discipline of the house?—He told me quite generally that the discipline was bad and that he had traced it to the master, I think.

Q. He said to you that he thought that the example set by the master and some of the guardians was fraught with great moral effects so far as the inmates were concerned. Did he tell you that?—That was more or less the point of his remarks.

Q. Matters were troubling him so with regard to the discipline and the general moral tone of the house. He came down to seek your advice?—Yes.

Q. Now you have told us, and I am not going to quarrel with you, that there has been large and general distress in Poplar?—Yes.

Rev. H. A.
Mosley.
17 July.

Rev. H. A.
Mosley.
17 July.

Q. But I suppose you will agree with me that the excitement of public demonstrations renders it more possible for the undeserving to creep in than in normal times?—Certainly.

Q. Do you approve of organised applications for the relief of those we have heard so much of at this Inquiry?—I think they made it extraordinarily hard to deal with. I think the motive of the organisers was good and honest and was done with a genuine desire to bring the unemployed question to the front.

Q. Have you considered not only the industrial but the moral effect on the working man who has relief given in this kind of way?—Yes.

Q. Do you think it has an incentive for excellence at one's trade?—I think the general result of charity on a large scale, whether private or by the Poor Law, is undesirable and has a demoralising effect.

Q. Upon energy?—Yes.

Q. Upon personal qualities and habits?—Yes.

Q. And upon the desire to excel in one's craft or trade?—Quite so.

Q. Because, if you can live without work as with work, you have done away with the incentive to live by labour?—Certainly.

Q. If it is possible to fare better in the workhouse or farm colony, then you have done away with the incentive to a large extent to the man to work to support himself and his family by his own labour?—Yes.

Q. You are making a poor man more dependent and less independent?—Yes. I should be inclined to agree with the last speaker in that.

Q. I suppose you have studied the history of the Poor Law to some extent?—Yes.

Q. Who do you think have been the greatest enemies to the poor man. Those who have been deliberately hostile to relief of this description, or men like Mr. Crooks and Mr. Lansbury?—I should be sorry to pass judgment, and must decline to do that. In theory I would approve of those who have the close personal touch with the poor that Mr. Crooks and Mr. Lansbury have.

Q. But, in addition to personal touch, we want a comprehensive view of the whole question?—Certainly. I came to Poplar having been taught at the Charity Organisation School, having been a member of it for many years. I think out-door relief is wrong. That is my conviction.

Q. When it is conducted on the scale here?—On the scale most certainly.

(The Inspector.) The applications for relief in November, 1904, were, in your judgment, organised?—Yes.

Q. And the organisers put the guardians in an awkward position?—Yes.

Q. And all the more awkward because the guardians were probably agreeing with the organisers?—Yes.

Q. Anyway, it was a time of real distress?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, may we just say a word or two about future arrangements. First I want to know about the contractors. You remember on the 5th July you wrote a letter to us to say. Perhaps I had better read it:—

"Dear Sir,—I should be much obliged if you would inform me whether the guardians intend to call certain of the contractors with reference to the evidence given by Mr. Oxley on Monday last. The Municipal Alliance wish the contractors to be called by me, but I think the guardians should have an opportunity of considering whether their case would not be prejudiced if the evidence was tendered in this way. I should be glad therefore to know the guardians' views before deciding whether I shall call these witnesses. The contractors in question would be Messrs. Pyle, Eaton, Cartwright, Pocock, Percival and Whitlock. It would be a great convenience if I could receive your reply to-morrow. It seems desirable that the contracts for 1904-5 should be looked into, and I should be glad if in the first instance you could without much trouble cause a statement to be prepared for that year similar to those numbered 'A' and 'B' put in by Mr. Oxley. I should be glad to receive the statement by Saturday morning if possible,—Yours very truly, J. S. DAVY."

Q. You think so. In Poplar the trouble is unskilled and casual labour?—Yes.

Q. The scientific remedy for that would be to find work elsewhere for some thousands?—Yes.

Q. There is not enough work in Poplar to go round?—No.

Q. Have you experience of underpaid women working under conditions of what is called sweating?—A certain amount.

Q. That is to say, women are doing work in their own homes and are paid such a scale that they cannot possibly live?—Yes.

Q. That is very frequently subsidised by the poor rate?—Yes.

Q. So that industries are based on casual sweated labour and they depend on Poor Law relief?—It makes it possible for the employer and the employee to live.

Q. What, in your judgment, is the scientific remedy for that?—Certainly not by an increase of out-relief.

Q. One more question. You have not lived in Poplar all the time?—No, I was in Bethnal Green.

Q. And are the poor in certain parts of Bethnal Green quite as poor as the poorest parts of Poplar?—Yes, certain parts.

Q. They have not the casual men?—No.

Q. They have the other?—The general level of poverty is worse. They have not anything like the casual labour.

Q. Application from able-bodied men is in a way more difficult to deal with?—Yes.

Q. The men have tempers, and there may possibly be a riot?—Yes.

Q. And that is the special difficulty in Poplar?—Yes.

Q. Do you know Canning Town?—I was at West Ham.

Q. It is poorer than Poplar, is not it, or as poor?—As poor. Here again I would bear out what Mr. Martley said. There is much more public life than in Bethnal Green.

Q. Poplar, being more alive, is more difficult to deal with?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) Is that public life in Poplar, do you think it has developed—has grown into being and developed since the present Labour party has been in power on the board of guardians and town council?—I should think it is largely the result of the influence of the leaders of that party.

Q. You know Mr. Martley said in his memorandum the effect of their policy had been to stamp out revolutionary anarchism altogether, and create a sense of civic life even in the lowest strata of the people in the district?—I would agree with that.

Q. It is the most desirable thing to obtain?—Certainly.

Then, sir, we replied on the next day, I think the 6th:—

"Dear Sir,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday which I have had an opportunity of submitting to a committee of the guardians in consultation with counsel. I am desired in the first instance to express the guardians' sincere appreciation of your courtesy in giving them the opportunity of considering the question of calling the contractors, and your desire that the guardians' case should not be prejudiced. The question of calling the contractors had not been fully considered by the guardians or counsel, but acting upon your suggestion at the last hearing, it had been arranged to interview four of the contractors yesterday, but only two of them attended and the statements of these two persons I will forward to you in due course. Upon consideration of the matter in consultation with counsel, Mr. Corrie Grant is of opinion that it would be preferable if the contractors were called by the Local Government Board. With regard to the statement asked for respecting the contracts for 1904-5, since the receipt of your letter I have had a search made for the rejected tenders of March, 1904, but up to the present they have not been found, and I fear

"it is probable that they were destroyed with other papers, which were not considered to be worth preserving, on the occasion of the last clearance of the office strong room. I am preparing and will forward to you as soon as possible a statement of the contracts entered into in March, 1904." Well, sir, on that we sent you, I think—of course we had Mr. Pyle called. We sent you a statement which we took from Mr. Eaton, in regard to the contracts. You have had a letter from Mr. Cartwright. Mr. Pocock has not been called. Mr. Percival has been called. Mr. Whitlock has not been called. Mr. Bean, one of the contractors, has written a letter to Mr. Marsh in reply to an inquiry from him, which I shall read:—

"Phoenix Works, Golden Lane, E.C., July 10th, 1906. Dear Sir,—In answer to your letter we beg to state that all the prices in our tender to the Poplar Board of Guardians are fair and reasonable, having been based upon the experience of two years' working of the contract. Some of the prices named in your letter must, we think, have been given without any estimate of cost being made, and were, probably, sent in by firms having little experience of this class of work. It will be convenient to reply to your queries in same order as written."

I will put in Mr. Marsh's letter, but that letter really embodied Mr. Oxley's figures.

(The Inspector.) What is the contract for?

(Mr. Marsh.) Printing. It is the last one of Mr. Oxley's sheets.

(Mr. Grant.) "Minutes. At both the prices you name there would be a serious loss to the contractor on this item. Additional copies of minutes. 4d. per page is a fair price. This item may, however, be passed over as unimportant. No additional copies have been required during the two years we have held the contract. This fact may have been known to other firms tendering, hence the absurd price put down. Guardians' diary. Is the worst instance of random prices in the tender. We may say the binding alone is worth 22s. 6d., leaving only £3 17s. 6d. and 17s. 6d. for the composition, printing and paper. Will you show a copy to the Local Government Board official? Commercial envelopes. We find that 14 orders of 50 were given during the year ending March 25th, 1906, and at our price of 1s. 5d. the amount on the item is 19s. 10d. Annual reports. Cannot be produced at a profit at less than our price, and on looking at the book it would be evident to anyone that it could not be done at 2s. 6d. or 3s. 6d. per page without considerable loss. Let the Local Government Board see a copy of this book. Extra copies of annual reports. After delivery of the first 300 the guardians may require additional copies printed. This is quite a different thing to printing an extra 50 copies at the same time as the contract number is worked off, which is probably what our competitors calculated for, as all the formes have to go down to machine a second time. We may further say that no extra copies have been required during the two years we have held the contracts. Printing on 8vo. paper. This is a 'general' item, and includes any matter that can be got on an 8vo. sheet, so that contractors must make an all-round covering price based upon previous experience. During 1905-6 contract we printed two lots of 100; tender anticipated 15. 13 lots of 250; tender anticipated 6. 6 lots of 500; tender anticipated 3. 100 circulars set up and printed, including paper, for

1s., is really absurd. We notice that the board's critics omitted to give the comparative price for 250. May we suggest that all three items should be worked out on quantities actually ordered, at all the prices, and then the difference between our prices and other folks', will, we think, be found not worth considering. Time books. These books we have not supplied. They are on hand-made paper, which, we think, our competitors did not estimate for. The price we have quoted is a fair and reasonable one. Relief case papers. We may just say that the 'cost of paper' for this job, of the same quality as sample in guardians' offices, is 13s., so that 14s., including paper, printing, and ruling, this is another fair specimen of the random prices submitted in tenders for public work. With this we have answered all your queries, and if we can be of any further service to the guardians we are quite at their disposal at any time.—Yours faithfully, THOMAS BEAN & SON."

Then there is a letter from Mr. Legg, china and glass merchant:—

"129 & 131, East India Road, Poplar. Dear Sir,—In reply to your request for an explanation concerning the varied prices of goods supplied by me to the Poplar Guardians, I have much pleasure in stating that the selling price is governed by the price of purchase, which being of a fluctuating nature readily accounts for any difference which may occur in successive years' quotations. With reference to teapots, the difference in price is accounted for by the fact that a better class article was selected for 1906 contract than that supplied in the previous year.—Yours faithfully, WILLIAM T. LEGG."

Now, sir, that is all the information I have supplied to me by the guardians in reference to the contracts. Except Mr. Whitlock, I think it covers everyone—Pocock and Whitlock, it covers everyone of the contracts mentioned in your letter. I do not know whether you want—

(The Inspector.) I don't want to call a contractor. I have had quite enough of them.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Bean might be called to show the system.

(Mr. Grant.) Then, sir, I want the report of Mr. Mott on the electrical inquiry.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Hooper?

(Mr. Grant.) No, Mr. Hooper is your engineer. Mr. Mott, the South London engineer, called by Sir Benjamin Baker, and I want that document put in.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Lough, would that be on the paper? Mr. Hooper is going to meet me to-morrow or the next day.

(Mr. Grant.) Perhaps that had better stand over altogether.

(Mr. Robb.) If that is going in we must also have a report on the accumulators. We have reports showing the defect of accumulators supplied by the Hart Accumulator Company, which were ruined in the course of a year. It should be shown who is responsible for that.

(The Inspector.) Had not we better leave that to Mr. Hooper?

(Mr. Robb.) Very well.

(Mr. Grant.) Then I shall leave the whole matter until he does come.

Mr. J. S. OXLEY; recalled, and further examined.

(Mr. Grant.) There are a number of documents I want to ask Mr. Oxley about, but I will only ask about three. "The report of the Departmental Committee on Workhouse Accounts, 1905." Have you seen that?—I have read a good deal of it.

Q. "Report by Mr. Goschen on the Supply of Provisions to Workhouses, 1872"?—I have not seen that.

(The Inspector.) Is that Mr. Rowsell's report?

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Rowsell's report, yes. Then a report on the Inquiry of the Farnham Union, taken in 1868, a long time ago; but I am going to refer to that and Wallington to show the method adopted hitherto by the

Local Government Board with inquiries where there were personal charges against guardians or officers. I take it you have not seen that?—No.

Q. That is Farnham and Wallington?—The Accounts is only a recent one.

(Mr. Grant.) 1903, yes.

(Mr. Robb.) What is the date of the others?

(Mr. Grant.) Farnham is 1863, and Wallington—I haven't the actual date.

(The Inspector.) You see that a good deal of the procedure of these inquiries was taken on the inspectors themselves.

Mr. Oxley.

17 July.

Mr. Ozley.

17 July.

(Mr. Grant.) Oh, yes.

(The Inspector.) We have no fixed rule.

(Mr. Grant.) Every lawyer is a great believer in precedent, and he does not want to alter. May I ask how you propose to deal with the question? Mr. Marsh tells me you are going to sit to-morrow.

(The Inspector.) I still feel we ought to get this thing over as soon as possible. The idea that these charges are hanging over the guardians is very distasteful to me, and last night I discovered I could give seven days in August.

(Mr. Grant.) I cannot tell myself. I can tell how long my witnesses will take. I cannot tell, of course, how long the whole operation will take.

(The Inspector.) No.

(Mr. Grant.) Do you intend to sit any more days this week at all?

(The Inspector.) If you can give me one more day.

(Mr. Grant.) The point is this. I think there are a certain number—three or four more witnesses that I can call to-day. These must be called sometime or other. It would be a good thing to get them out of the way. Then there are individual guardians asking to be heard, and who ought to be heard, and I think if we could devote a day to them and you say then you would adjourn to next Monday, on Monday I should be prepared to deal with the substantial case. Then I should be prepared to go on from day to day, if you could give us a day or two in August we might finish. As far as I can give an estimate, I think my three substantial witnesses would be Mr. Crooks, Mr. Lansbury, and Mr. Ford, and I don't see why we shouldn't dispose of these in a week. I don't think Mr. Ford ought to take a day, and the other two two days each—cross-examination and so on. I may ask to be allowed to put in certain tables.

(The Inspector.) Yes, we shall meet you in that way. What do you say, Mr. Robb?

(Mr. Robb.) I take it one day will suffice this week.

(The Inspector.) Shall we have to-morrow or Friday?

(Mr. Robb.) To-morrow I am afraid I cannot come.

(Mr. Grant.) I don't mind which day. One or two witnesses said they could come to-morrow. What about Palmer? I want him here. That is the only one I think I want.

(The Inspector.) Do you know where Palmer is, Mr. Robb.

(Mr. Robb.) I do not. I have his address.

(Mr. Grant.) I find I have Mr. Reed's proof in regard to the contract. Would you mind me reading it? I want to get it on the notes.

(Mr. Robb.) I do not think—I think I must object. If this goes on the notes I have letters from contractors telling me—

(Mr. Grant.) Your letters are not in the possession of Mr. Davy. My point is Mr. Davy has had this statement sent to him.

(Mr. Robb.) I could easily put myself in the same position by sending Mr. Davy copies of these letters.

(Mr. Grant.) You are really not doing me justice. I thought as Mr. Davy had this it is only fair Mr. Robb should hear what is in the document supplied to you.

(Mr. Robb.) I am glad to be fairly treated for once.

(Mr. Grant.) I have done with it. May I call—I think Mr. Hayes is here.

(Mr. Robb.) I understood that Mr. Deason—that you promised to call Mr. Deason.

(The Inspector.) If you want him. He has gone to the relief committee.

(Mr. Grant.) I am afraid that is as far as I can go. Two witnesses I want, but neither of them are here. It always happens. I have had very great difficulty to get Miss Grant here. She has had to make appeals to her education committee to break through all the rules.

(Mr. Robb.) There is one question I want to put to Mr. Ozley. Perhaps I can do that to get it on the notes. It is only one. May I. It is only one. I have it written down, sir. I want to get it on the notes. Mr. Ozley, I understand, before I arrived this morning, Mr. Grant drew your attention again to the error of £500 in your original figures?—That is so.

Q. On the contracts?—Yes.

Q. Now, your original figures were £1,507?—Yes.

Q. We have on that score a corrected figure of £1,001?—Yes.

Q. Is not it a fact if the contracts had been split the actual saving the guardians might have made would be over £1,700?—I think I gave the figure on the first day. Is that in 1905 or 1906?

Q. It is 1906?—It would be £1,718.

Q. So that although comparing the tenders as between the highest and the lowest, Mr. Grant's point was perfectly correct; yet the guardians might by splitting the contracts have made a larger saving than the £1,517 originally?—Yes. The £1,700 only included—I did not go through all of them. There have been others that might well be split, and I did not calculate them.

Q. And, of course, that is again only upon the basis of the tender quantities?—It all depends. It does not depend so much in splitting on gross quantities. The whole thing depends upon the estimates of the officials of a future year's consumption being correct.

Q. And if the deliveries were higher than the estimates the saving might be more?—If the deliveries were higher, yes.

Q. That follows?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) Would you mind saying publicly that on Friday any of the guardians who want to make individual statements should be here?

(The Inspector.) I do not think we can carry this Inquiry further to-day. We have been sitting since eleven.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Deason, I have only three or four questions.

(Mr. Grant.) We have asked for him. He is not here.

(The Inspector.) We shall come on Friday, and any individual guardians who have statements to make will be here.

SIXTEENTH DAY.

Friday, July 20th, 1906.

(Mr. Robb.) Before, sir, we take the evidence of Mr. Palmer, I have been asked by several ratepayers who are members of the alliance, to request you to be good enough to define their position, because it is within your knowledge two ratepayers who were here, both of whom are prominent men—Mr. Warren and Mr. Geary—got up for the purpose not of interrupting, but for the purpose of

putting a question to you as other ratepayers have done. The result was that constables were called to eject them. I would not refer to that. That is past and done with, but there has been some correspondence. Mr. Warren, one of the gentlemen, wrote to Mr. Corrie Grant and Mr. Corrie Grant has written a letter in reply, in which it is alleged—

(Mr. Grant.) I do not object to my private letters being read. Mr. Warren wrote to me and asked me to explain certain circumstances, and I courteously answered it. In that letter handed to Mr. Robb—I understood it to be private—I explained—

(The Inspector.) A good many guardians wished to address me, and if they are allowed to do so the proceedings might become disorderly. Eventually Mr. Corrie Grant appealed to them. It would be much better if individual ratepayers approached the Court through you.

(Mr. Robb.) I quite agree. It was not that, but according to this letter, Mr. Grant says either you or the guardians can exclude any persons, and there can be no remedy.

(Mr. Grant.) Read the whole correspondence.

(Mr. Robb.) "July 14th, 1906. Dear Sir,—In answer to your letter of the 13th—"

(Mr. Grant.) Read Mr. Warren's letter first.

(Mr. Robb.) I have not that. It is only material in this respect.

(Mr. Grant.) I think, if Mr. Robb wants to read that he had better have the whole correspondence. I shall send for Mr. Warren's letter.

(Mr. Robb.) It is only material in this respect that Mr. Grant alleges this room is the property of the guardians and no member of the public has any right to be here.

(The Inspector.) The position is this. I asked the guardians to make arrangements for a room in which to hold this Inquiry. By their courtesy they lent me this room. As far as the Inquiry is concerned I find it is open to every one, but if the guardians object to any one being here I shall have no alternative but to go elsewhere. The guardians lent the room—

(Mr. Robb.) But the room is the property of the ratepayers, and it appears to me to savour of impertinence for persons who are under a cloud—to put it mildly—to make representations of this kind to a prominent ratepayer in the position of Mr. Warren. It savours of great impertinence.

(The Inspector.) It is rather unfortunate.

(Mr. Robb.) We want to know, sir, who is conducting this Inquiry. It appears to the ratepayers Mr. Corrie Grant is behaving in a very arrogant and uncalled-for manner. I say it advisedly. I have never in the whole of my experience seen an advocate offer to send for constables to eject people.

(The Inspector.) That is what might be called a regrettable incident. There was some misunderstanding. I saw the sergeant, and he apologised to Mr. Warren and explained the circumstances. He said he had reason to apprehend a breach of the peace. I consider the question closed and at an end.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Corrie Grant says he called upon the police in his own letter. I would like the rights of the ratepayers—it is rather a delicate position for a ratepayer to come here on an occasion which is vital to him and be exposed to insults of that character.

(The Inspector.) I look upon the question as a hypothetical one. It will not occur again. This room does not belong to me, but to the guardians as the representatives of the ratepayers, and if they did anything which I thought unfair, but within their rights, I should have no alternative but to go elsewhere.

(Mr. Robb.) I mention it because several ratepayers have stayed away in consequence. They are afraid of being exposed to insults.

(Mr. Grant.) I am bound to say Mr. Warren wrote to me last Saturday—reaching me on Saturday afternoon—what I understood was a private letter putting certain matters to me. The letter, I think, if you saw it—Mr. Robb has not seen it—you would have said it is not quite the courteous letter that should be written. I ignored that, and told Mr. Warren what I am prepared to say anywhere, my view of the legal position. People come here by licence. They have no right here whatever, whether ratepayers or not, and can be ejected, as, sir, from any public place if there is any breach of order. I simply put the legal position to Mr. Warren. Mr. Robb has not taken the trouble to read the letter, and it is because, as you said yourself, some of the ratepayers have attended here under a misapprehension as to their rights—that they have a right to interrupt the proceedings and

ask questions; some disorder has taken place during these proceedings, and I thought it would help Mr. Warren if I told him what the position was, and I told him.

(Mr. Bird.) With your indulgence I would like to ask, as representing a large number of ratepayers, so long as we do not interrupt the proceedings, shall we be allowed to ask a question at the commencement or end of the proceedings?

(The Inspector.) Yes. I should just like to say this. My position is rather difficult. I am lent the room, and my only remedy if anything were done which was unfair, would be to adjourn. I have no power to clear the Court, no power at all. I am simply here to take evidence. I must say, considering the heat of the Inquiry, and considering what little I can do to keep order—I can only express my great sense of the fairness of the whole of the audience at the back of the Court. We have had very little interruption and very little disorder. We have had occasionally an outburst, but no more than is to be expected under the circumstances. Now we shall proceed with the Inquiry.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Palmer first.

(The Inspector.) There is just this: I find we did not bring down the books Mr. Palmer produced. We have telephoned for them.

(Mr. Grant.) Perhaps we can take something else.

(The Inspector.) Take something else. You want the books, don't you?

(Mr. Grant.) I had a notion I should. I only want to ask one or two questions.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Palmer can stay a bit?

(Mr. Palmer.) Yes. Oh, yes, sir.

(Mr. Grant.) Well, then, sir, we want to put in a statement by Mr. Lloyd Jones, one of the officials of the Church Army, showing what the—perhaps I had better read the letter.

"The Church Army, Men's Social Department. E. J. Marsh, Esq. Dear Sir,—In accordance with your request I have pleasure in handing you herewith figures taken from the weekly returns of our officers at our Bow and Poplar depots for the periods of 12 months ending March 31st, 1905, and the same date in the year 1906. It will be noted that the statement shows the number of days' work given during the week, and the total amount of wages paid. We have at the moment no means of obtaining the information how many individuals are represented in the total of days' work, but the average number of days' work given to each man provided with temporary employment by the Church Army at the Bow depots during the 12 months ending December 31st, 1905, works out at about 2½ days per man, and I think this might be taken as the average number of days given to each individual during the period covered by the enclosed statement. We do not wish to have to send a representative to give evidence before the commission, as we think the enclosed is all the information at our disposal that can be considered to be of any service, and our representative could only repeat on oath that the statement we send you is the correct extract of figures shown on the officers' weekly returns. Should you feel it necessary to call the officer in charge of the Bow depot during the past winter, namely Mr. G. Butler, 116b, Bow Road, E., we will permit him to be present.—Yours faithfully, for the Hon. Social Secretary, W. LLOYD JONES."

That statement shows first of all that in 1904 the Church Army—the work began April, 1904, and ends March, 1905—April 7, 1904, to March 30, 1905, they provided married men with temporary employment to the number of 7,334 days and the cost was £913 6s. 10d. In 1905, from April 6, 1905, to March 31st, 1906—a similar year, they provided 10,245 days' work at a cost of £1,361 9s. 6d., and, in addition, they provided separate works they had opened at the beginning of 1906 at Sugar House Lane: from January to March, 6,566 days' work at a cost of £882 11s. 9d. That made a total in the year of 16,811 days' work as against 7,300, and a total cost of £2,244 1s. 3d. against a total cost of £913 6s. 10d., more than twice as much the second year—more than twice as much the second year as the first. I put that in as accounting for the fall in our returns of relief in those years. It shows there was an external agency doing a great deal of work which otherwise we should have done. May I call Mr. Griffiths?

(*The Inspector.*) Before you call Mr. Griffiths, I have seen Mr. Ross Hooper and given him all the figures I had. He is at this moment looking at the works at the workhouse.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I should like to have an opportunity of submitting one or two points to Mr. Hooper. It is quite probable they will occur to him. There are one or two questions I would like to put to Mr. Hooper.

Mr. H. GRIFFITHS; sworn and examined.

Mr. Griffiths. (*Mr. Robb.*) May we have, sir, the porter's in-and-out book sent for? The porter's book—that will be necessary in the examination of Mr. Griffiths. The one for January, showing the persons who come in and out of the workhouse.

(*The Inspector.*) Mr. Lough, will you obtain that book?

(*Mr. Grant.*) Mr. Griffiths, do you live at 40, High Street, Poplar?—Yes.

Q. And work with your father at that address, and who is a marine store dealer?—Yes.

Q. Is part of your work to call at the workhouse about twice a week to fetch away rough fat from the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. What is that rough fat?—It is what trade experts call slosh.

Q. Does it consist of scrapings from the coppers?—Yes.

Q. And scrapings which collect in the drain pipes?—Yes.

Q. And that is taken away to prevent the pipe being choked up?—Yes.

Q. Well, now, when you have collected that what do you do with it?—We sell it to a firm at Hackney Wick who calls on us every Thursday morning.

Q. We are told your firm paid £2 a month for it?—Yes.

Q. Does your father in the course of his business obtain dripping from coffee houses and hotels?—Yes.

Q. And is the dripping sold to Mr. Elliott, 26, High Street, Poplar, at 3d. a lb.?—They come from the ships and coffee houses on three occasions.

Q. Does any of this rough fat from the workhouse go to Mr. Elliott?—No. What we buy over the counter.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Mr. Griffiths, are you a partner in the business?—No, an employee.

Q. How long have you been with your father?—About six years, sir.

Q. What is your special duty?—Managing the business the best way I can.

Q. Why is not your father here?—Because he has something else to do. I represent him as his son, as I can do.

Q. Your father has?—I have seen more of the work than my father.

Q. Do you go to the workhouse?—Yes, about two or three times a week.

Q. Always?—Not always, sometimes.

Q. And fetch this stuff away?—Me and one of our chaps.

Q. What is the name of the chap?—Featherstone.

Q. Fiddlestone?—No, Featherstone.

Q. You never took any dripping away?—Never had any dripping from the workhouse, not as we receive it.

Q. You went to the workhouse on 25th January last?—I do not remember that, sir.

Q. But you come here to tell us all about it. I suppose you have some record?—I do not remember the 25th January.

Q. I call for the porter's book, please. I suggest in that porter's book there is this entry under the 25th January, 1906: Griffiths came in 10.5 left 10.35, taking dripping?—If they call it dripping they can.

Q. You suggest that is a false entry?—It is so, because fat is fat, slosh is slosh, and dripping is dripping.

Q. And you are intimately acquainted with all varieties?—Intimately, that is our business.

Q. 25th January, I suppose you took everything away on one journey or do you go two or three times a day?—In our business we take what we can.

(*The Inspector.*) If you make a note of them.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I will do that, sir.

(*Mr. Grant.*) It was suggested, sir, that dripping from the workhouse was sold to Mr. Griffiths. I am calling Mr. Harry Griffiths, of 40, High Street, Poplar. Where is Mr. Griffiths?

Q. Same day. Griffiths entered 2.10; left 2.20 taking old fat and bones?—Yes.

Q. Old fat and bones?—Yes, you are correct.

Q. Why should there be a distinction between dripping on one journey and old fat and bones on another in the afternoon?—If the porter wants to make an entry it is dripping; he does not know suet from dripping.

Q. 27th January, 1906, Griffiths came 9.45; left 10, taking dripping?—That is another false statement entirely.

Q. All imagination on the part of this workhouse porter?—Whichever you like. I could face him now.

Q. I have no doubt you will face anyone. 13th February, Griffiths?—That is me again.

Q. Came in 10.10; left 10.30, taking dripping?—Another false entry.

Q. 14th February, fat and bones, it that a false entry?—It is different to dripping.

Q. So when he has to enter fat and bones he is correct; when he enters dripping it is a false entry?—If it had been dripping we should call it dripping.

Q. When he enters fat and bones he makes a correct entry; when entering dripping he makes false entries on each occasion?—We have never sold the stuff as dripping to anyone.

Q. When he enters dripping that is a false entry?—You cannot blame the man; he is a bad judge.

Q. He thought so?—He made a bloomer; he thought so.

Q. Then we go on, 13th February; Griffiths 10.10; left 10.30?—Griffiths is having a run for his money.

(*Mr. Grant.*) We had that before.

(*Mr. Robb.*) 14th February, St. Valentine's Day; Griffiths enters 10.10?—Do you see where the bloomer comes in? People have an idea its dripping; its only common slosh.

Q. 14th February: Griffiths came in 10.10; left 10.35—half-an-hour, or 25 minutes—taking dripping?—Yes, dripping again.

Q. 14th February, taking bones and fat?—That is quite correct.

Q. So you distinguish between fat and dripping. Are these false entries?—The dripping is false. Fat and bones are correct.

Q. Who did you sell these to?—To a firm at Hackney Wick.

Q. The name?—Mailings.

Q. You suggest the dripping coming from the ships and coffee houses was sold to Mr. Elliott?—Yes.

Q. Is it not a fact that the residue you get from a ship would be much worse quality—much more rotted—than that from the workhouse?—No, because the stuff from the workhouse is mixed—pork, bacon fat, mutton fat, all mixed together.

Q. Do you suggest seamen get the same quality meat and bacon as in the workhouse?—I do not know about seamen.

Q. But you suggest the fat and dripping would be the same quality?—You get a better quality from a ship than from a workhouse.

Q. A better quality of dripping. Then you have had dripping?—No, sir.

Q. But if you have had a better quality of dripping from a ship than you have had from the workhouse, you have had it from both and you make the comparison?—No, sir.

Q. You are not doing yourself justice. You say you can get a better quality?—What I mean is, as we receive the workhouse stuff it is in a mixed state—mutton, pork, bacon, and so on. If it was always separate it would be different. Because there are three different kinds of waste, it is not.

Q. Because it is mixed up it is not dripping?—Take the pork from the mutton and the mutton from the bacon.

Q. It is all put together?—Yes.

Q. Three kinds of dripping in one lump?—Yes.

Q. Some ignorant people may think it was dripping?—Some people.

Q. There is a great deal of ignorance. So this poor benighted man still thought it was dripping?—Yes.

Q. Of course you know once it is blended with another kind it is no longer dripping but fat?—That is correct.

Q. Dripping is not the only thing you get from the workhouse?—No, we have rags.

Q. A large quantity of rags every month?—What do you mean by a large quantity?

Q. Some hundredweight of rags every month?

(*The Inspector.*) About how much?—8 or 10 cwt.

(*Mr. Robb.*) 8 or 10 cwt. of rags every month from the workhouse, and then you go I see on every day. Let us take a week. One week. I forgot to put every day. You were there taking the fat from 22nd January to the 27th?—That is ridiculous.

Q. I did you an injustice. You were there twice one day—four occasions from the 22nd to the 27th January, to take dripping; other occasions fat and bones. So practically you were there three or four times a week to remove this stuff?—No.

Q. Three or four times a week?—If I say two or three times a week I am correct.

Q. How much did you take each time?—A hundred-weight of fat.

Q. Three or four times a week?—Not three or four times a week. Twice a week.

Q. Here are four times between the 22nd and the 27th?—I may have called in for something else. I may have taken back bags.

Q. Once on the 13th and twice on the 14th. Sometimes twice in one day, and that is not a question of rags. No entry of rags. I suppose you can show every day you got something?—Of course I pinched.

Q. And for all this you pay the magnificent sum of £2 a month?—That is all it is worth, I would not give any more.

Q. You get about a ton of fat?—Do not make a mark of yourself.

Q. About 10 cwt. of rags?—That is your idea, a ton of dripping a month. Can you prove it?

Q. Mr. Griffiths, do you suggest you, as a business man, sent round for anything but a substantial quantity. What did you take it away in?—Vessels.

Q. What size?—That size.

Q. From the ground?—L.C.C. regulation vessels.

Q. What is the capacity?—About 1 cwt., and took two.

Q. Each?—Yes.

Q. You generally took two?—In the week, yes.

Q. You took two of these vessels on each occasion?—That is right.

Q. So that if they have held 1½ cwt. each, that would be 2 or 3 cwt. on each occasion?—In these vessels there is a quantity of water, drainage from the sewers—meat, potatoes, &c.

Q. Do you tell this firm at Hackney Wick it includes drainings from the sewers when you sell to them?—That is our business.

Q.—Do you tell your customers this includes drainage from the sewers?—We are wholesale men.

Q. He is a customer of yours?—Yes.

Q. That you sell this—I suppose you know the purpose it is to be used for?—They make soap and candles and cough lozenges.

Q. Do you tell him you get it from the drains—the sewers. Now, your transactions with the workhouse were not limited to the articles we have mentioned. You bought bedsteads?—Yes.

Q. You bought some nice bedsteads. How much did you give for them each?—I forget now. We have had so much business since then.

Q. They were as good as new?—No, absolutely no.

Q. What did you give for those bedsteads?—I do not remember what we gave for them. *Mr. Griffiths.*

Q. You were able to advertise them at 2s. 6d. each?—Some of them. *20 July.*

Q. I suggest they were as good as new. Have you also had dinner plates and soup ladles?—I have had no dinner plates.

Q. What have you had in the way of crockery?—No crockery.

Q. What other articles have you had besides bedsteads?—Dust pails and some of the master's stuff.

Q. Fibre matting?—Yes, what has been disused.

Q. Unsoiled?—It has been soiled.

Q. Since you had it?—Before we had it.

Q. A large quantity of waterproof sheeting as good as new?—Waterproof sheeting, but very old. Sold it for 2d. a lb., the same price as dripping.

Q. Who did you arrange for this transaction with?—I do not arrange it; my father did.

Q. With Mr. Madeley?—Mr. Madeley?

Q. Yes?—If Mr. Madeley sent a message to take the stuff it was our duty to do so.

Q. It was all arranged with Mr. Madeley?—Certainly.

Q. When you went to arrange these matters were you invited to have refreshment?—Never in my life.

Q. Then you have been unfortunate?—

(*The Inspector.*) Did I understand from you there were three greasy substances in the stuff which you got?—Yes, sir.

Q. Dripping from roast beef?—Yes.

Q. Then there is fat?—There is fat.

Q. And then there is slosh that goes through the sewers?—Potatoes, mutton, and so on.

Q. Through the sinks?—Yes.

Q. That is stuff from the sewers?—The mistake is that they put down dripping, and dripping we never had. It is slosh.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Will you ask him whether the dripping from the drain pipe was from 7 lbs. of mutton?—Do you mean in money or weight?

(*The Inspector.*) Can you tell me the total amount you paid to the workhouse every month?—£2 a month for slosh. We went a fair way to business. They look upon us as criminals. If I go as far as the workhouse I am shadowed by some private individuals. Last Friday a Limehouse man told me the stuff was stolen. Father's name and my name was taken. What do I care?

Q. There was no truth in that. You say you paid a fair price for it?—We have.

Q. Have not got it cheap?—Some is almost valueless to anyone, and if anyone wishes to come to our place they can have a sample.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Has anyone else had an opportunity of taking it on the same terms?—We have had the stuff for 30 years from the workhouse. Before that I cannot say.

(*The Inspector.*) The same price?—About the same price. I cannot bring the book. It is too large.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Will Mr. Robb tell us what the entries are?

(*Mr. Robb.*) What entries do you want?

(*Mr. Grant.*) The one in January—twice a day.

(*Mr. Robb.*) 25th January.

(*Mr. Odey.*) There are two pages. It will take a long time to copy.

(*Mr. Grant.*) We will get it out. We need not copy the whole thing. Mr. Lough will get it out for a month, beginning on the 25th January?—On May 3rd we received 1 lb.

(*Mr. Robb.*) How much have you sold altogether?—60 lbs.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I understand Mr. Deason is waiting. Mr. Robb wanted him on Tuesday.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I do not think, after looking at the note, I will.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I call Mr. McCullum.

(*Mr. Robb.*) One or two matters on that I will not keep you more than a moment or two.

Mr. A. C. DEASON ; recalled, and further examined.

Mr. Deason.
20 July.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Deason, you remember giving evidence on Friday, June 29th?—Yes, sir.

Q. You remember what you said then?—I could not say I could.

Q. Was that true and correct. What you told us on that occasion?—Yes.

Q. You do not wish to vary it in any way?—No.

Q. Only one further question. When was that interview with Mr. Lansbury. What date?—I could not tell you. One afternoon some time ago. That is all I know about it.

Q. Why did you go to Mr. Lansbury. Was he a member of your committee?—Yes.

Q. That is the reason you went?—There is no reason why we went.

Q. Do you remember any other portion of the interview excepting the advice of Mr. Lansbury?—I cannot recall anything particularly, except he strongly impressed us to conceal nothing and speak the truth.

(Mr. Robb.) That is all you remember? Very well.

Mr. E. W. McCULLUM ; sworn and examined.

Mr.
McCullum.
20 July.

(Mr. Grant.) Edward William McCullum, are you a confectioner carrying on business at Saxon Road, Bow?—Resident.

Q. Resident in Bow for the last 50 years?—I am one of the old relics.

Q. And carried on the business of a wholesale confectioner for 23 years?—Yes.

Q. Are you interested in the firm of Clark, Nicholls & Coombes, who we all know employ—?—Over 2,000 hands, yes.

Q. During the whole time you have lived in Bow have you been interested in the parochial and municipal affairs of the neighbourhood?—Yes, speaking of the whole of North Bow.

Q. I think you were chairman of the Bow charities?—Yes, for several years.

Q. And been for many years helper in philanthropic and charitable work?—Yes.

Q. A private resident in St. Stephen's Road?—Yes.

Q. Tell me all about the general condition of the people in Bow. Is there always here a certain amount of distress caused by casual labour?—Yes, there is, and I may say that as far as my experience goes with Poplar the whole of the Borough of Poplar has got poorer every year. The best of the people are gone out. The chosen lot come in. We find throughout the last two or three years there has been exceptional distress: I know it to my cost.

Q. Is there any set cause in Poplar which attracts the casual labour—do you think the docks?—That is always so.

Q. Always so?—Yes.

Q. A man who has lost his character or employment and cannot get work drifts to the docks, where there is sometimes employment for him?—Yes.

Q. Without character?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) There are no docks at North Bow, surely.

(Mr. Grant.) Is the distress—you said there was always a certain amount of distress—is it always intensified in winter?—From January to April.

Q. Why is that?—Because there is less employment. I may say our business as a combination in the East End we employ thousands altogether, directly or indirectly.

Q. Your own firm?—Two firms alone.

Q. You were speaking then, not of your own firm, but of the confectionery trade in the East End?—Yes.

Q. Several other firms?—Yes. Two firms only employ 5,000 hands directly with those outside who are employed indirectly.

Q. Do you include the jam trade?—Yes.

Q. You include Batger's and Pink's?—Yes, and Carle's and Maconochie's.

Q. You were going to say they employ several thousands of hands. How are they affected in winter time?—These last two or three years, owing to the price of sugar going up and down. I was going to say through the idiotic—

Q. Sugar Convention?—Yes. I did not want to bring politics in, but I was going to say that.

Q. That is the hard fact?—There has been as many as 25 per cent. for several months out of all these who were employed who had no employment.

Q. What would you say roughly is the total employed first directly by the confectionery trade down here?—At the very least about 10,000.

Q. And then indirectly, how many?—There are so many such as box makers—

Q. Printers, and so on?—I could not tell you entirely. I should say we employ indirectly more different trades than any other business you can mention.

Q. But, at any rate, taking those directly employed at 10,000?—10,000 at the very least.

Q. Of those a quarter, that is 2,500, would be out of employment in the winter?—They have been since the last two or three years.

Q. That is partly due to bad trade and partly to economic conditions, as the Sugar Convention?—Yes. I could mention, I can mention a person, if it is any use to you—a case of distress. I saw you got an impostor going up with the unemployed, and because you find one impostor the whole lot are damned. That is not right nor justice. I mention it because this one went up with the unemployed, and it was heartrending to witness. Not only poverty, but heartrending poverty, and some of them had been my old employees, and got married and had children. I have known about these things a good many years back—over 40 years.

Q. Did you have an opportunity of hearing Miss Grant's evidence?—Yes, and I think it was excellent, and I can corroborate every word. She was a plucky woman.

Q. Not only a plucky woman, but a woman who had carefully investigated and re-investigated the condition of the families who send children to her school, and she speaks from actual knowledge?

(Mr. Robb.) I venture to ask—Is that a fair way to examine in chief. What is the use of a long rambling statement?

(The Inspector.) Please let this witness go on. He is interesting me personally very much?—One very important thing. I am an independent witness.

(Mr. Grant.) May I go on: You say the evidence of Miss Grant; you say you corroborate every word she says, and your experience here, which is a life-long experience, corroborates every word she said as to the industrial condition of Poplar?—Yes, that is so.

Q. The distress is increasing here every year?—We get poorer. The best of the inhabitants are going out, leaving only the poor to struggle on by themselves.

Q. I want to ask you about the year 1903 and the winter of 1903-4. Was the distress then acute?—Yes, it was.

Q. Did it get worse or better next year?—It seemed to me to get worse in 1904-5.

Q. That winter, 1904-5, do you know any worse winter than that in your experience?—No, we have had terrible distress, of course. I know the whole history of Bow, from when it was a little village until it became a forest of chimney pots. Therefore, I am able to speak, especially being mixed up with so much Church work and political and social work, when I come in contact with it; and I assure you, sir, it is a fact, and they who say it is not so, they do not know what they are talking about.

Q. The winter 1904-5 was the worst you have ever known?—Yes, sir. There was 12 or 13 years ago, when we had six weeks' frost—I am not quite sure of the year, but I think 12 or 13 years ago. That was a very bad time, but then we had a better class people to help with it in Bow. But they have all fled.

Mr.
McCullum,
—
20 July.

Q. That winter you were speaking about was the winter of the big frost—1895?—Yes, six weeks' hard frost. It was a terrible time for the poor.

Q. This winter 1904-5, we know that in the neighbouring places the distress was so acute that the newspapers got up a scare?—Yes.

Q. The *Daily News* raised a fund?—Yes.

Q. Raised and spent something like £12,000. There was no such fund as that in Poplar?—No.

Q. Was the distress as bad in Poplar as there?—As where?

Q. Was the distress in Poplar as great as in the Hams—West Ham?

(*The Inspector.*) Canning Town?—I could not say that.

(*Mr. Grant.*) You do not go to Canning Town?—I could not answer that.

Q. But comparing that with your experience it was the worst?—That is my personal experience, without any systematic investigation.

Q. Did a great many people in that winter who are usually in work—were they without employment?—Yes, they were.

Q. And obliged to go on the rates?—Yes.

Q. Now, with the number of employees still in your business that year, did you do £6,300 less trade than in the previous year?—Yes. That, of course, was in a small branch.

Q. But, notwithstanding that, your firm kept your people on. You did not wish them to be suffering like other people?—No, our employees are our friends, and we stand up for them.

Q. In the confectionery trade, you told me, in the winter 25 per cent. of the people were out of work?—Yes.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Mr. McCullum, let me understand the point of view from which you speak. What are you personally?—A confectioner.

Q. In business on your own account?—Well, I have a branch firm of Clark, Nicholls & Coombes, and am interested in the larger firm.

Q. We know all about Clark, Nicholls & Coombes. What position do you hold in that company?—My firm is a branch firm of the whole firm.

Q. A branch firm?—Yes, I am, because our goods bear their name.

Q. You buy goods from them?—No, I do not. It is a branch firm.

Q. Do you suggest you are a director or appear in a responsible position?—I am not a director.

Q. What actual position do you hold in Clark, Nicholls & Coombes to enable you to speak for them?—I have been with them 23 years.

Q. In what capacity?—In specialities.

Q. Buying goods from them?—Not buying. I am not a buyer of goods, and do not supply a single shop or wholesale. Clark, Nicholls & Coombes and mine are one.

Q. I suggest you are not—you have no position with Clark, Nicholls & Coombes?—Why do you say that?

Q. You told us just now that the employees of Clark, Nicholls & Coombes lived in Poplar?—I said so.

Q. Yes?—I was speaking generally of the whole confectionery trade. I never said the whole of Clark, Nicholls & Coombes' people.

Q. You distinctly said so. Do you know Mr. Matheson of Clark, Nicholls & Coombes?—Yes, he is a friend of mine.

Q. He is managing director?—Yes.

Q. He said that the majority of the employees lived at Hackney because they could not afford to pay the rates in Poplar, or, rather, could not pay the rents. Is that correct?—What is that?

Q. If Mr. Matheson said the majority of the employees of Clark, Nicholls & Coombes had to live in Hackney because they could not pay the rents in Poplar, would that be correct?—I would answer for what Mr. Matheson said. He is a gentleman.

Q. Would you trust him?—What he said, I would say so. He is not only an honest man, but a generous one, too.

Q. Well, now, you were speaking about the conditions of labour at the docks. Do you know anything at all

about the docks?—I do not know personally about the docks. All I know is that there is casual labour, and always has been. I only have the common knowledge of every one who lives in Bow or Poplar about the docks.

Q. I suggest to you that North Bow is practically isolated from that part of Poplar where casual labour is in vogue?—I get all over the place. I am interested in all church and philanthropic work.

Q. In North Bow?—All over Bow and Bromley and Poplar. There are many here can say the same. They know me well enough.

Q. How do you arrive at your statistics that 25 per cent. directly employed in the confectionery trade were out of employment?—From Mr. Matheson. There is a pamphlet. He is acknowledged to be one of the greatest authorities in the confectionery trade, and Mr. Matheson will tell you.

Q. I will take it from Mr. Matheson. How do you know it?—From Mr. Matheson himself.

(*The Inspector.*) He wrote the pamphlet?—Yes, several of them.

(*Mr. Robb.*) The evidence you have given is what you have read in Mr. Matheson's pamphlet. It is not what you know personally?—Yes it is, because I know it from my own trade.

Q. Do not you know that 90 per cent.—from 80 to 90 per cent.—of the confectionery employees live out of Poplar. So those figures have not any bearing?—I should not believe it.

Q. Would you believe it if Mr. Matheson said it?—Yes, if he said it.

Q. Then the figures you gave us would have little bearing on the question of pauperism?—There are other trades; they have had the unemployed. I only give the confectionery as one instance.

Q. You come to speak specially about the confectionery trade?—I know something about that.

Q. You do not know where the men live?—What men?

Q. The men and women employed in that trade?—I know where numbers of them live. Do you want me to give you their addresses?

Q. You are basing your evidence on the assumption that they live in Poplar?—That must be. Hundreds live in Poplar—in the borough of Poplar—that is Poplar, Bromley, and Bow.

Q. Do you appreciate if 80 or 90 per cent. live elsewhere?—I do not acknowledge that as a fact. It is only your statement.

Q. Have you made any inquiry as to that?—No, certainly not.

Q. You do not think it of sufficient importance to ascertain when you give evidence of a certain class of workers?—I have never thought of that. I am sure that is an error.

Q. You are sure, although you have made no inquiries?—Yes, because we have hundreds here.

Q. What kind of inquiry have you made into the other statistics you gave us: You read Mr. Matheson's pamphlet?—What statistics?

Q. 10,000 directly employed; 2,500 out of employment in 1904?—Yes.

Q. What inquiry did you make. Are they from Mr. Matheson's pamphlet?—Shall I tell you? Mr. Matheson and I were so interested in it that we sent round to the firms—the different firms—and you can ask Mr. Matheson.

Q. I have asked?—I know he is one of your leaders in the municipal alliance.

Q. I know all about that?—If he took my advice he would resign forthwith.

Q. What you are relying on is what you have heard from Mr. Matheson?

(*Mr. Grant.*) I only want to ask this: You are asked what inquiry you made. You have been living in this place all your life?—Fifty years.

Q. Been in touch with these people every day?—Yes.

Q. You did not need to make a special inquiry. You had individual knowledge of cases?—Yes, but it happens that we did make a special inquiry.

Q. Tell us about it?—Mr. Matheson wanted to get the percentage of those out of work, so that he could have a good argument against the Sugar Convention that he was writing about, and it was for that reason that he asked

Mr.
McCallum,
29 July.

me to get all the information I could. He sent round to the firms, and we got the statistics like that from one of his own people.

Q. Do you remember what the figures were?—25 per cent. out of work, besides the number on short time.

Q. You got these figures when you got the 10,000 directly employed?—That is general knowledge. I believe there are 15,000, only I do not want to over-estimate, because I know what Mr. Robb is.

Q. This is very important and very valuable. This inquiry was not for the purpose of the present Inquiry, but you and Mr. Matheson wanted to show the effect of the Brussels Sugar Convention; you wrote to all the firms in the confectionery trade and asked the numbers who were out of employment?—Yes, that was the reason. A lucky job we did.

Q. Are there a very large number of confectionery firms in the East End of London?—Yes.

Q. And the return showed that 25 per cent. of the employees of those firms were at that time out of work?—And some on short time.

Q. Besides some working short time?—Yes.

Q. The winter of 1904-5?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) Will you ask him if this return was made for the whole of London?—I tell you what we were doing, I was having an argument with Mr. Arthur du Cros. He was on the side of the Government. I was against him, and I was trying to oust him out, which we did, I am glad to say, and that was the reason. It was a political argument on the Sugar Convention Bill and its evil effects which caused us to go into the matter, so I could get facts against Mr. du Cros.

Q. For the whole of London?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Just a few questions. You have told us that the best people are going out and the chosen people are coming in?—That is for North Bow.

Q. Who are they?—Every one knows.

Q. Do you know that the chosen people very seldom come on the poor rates?—They do not.

Q. Would the chosen people coming in have a beneficial effect?—No, because they trade among themselves and not with the Gentile.

Q. They would not come on the rates?—They are no good to the shopkeepers. They stick very close together.

Q. You told us in your examination there were a number of subsidiary industries; what would they be?—The great industry is box-making, because we use thousands and thousands of boxes every week and they are all smashed up. They are not kept. We keep large firms going.

Q. You make contracts for the supply of these boxes?—Yes.

Q. In your jam trade?—I am not trading in jam. Mine is real confectionery.

Q. The confectionery and jam trades have increased largely recently?—Yes.

Q. We have been told Poplar is ceasing to be a harbour and becoming more of an industrial town. Is that so?—Yes.

Q. If this jam trade and other trades of the same sort have been increasing in numbers they have periods of prosperity?—Yes, periods of prosperity, but the last one or two years they have had one or two months of great depression.

Q. Owing to the Sugar Convention?—Yes.

Q. Did these periods of depression coincide with the guardians having to give a large amount of relief?—Yes, with the unemployed as well.

Q. I mean that has been one of the reasons?—I give you one instance. One of my old employees went with the unemployed. I found she had sold her home. She had three children to keep. She sold her home, her husband being out of work, and she was starving herself to keep the three children. Some of my employees told me about it. I paid all the back rent and gave her a fresh start, and kept five of them from going on the rates for four months.

Q. What is the state of trade now?—Much better. Trade all round is much better.

Q. Since when?—Well, the confectionery trade has improved since last year.

Q. Can you tell me what proportion of your work-people are permanent men?—All my own.

Q. Can you say what the conditions are in other firms?—Of course it is casual. They go on in the fruit season. You have hundreds who directly suffer as soon as the fruit season is over.

Q. In these subsidiary industries of making boxes, is the labour casual?—Yes, because they take a number on.

Q. Would it be essential for the existence of these industries to have a reserve of labour to trade upon?—Yes, that is the evil. I have been told they would not know what to do without our casual labour.

Q. That is to say their industries are established on the basis of casual labour?—Yes.

Q. And that you hold to be rather mischievous?—Yes, it is.

Q. Where you have casual labour you have the necessary consequence—ill-payment?—Yes, it is so.

Q. Can you tell me what proportion of your men or women employees are in receipt of parish relief?—I have tried to keep them off, sir. I can give you numbers of instances, but it seems egotistical. I do not want it to go into the papers.

Q. Is not it a fact in your own knowledge that in these industries a large number of the persons employed are so poor they are obliged to go on parish relief?—Yes.

Q. They exist on what labour they can get and on what relief they can get?—Yes.

Q. Do you think that a good system?—No, I think the explanation of what has been done for the unemployed to find employment, is the best system, and all honour to such men as Mr. Lansbury and Mr. Crooks.

Q. That is not exactly the point. The point is what we can do to put an end to a system whereby an employer has a reservoir of labour kept by the poor rate?—By the employer not being over greedy and in times of depression helping the unemployed.

Q. By subsidising as far as possible all skilled labour?—Yes.

Q. Is short-time common in your industry?—Not in my firm.

Q. There is a good deal of short-time?—Short-time in the confectionery trade is general. There is a lot of short-time in the general confectionery trade in the summer time—the fruit season.

Q. You are a large ratepayer, I suppose—you or your firm?—Yes, so am I myself.

Q. Do the rates press hardly upon your industry?—Well, I do not think that they do. Perhaps I am a curiosity. I am the only one that I know. I was told that for writing to say the rates were not high enough.

Q. Do you not consider 12/- high enough?—Yes, I do.

Q. I thought you said your rates were not high enough?—So it was. I went about some property, and I found one was not paying a fair share of the rates, and I wrote to ask if the rates might be put up.

Q. The assessment unfairly made?—Yes; they said I should be labelled and put in the British Museum as a curiosity.

Q. I suppose as a business man you suggest very heavy rates are a drawback to the development of a business?—Yes, no one likes their rates to be very high.

Q. So you would benefit the workpeople?—Yes, by keeping the rates down; the employers say they do not get their share.

Q. Still, if they had to pay 12/- in the £ they would not be better off than if they had to pay 6/-?—Certainly not.

Q. What is your remedy?—I will tell you the great remedy. Employers ought in prosperous times to see they get the work done, and in slack times they ought to help their employees, and not turn them off for the least thing.

Q. A better organisation of labour?—Yes. I am only giving you my idea. I do not turn anybody off, and if there is short time we have to make it up.

Q. You concede, then, that if the rates are further increased the position may become extremely serious?—Yes, I do not like high rates. I wish they were only 6/- in the £.

(The Inspector.) Whom shall we take next?

(Mr. Grant.) We might have Mr. Palmer.

Mr. J. W. PALMER; recalled, and further examined.

(The Inspector.) You are sworn?—I was sworn. I want to say this: After what took place last month I should like Mr. Lansbury to leave the room. (To Mr. Lansbury.) I do not mind you knowing. You cannot control yourself and I shall not give any evidence unless you leave the room.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Oh, I am not going to stand between him and his evidence. (Mr. Lansbury then retired.)

(The Inspector.) Sit down, Mr. Palmer, and answer the questions of Mr. Corrie Grant.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Palmer, you have given us a number of these tickets?—Tickets to the relieving officers.

Q. Who signed them?—I do not think I have signed many of them. Anyone who was in the office filled them up you know.

Q. Anybody in the office filled them up?—Yes.

Q. Then you never knew the particulars of those you signed?—Well, I know practically every man that comes. For instance, I am in the office in the morning and I saw them although I did not fill the papers up.

Q. In the evidence, you say a great many of these men came for a night and then went into the workhouse?—I did, sir.

Q. But the men you did not sign tickets for, you could not tell whether they had been in the place or not?—I am always there in the morning when they come down, I am never away as a rule.

Q. You told us this—“(Q) And you instance 70 men from your own lodging-house in Stratford?—Yes. (Q) Who came here one night and qualified for the house?—Yes. There is one man in the house who has been a regular for five years. He goes into the country for the summer and comes back in the winter. Davies is in the house to-day. (Q) That is a case, the case of an inmate Davies?—Yes, he has done it for years. He makes a boast that he has never worked for years. He is over 61. (Q) His age is 61?—All give their ages over 60.” You could only know that if you signed the ticket yourself?—On the Stratford business, yes.

Q. Did you sign for these 70?—I cannot tell you how many I signed for.

Q. Put your mind to the question. Did you sign for these 70?—Over a period, yes.

Q. Did you sign for these 70?—What period do you mean?

Q. The period you spoke of?—I said 70 men came from Stratford since I had to do with the house and went into the workhouse.

Q. Mr. Robb asked you, “Can you say of your own knowledge if men have been attracted to Poplar from other districts?” and you said “Yes. Seventy from the Stratford lodging-house stopped one night in Bow and asked for an order”?—That is wrong. It has got into the newspapers 300. The figures are wrong altogether.

Q. I am only taking the shorthand notes. Then the shorthand note is wrong if it says 70 from the Stratford lodging-house stopped in the Bow house?—Certainly, I said several.

Q. Instead of 70 you said several?—It should be several.

Q.—“(Q.) Why did they come to Poplar?—Because they did not like West Ham. (Q) What is the attraction to Poplar?—I could not tell you. (Mr. Grant.) The witness never used the word attraction. The word attraction was put into his mouth by Mr. Robb as usual. Witness: I know of no attraction. The only attraction I know of is 12s. in the £. (Mr. Robb.) You say you know of your personal knowledge that there has been an influx of people from other districts into Poplar?—Yes. (Q) And you instance 20 men from your own lodging-house in Stratford?—Yes. (Q) Who came here one night and qualified for the house?—You say that is not correct?—The 70 would be correct over the period since I have been connected with the premises. I allude to that.

Q. It was put here you know, 70 men coming from your lodging-house at Stratford to your lodging-house at Bow. They remained there one night and qualified for the house. You say that is not correct?—It is correct for the period I had to do with the house.

Q. That is put as one day?—That is ridiculous.

(Mr. Robb.) If you look at the question, sir—

(Mr. Grant.) All right, Mr. Robb. (To witness.) How long do you say it is spread over?—I should say about four years.

Q. The 70 men on page 324 were spread over three or four years?—Three or four years. It might be 12 or 18 months, but I should say three or four years.

Q. Do you say it is unusual to admit men from a lodging-house into the workhouse?—I do not follow your question.

Q. You said, you know, in your evidence, that men have come into the lodging-house, stayed for a night, and then been admitted to the workhouse?—I take it they have. They have not come back again to us.

Q. You think that is improper?—I do, sir.

Q. Do you know if it is done in any other workhouse?—I believe it is. I have made inquiry since I gave evidence, and I believe it is done in one or two places.

Q. Do you know anything about Whitechapel?—No, I do not.

Q. I put it to you, it is done at Whitechapel?—What I raised an objection to was men. This morning a man came to me and said he wanted a ticket for the relieving officer. I refused, and said he ought to go to the casual ward. I refused to give him a ticket; but if we refuse a ticket they come back.

Q. Could you give a ticket to the relieving officer, and mark on it: “Only been one night in the house”?—If a clerk was there he would not know how long they had been there. Some of these men have been there three months, and some may not have been there at all.

Q. I have a letter from Mr. Vallance, clerk to the Whitechapel Union, and he says, among other things: “Admissions to the infirmary: admitted from shelter, 767; from common lodging-houses, 2,146”?—Of course Whitechapel has got 10 per cent. more lodging-houses than Poplar.

Q. St. Pancras Union: On the returns supplied by them to us on the 19th January, 1906, it is shown there were admitted from common lodging-houses—?

(Mr. Crooks.) It is a very large district.

(Mr. Grant.) There are altogether nine districts. There were admitted altogether 300, and there were admitted from one ward alone, No. 7 ward, 173?—Yes, sir.

Q. And the number in Poplar for the same year, for the one I have just quoted, the total number was 110. But you have told us quite fairly that since you were here the last time you have made inquiry and found other workhouses—other boards of guardians have had the same experience that we have had in Poplar?—Yes, sir.

Q. As the result of these lodging-houses?—I believe Poplar is the only place where they force it on the keeper of a common lodging-house to give the men a ticket.

Q. Now in regard to the evidence you gave with respect to these bedsteads. You said you gave a quotation for—?—I never quoted at all.

Q. You supplied them, did not you?—No.

(The Inspector.) What he said was that he obtained a quotation.

(Mr. Grant.) “(Q) Did you obtain a quotation?—Yes, sir. It will be here in the course of the day. (Q) It has arrived. You received a quotation for 75—19s. 6d.” That quotation is No. 1,060 in the list, 6 ft. 6 in. by 2 ft. 6 in.?—Yes, that was the quotation.

Q. The quotation of Mr. Butcher's for the guardians was not No. 1,060 but No. 1,017, 6 ft. 6 in. by 2 ft. 9 in., price 25s. less 7½ per cent. discount. You were dealing with a different bedstead?—Slightly different.

Q. Would you just look at that list?

(The Inspector.) What is the date of that letter?

(Mr. Grant.) The letter is the 28th June, 1906. Mr. Whitfield's letter.

(The Inspector.) The date of the other?

(Mr. Grant.) The date of that is the 17th July, 1906. Now, Mr. Palmer, you see 1,060 there in the list right in the middle?—Yes, I see 1,060.

Mr. Palmer.
20 July.

Mr. Palmer.

20 July.

Q. Now you see 1,017 also, at the side. It is just to the right of 1,060?—1,071 do you mean?

Q. 1,071?—Yes.

Q. Those are two different bedsteads, are they not.—Yes, they are slightly different. Very slight.

Q. What are the prices quoted there for each of them. What is the list price of 1,060?—2 ft. 9 in. is 33s. 9d.

Q. No. 1,060, 2 ft. 6 in.?—2 ft. 6 in. is 33s.; 2 ft. 9 in. is 33s. 9d.

Q. And the 1,071?—33s. 9d., 2 ft. 6 in.; 40s. 3d., 2 ft. 9 in. Ninepence extra for the 2 ft. 9 in. There is only about 9d. on a bedstead 3 in. wider.

Q. Mr. Robb asked you, Mr. Palmer, whether you know of your own knowledge the men who applied misrepresented their ages, and you said you knew they did?—Oh, yes, in several cases.

Q. Have you not filled up a good many papers for those over 60?—I have to take a man's age. I could not call a man an infamous liar. I have to take the man's word.

Q. You take their statements, although you do not believe them?—I have filled up some hundreds of papers for these men in the course of nine years, knowing most of the things I have filled up have been absolute lies. But you have got no remedy.

Q. There is always the remedy of the honest man, to refuse to circulate an untruth?—If we refuse to give them, the relieving officer comes and asks for particulars himself, and he has to take it, and gets it the same as I do.

Q. At any rate you do not take the responsibility of circulating a lie?—I have complained about them ever since I have had them, and have refused to fill them up several times.

Q. I have here a big bundle?—That is only for the last few months. We have had some hundreds of them.

Q. These are only a comparatively short time?—Only up to the Inquiry, I believe.

Q. Yes, beginning in December, 1905. Now we are on the bedsteads, I have here the receipts of Mr. Butcher, for the goods supplied to us. They are very kindly lent to us; so I ask you now to see them. They show exactly what Butcher paid to the firms supplying him with the bedsteads he sold to us. That will show what profit he made on them. You see I am told, I have not worked it out, that it shows that he made a profit of 7½ per cent.

(The Inspector.) At what were they passed on to you?

(Mr. Marsh.) 26s. If you look at that you will find the amount receipted on the invoice is 7½ per cent. discount off the purchase price of 26s., and that is what he made out of it, for which he said he had to wait three months for his money.

(Mr. Grant.) May I identify these accounts for the purpose of the shorthand notes?

(Mr. Robb.) May I look at them?

(Mr. Grant.) Certainly.

(The Inspector.) Everyone knows pretty well the price of a bedstead of that sort. Whitfield said he would supply them at 19s. 6d., and I think you said in your evidence that you could get them for less?—It might be interesting to the guardians—the Lawson Tait people are a respectable firm—if they would let them see the cheques that cover these invoices. I personally do not believe it. I think they are a respectable firm and would send the cheques. It would be interesting to see who paid that.

(Mr. Grant.) This account I am looking at is January 9, 1906, and it covers Mr. Butcher's account with Messrs. Whitfield & Co.; the period covered is October 26, 1905, to December 12, 1906, and it is invoices of goods. There is a summary of the invoices with which I will deal presently. The amount of the total is £98 15s. 3d., and there is a receipt for £91 6s., which is £98 15s. 3d. less 2½ per cent. discount. There are five items in that quarter's account, and I take it, October 26, 1905, Lawson Tait bedsteads 1,017, ten at 26s., £13 net. On October 28, 1905, there are 15 Lawson Tait bedsteads, including one sample bedstead, £19 10s.

(The Inspector.) What is the price of those?

(Mr. Grant.) They would be 26s.

(The Inspector.) It is very mysterious, because the price of the material has gone up. Everything has gone up 10 per cent.—I think it is only fair to mention—

(Mr. Grant.) May I clear it up. I think this is the difficulty. Whitfield was going to supply for 19s. 6d., but that was the price for the bedstead 1,060 I have shown you, 2 ft. 6 in. wide. The bed supplied to the guardians was, I think, 1,017, and was a larger size, and the price of that was 26s. That is what they quoted to the guardians. The figure 1,017 is repeated over and over again in the invoices. I think it must be right. These invoices we must take to be correct. This invoice, November 11, 1905, is for 9 bedsteads, Lawson Tait, 1,017, at 26s. Then November 16 and 17, 1,017, Lawson Tait bedsteads, 14 at 26s., 3 at 25s. 9d.; a second lot, 6 ft. instead of 6 ft. 6 in.; 14, 6 ft. 6 in. by 2 ft. 9 in., at 26s.—£18 4d.; and 2, 6 ft. by 2 ft. 4 in., £3 17s. 3d., making a total of £22 1s. 3d.; and on December 12th, 1905, 25 bedsteads, 1,017, 6 ft. 6 in. by 2 ft. 9 in., at 26s., £32 10s. These items totalled up make £98 15s. 3d., which I gave you, and, as I understand, what Mr. Butcher charged the guardians was £98 15s. 3d. What he paid Whitfield was £91 6s., and that difference of £7 9s. 3d. is his profit on the transaction. Here is a Lawson Tait bedstead in the catalogue of theirs. I do not know what the date of the catalogue is, but here it describes the bedstead 1,017.

(The Inspector.) Did you say, Mr. Palmer, that by that list the price they are charging is 33s.?—When I wrote to the Whitfield people for the price of the Lawson Tait bedsteads, I made use of that to give the prices, and the representative came down to me twice. First of all he would not quote me at all; he said they were rather suspicious with the Inquiry going on, and when I told him I was a friend of Mr. Butcher's—I had to tell him something—and I wanted the same as he supplied to the guardians, he said he did not think he could get them at the same price but would do the best he could. He then sent me that letter giving the price as 19s. 6d. That is all that took place, in my own office in front of the clerks.

Q. You told Mr. Whitfield you were a friend of Mr. Butcher's, and wanted the identical bedstead as supplied to the guardians?—I did.

Q. He said you could not have it so cheap, and quoted 19s. 6d.?—He quoted 24s. 6d., but when I mentioned Mr. Butcher's name he sent a quotation down at 19s. 6d.

Q. And it is the same sort of bedstead as was supplied to the guardians?—I think it is three inches less. You will see. It shows that.

Q. What were the general prices of the Lawson Tait bedsteads?—I should say at the time that we quoted they were a lot less, because bedsteads to my knowledge have gone up 15 per cent.

Q. All iron?—All iron.

(Mr. Grant.) Did you tell Whitfield you wanted them for the lodging-house?—I did; I said I was introduced to them by Butcher, and wanted them for the lodging-house, and I think on behalf of the ratepayers I was entitled to.

(The Inspector.) Look at that on the right hand sheet, is that the bedstead?—(Examining document) Yes, that would be the bedstead. The only difference is the guardians have been quoted at 1½ inch bows instead of 1 inch, which might make 1s. difference.

Q. Might not that be a special size and somewhat expensive?—They charge at the rate of 3d. per inch. The guardians had 2 ft. 9 ins., and they quoted me 2 ft. 6 ins., and they charged 3d. per inch on their own list.

Q. Your suggestion is the guardians paid about 3d. an inch too much?—I do say so.

Q. Can you suggest any explanation?—Well, I have an opinion, but of course it is rather dangerous to say it. I may say I am still inquiring into the matter and I intend to. It is common knowledge that they have to make all sorts of invoices, and I was asked only yesterday by a man who paid 3s. for a dustbin, to give him a bill for 5s., and it is a thing a man working on commission has to do. Of course, if he is his own master, he need not do it. Personally, I do not believe these invoices for a single moment. It got into the papers that dustbins were put at 4s. 6d. and I quoted at 14s. 6d. It was entirely a mistake, and I think it is only fair to Messrs. Walber to say our price was 10s. 6d. Mr. Robb got it out in error, and it came out in the newspapers on a day

I was not here. They are a very respectable firm, and I think it is rather a pity their name was dragged in.

(Mr. Robb.) What you said was this: "What was your ordinary price each for those dustbins?—Our ordinary price, not galvanized, is 45s. a dozen; after being galvanized, 48s." That is speaking of your list prices?—Yes.

Q. Then you went on to say you knew what price they, the guardians, were going to pay, 14s. 6d., and then you suggested 10s. 6d., which they agreed to pay. The position was this: Your ordinary price was 4s. 6d. Knowing it was for the guardians, you charged him 10s. 6d. instead of 4s. 6d., which he agreed to pay you?—But the matter I refer to was a day or two previous, only it came out in the papers in the evening—

Q. I think the mistake was this: It was assumed Walber paid you the list price, instead of which you charged him twice your list price?—More than twice.

Q. Your point was the guardians spent 14s. 6d. for an article which according to your list price was 4s. 6d.?—That is quite right.

Q. You never suggested Walber got it; they paid you 10s. 6d.?—No, I am sorry their name came in.

(Mr. Grant.) Here is the invoice of Mr. Butcher to the guardians and the cheque paid. You see the Lawson Tait bedsteads altogether came to £97 10s., three times £32 10s., and in the account the total is £128 10s. So his account was £97 10s. His account with Whitfield was £98 15s. 3d., subject to 7½ per cent. discount?—It would not pay a man to do it.

Q. Here is a letter from Messrs. Whitfield, 17th July, 1906, in which they give this quotation. I will read it:—

"Dear Sir,—I beg to inform you that the specification of the bedstead for which I gave a quotation to the Bow Iron and Metal Works, Limited, was as follows:—

"No. 1,060 in the list, 6 ft. 6 in. by 2 ft. 6 in., 1 in. iron bows, three uprights in the head end, 14 springs at each end, iron feet without castors, the number to be taken in one lot, viz., 75. Terms, nett cash, 19s. 6d. each.

"The specification of the bedsteads supplied to Mr. Butcher for the Poplar Guardians was:—

"No. 1,017 in the list, 6 ft. 6 in. by 2 ft. 9 in., 1½ in. iron bows 4 uprights in the head end, 16 springs at each end, special pattern, all hardwood ball feet at the foot end. Price 26s. less 7½ per cent. monthly account.

"We have never at any time allowed Mr. Butcher a greater discount than 7½ per cent. I have been supplying other institutions with similar bedsteads. In December, 1905, I supplied St. Bartholomew's Hospital with two

"No. 1,060, 6 ft. 6 in. by 2 ft. 6 in., similar to those quoted to Palmer. As it was a very small order—2 instead of 75—the price charged was 23s. 6d., without discount.

"In December I also supplied the Guildford Union with 12 No. 1,060 at a price of 23s., without discount. In November, 1905, I supplied the Romford Union with 48

"No. 1,061, 6 ft. 6 in. by 2 ft. 6 in., at 24s. This order was subject to 5 per cent. at a month. In October, 1905, I supplied to the Paddington Workhouse 200 No. 1,061,

"6 ft. 6 in. by 2 ft. 6 in., at 22s. 6d. This order was subject to 6 per cent. discount. Yours faithfully,

"HARRY WHITFIELD, London Manager to Whitfield Bedsteads, Limited." It shows that he has given us variations of his own price. You will see, sir, presently, from these invoices, ours are 10 per cent. cheaper.

(The Inspector.) Can you tell me whether this is an agent's receipt or whether it was Mr. Whitfield's signature?—I cannot tell you. The London office would have the same stamp as the works. That is the same initial as on mine. You see it is practically the same.

Mr. J. ANDERSON; sworn and examined.

(Mr. Grant.) So far as my notes go, the only reference to Mr. Anderson is this. "Now, Mr. Haswell—" Mr. Anderson, you just attend to this I am reading:—

"(Q) Now, Mr. Haswell, do you know anything about this alleged drinking of beer by guardians in the house?—Yes, sir. (Q) What took place? (The Inspector.) Stick to what you actually know. (The witness.) What I know is this. I have on many occasions happened to be in the beer cellar and have seen guardians drinking—several of the guardians. (Q) Can

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Whitfield's representative has written saying if you would like to see him he would come down. It is really a very simple matter.

(The Inspector.) You may be surprised that I have given so much attention to it, but I think it is only just to the guardians. You see here is this fact, here is a large order for bedsteads, 75 bedsteads, not put out to tender, but bought through a local tradesman. The price which you pay that local tradesman was to me at first sight startling. The suggestion was, of course, that the guardians behaved in a very un-businesslike way in not putting it out to tender, therefore it was worth while to investigate it. The matter, as it stands now, is that Messrs. Whitfield paid 7½ per cent. commission on it.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Butcher did. The guardians approached Whitfield to ask the price. The price quoted was 26s. They then found Mr. Butcher's, a local tradesman, also were 26s., and so they said to him, "You have the order for the bedsteads"—I will deal with the number presently. What Mr. Butcher does is to go to his local tradesmen and through an agent they give him a special discount of 7½ per cent., and that is the profit he makes on the transaction. If Mr. Whitfield were here he would tell you that. So it clears the whole matter up.

(The Inspector.) Then there is the mysterious fact that Mr. Whitfield suggests he should sell practically the same bedstead for 19s. 6d.

(Mr. Grant.) Oh, no, sir. I believe it is a different bedstead?—There would not be a shilling difference.

Q. Mr. Marsh, who has checked it, tells me this—of course, that is not the price list—if you look at those two bedsteads you will find, while the prices are different, the variation in the majority of the prices is about the same as the variations between 19s. 6d. and 26s. The bedstead which Palmer sent to us was one number—I have not got the list, so I cannot tell you what it was—and the bedstead which the guardians bought was another. The difference in the prices between these two bedsteads was 6s. 6d. That was the difference between these two bedsteads on the price list you have in front of you. There is a difference there.

(The Inspector.) Are not these subject to that discount?

(Mr. Robb.) The invoices are misleading, because the invoices state not.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Robb must know—when invoices are issued like that—tradesmen's discounts are never shown.

(Mr. Robb.) I beg your pardon. All invoices of wholesale firms are subject to discount. Here is a statement, and there is no discount shown.

(Mr. Grant.) Really this is too childish.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes, it is, but it arises from your ignorance of commercial matters.

(Mr. Grant.) If you will be good enough—Mr. Robb ought not to have said that.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Grant—

(Mr. Grant.) On paper there is a difference between the two sizes. It does not show the discount of 7½ per cent. It shows the amount charged £98 and he pays £91. And the receipt is given for it.

(Mr. Robb.) The discount will be shown in the letter. The invoice states nett. There is some mystery we have not probed to the bottom.

(Mr. Grant.) Would it not be better to have Mr. Whitfield here? Mr. Robb keeps on making these suggestions and the best way is to have the man here.

Mr. Palmer.

20 July.

Mr. Anderson.

20 July.

"you name any of them?—Yes. I have seen Mr. Peacock, who is not a guardian now: I have seen Mr. Smith there. (Mr. Robb.) Do not be afraid?—I am not afraid. I am just thinking. The names do not always occur to me. I have seen Mr. Anderson there and also Mr. McCarthy. (Q) And Mr. McCarthy?—Yes. (Q) Do you pledge your oath you have actually seen them drinking beer in the cellar?—Yes. (Q) Have you ever seen any guardian the worse for drink on the workhouse premises?—Yes, sir. (Q) Who have you seen?—I have

Mr. Anderson.

20 July.

"seen Mr. Anderson on several occasions. (Q) Anyone else?—And Mr. Smith. (Q) And anyone else?—And Mr. McCarthy. (Q) Do you swear that you have actually seen these guardians the worse for drink?—I do. (Q) Recently?—Recently. (Q) I mean you realise the gravity of the circumstance?—I do. (Q) Are there any other guardians you have seen in these circumstances beyond those you have named?—No others occur to me just now." Mr. Anderson, that is the statement by Mr. Haswell, that on several occasions, he has seen you the worse for drink on the workhouse premises, and that it has taken place recently. Is there any truth in that statement?—Except so far as taking a glass of beer occasionally, which would not be more than once a month, I absolutely deny that statement, most emphatically.

Q. Let us take first of all as to how far it is true, Mr. Anderson. How long have you been a guardian?—Five years altogether.

Q. And have you, as a guardian, constantly visited the workhouse?—Yes, on an average about once a week.

Q. And you say on about one visit out of every four you have had a glass of beer in the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. Whose beer was it?—It was from the master's cask, all I have had. I could explain how I know it.

Q. One moment. It was from the master's cask. Mr. Robb all through this examination has been talking about down in the cellar. Was there any cellar at all?—I have not seen any cellar.

Q. Where was the beer kept?—In the beer store.

Q. Is that one of a series of stores on the ground floor of the workhouse?—There was a corridor and a series of stores.

Q. And one of these rooms, a small room, was used for keeping the beer that was used for the inmates?—Yes.

Q. And there was also a cask which you said you were told belonged to the master?—Yes, he told me himself, I asked him.

Q. Was that kept separate from the inmates' beer?—Yes, in a corner by itself.

Q. And about once a month you might have had a glass of beer with him?—Yes.

Q. But the seriousness of the charge is this, that on several occasions you have been the worse for drink on the workhouse premises?—I absolutely deny that.

Q. Now, I think you are an official of the Stevedores' Union?—General secretary.

Q. How long have you been general secretary?—Eleven years.

Q. That is a responsible position?—Yes.

Q. And there is a good deal to do?—Yes.

Q. And the man who is chosen for it would be a man, first of all well known to the stevedores, and next he must be a man of character?—I take it so, sir. I may say I have just been through an election, and returned by a majority of three to one.

Q. Is that since this Inquiry, Mr. Anderson?—While it has been going on.

Q. Well, now there is another charge against you, which is rather a different charge. It is made by Mr. Conoley, examined by Mr. Robb. He says he had seen guardians in the cellar with the master drinking. "Have you ever seen any person in the workhouse the worse for drink?—I have, sir. Who have you seen?—Mr. Anderson. You saw him the worse for drink?—Yes. When did you see him drunk?—I cannot specify the date. I mentioned it to Haswell, and said: Did you see that man who has gone into the workhouse. Who is he? He was not sober. I saw him rolling up to the master's house?" So Mr. Conoley's evidence was that you were going into the workhouse, and as you were going through the porter's lodge he noticed your condition, and spoke to Haswell and said: "That man has gone into the workhouse—he is not sober. I saw him rolling up to the master's house." Is there any truth in that statement?—There is absolutely no truth in the statement that I was drunk. I may have been rolling. Unfortunately, I walk with a sort of rolling gait, and on that particular night—I happen to remember it because I very seldom smoke a cigar at all, but on that particular night I did have a cigar—and something drew my attention to the lodge, I noticed a conclave of officials and turned round suddenly, and met a person coming up a short lane from the corner

where I stood. I reeled round to the porter's lodge, and I was trying to look at two of them at once and slipped off the kerb and nearly fell on to him. I remember the incident for the reason that I was smoking the cigar.

Q. And it is so rarely you smoke a cigar, that you remember it?—Yes.

Q. Put it generally thus: During the whole time you have been a guardian have you ever been in the workhouse the worse for drink?—I absolutely deny that any time I have been transacting the guardians' business I have ever been under the influence of drink.

Q. And while you may have occasionally had a glass of beer with the master, it has always been on the understanding of a statement made to you that it was his own private cask from which the beer was drawn?—Yes, sir. I would like to state the circumstances under which I had the first glass of beer. We had been sitting on the committee from 4 o'clock in the afternoon until nearly 9 o'clock in the evening, and when the coffee was passed round the master noticed that I did not drink any, and he asked me if I would prefer a glass of beer. I thought he was joking, and I said "Yes, I am going to have one when I get outside." He said: "I can give you one inside." We went along to this store. I did not know where we were going. It was the first time I had been there, and he drew a glass of ale. I asked him what beer it was. I put the question to him straight. He said, "Oh, it is all right. That is my own cask. I can show you the invoice." I hesitated even then.

Q. The cask was standing in a separate part of the store away from the casks with the inmates' beer?—Yes, he pointed out a row of casks of inmates' beer, and in a corner entirely by itself was a smaller 36-gallon. The others looked to me like 52.

Q. I have been in the cellar, Mr. Anderson. When you go in there is a table right across the room, is there not?—It is a few boards nailed together, with a piece of linoleum.

Q. As you go into the room on the right-hand side there is a beer trestle, upon which the inmates' casks are put?—Yes.

Q. Where was the master's cask?—On the opposite side: just the other side of the cupboard, which forms an angle, and in the angle on the further side of the cupboard.

Q. Furthest from the door?—Furthest from the door. The cask was resting on a trestle. There are one or two other statements I want to make, sir. There is one other statement I wish to deny first of all before I make any more statements, and that is the statement of the inmate Crosbie that he saw me going into the master's room with a lady guardian.

Q. I do not follow that?—Well, it is so.

(Mr. Robb.) I have no recollection of it?—Oh, I have. I have a recollection of the statement I mean.

(Mr. Grant.) Quite right. It is my cross-examination. Crosbie was asked what was the name of the guardian. He said, "The name of the guardian would be mostly McCarthy." "Who were the others?" "I have also seen Mr. Anderson there?"—There is also a statement that I went with a lady guardian.

(Mr. Robb.) I have no recollection of any such thing?—Well, it was in the Press. I have good reason to remember it, Mr. Robb, you know. I mean ladies read the newspapers as well as men.

(Mr. Grant.) What was the question you were on, Mr. Anderson?—I want to unhesitatingly deny that statement, that I went into the master's sitting room with a lady guardian. I just want to explain. This is an example of the unreliability of some of the evidence. It was on the night of the old men's outing last year. My wife went down to help cut up for and serve the old men, and I met her and we went into the house together, and it was my wife who went into the master's sitting room with me.

(The Inspector.) Have you anything more to say?—That is all the denials I want to make. I do not think there is anything else affecting my personal character, but I want to make one general statement as to work in the docks. I do not think there are many people in Poplar who know more about it than I do.

(Mr. Grant.) First, perhaps Mr. Robb would like to question you.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Anderson, are you now on the list of municipal electors. Have you any qualification to serve

as a guardian at the present time?—I have not got the list, so I cannot say.

Q. You know, do not you, that your qualification has ceased?—I am not sure it has.

Q. You have been informed?—I am not sure it has, I say.

Q. Have you been so informed by the town clerk?—No.

Q. No information that the entries were made in error, and that you had, in fact, no qualification at all?—I have had no information of an entry being made in error yet. I would like to know what entry you are referring to?

Q. I suggest to you that you live at the Maritime Hall, West India Dock Road?—I suggest I do not.

Q. You are entered as a service voter. You are not qualified?—I suggest your information is altogether wrong.

Q. As a fact, I suggest you do not really live there?—Well, you are quite right, I do not; I did not say I did.

Q. But it is in respect to that you get your qualification as a service voter, although you don't live there?—No, it is not.

Q. Where is it?—I am not going to tell you. I am not going to make the running for you.

Q. I suggest you claimed a service vote in respect of the Maritime Hall, West India Dock Road, a place where you do not reside?—I suggest I did not.

Q. In respect to what premises do you claim?—When?

Q. Prior to last year?—When I was elected I was on the register.

Q. Yes, but how did you get on to the register?—Because I was entitled to be on.

Q. Did you claim a service vote?—No.

Q. In respect of these premises?—Yes.

Q. And you did not in fact reside there?—Yes, I did last year.

Q. Then I suggest to you, you have been told the entry is wrong. It was made by a wrong statement?—I want to tell you there is no entry. If you don't know, I may as well inform you.

Q. What is your qualification?—You mean what was it.

Q. No, at the present time, what is it?—My qualification is I am elected a member till next year.

Q. Although you have no qualification there as a voter or a guardian?—I do not know. I pay rates, £30 a year now.

Q. Where?—The Maritime Hall.

Q. You do not pay them?—I pay a proportion of them.

Q. You do not reside there?—No.

Q. You know you are not entitled to claim a vote?—I am entitled to claim a vote on those premises just as well as members of the municipal alliance are on those little wooden huts in the docks.

Q. What is the Maritime Hall?—A large building.

Q. You are not the tenant of it, are you?—Yes, one of them.

Q. One of them in the sense that any member of the association is a tenant?—No. No, I have two offices there. I have the exclusive use of them.

Q. I suggest to you that you claim a service vote in respect of those premises well knowing you do not reside there and are not qualified in respect of them?—I do not do anything of the sort.

Q. Very well, we will leave that?—Your information is entirely wrong.

Q. I see, with regard to Mr. Madeley, you say you may have had a glass of beer with him occasionally?—Yes.

Q. You knew other guardians were having glasses of beer with Mr. Madeley?—Yes.

Q. Did it strike you as a dignified and proper thing that you, the elected representative of the ratepayers, should receive free beer from the hands of your servant?—The hands of my servant?

Q. Yes?—I did not look upon him as a slave. I do not take those views of life.

Q. I quite agree?—Because a person is in my employment I should not treat him like a dog. If I went to his

house and he asked me to have a glass of beer, I should have it with him.

Q. A good many other people did too?—Very likely they did.

Q. Did it not occur to you you were encouraging the man to extravagant expenditure?—No, if I thought he was living above his position, I should be the first one to stop him.

Q. Do you know he was living at the rate of £1,500 a year?—No.

Q. Did you hear he had as many as three broughams one night?—No.

Q. Then you have not followed the evidence?—I have heard this evidence here, but I do not believe one half of it.

Q. I suggest to you it was well known this man was living at a rate far in excess of his income?—Who do you suggest it was known to?

Q. To you, sir?—I emphatically deny it was known to me.

Q. I ask you whether you consider it consistent with the dignity of your position to accept beer at the hands of the workhouse master?—Yes, I do.

Q. That is the view you take of your duties?—I take the view that because a man is an employee of this board I am not going to treat him as if he were something beneath me, as if he was not fit to be touched, like an unclean being.

Q. I suggest that you accepted benefits at his hands, and that you conferred benefits upon him in the way of allowances?—I absolutely deny it.

Q. Were you one of the guardians who voted for him having £50 for disturbance when the electric light was installed in his house?—No.

Q. Do you think any guardian would vote for a man, having had his judgment biased by gifts of free beer?—I was not there.

Q. I accept your statement. Do you know whether any guardian voted on matters of that description personally benefiting Mr. Madeley who might have had his judgment biased by gifts of free beer?—I know all the members of the board personally, and I do not believe a man on the board would be influenced by a glass of beer?

Q. Or several glasses?—By 20, if you like.

Q. Do you think it right that guardians who hold a dignified and responsible position should put themselves in a position of receiving benefits at the hands of their own servants, who might ask for benefits in return?—I do not take it in that light at all. I may say, if I had somebody in my employment, and went to his house, and he asked me to have a glass of beer, he would not be trying to bribe me to increase his salary, which I would not do.

Q. Do you think that this man was in a position to give to you guardians, or those who drink, free beer?—He was in a position to give us all we had.

Q. Do you think so?—Yes, I am sure so.

Q. You think it was a proper and dignified thing, consistent with your public duty, to take it?—Yes.

Q. Now, you say you have never been drunk on the workhouse premises?—I do.

Q. Have you ever been drunk anywhere?—Mr. Chairman, I think that is a direct personal insult.

(The Inspector.) I do not think you should ask him that?—I think it is a direct personal insult. I might ask Mr. Robb that, or plenty of people.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Anderson, can you, as a guardian, explain what becomes of this 10 per cent. waste in respect to the beer?—I take Mr. Walton's explanation as being a fair one. Since this Inquiry has been on I have spoken to several publicans, and they say in their line actually they lose from 2½ per cent. to 5 per cent. 2½ per cent. is the lowest percentage of waste I have been able to find up till now.

Q. How do you account for the fact that it is always 10 per cent., not more nor less?—I suppose they strike an average.

Q. How do you account for it?—If there is a little drop left one quarter perhaps that counter-balances the extra waste in the next.

Mr. Anderson.

20 July.

Mr. Anderson.

20 July.

Q. That is your view?—That is my view, yes.

Q. You think it is all genuine waste, the 10 per cent.?
—Yes, I think so.

Q. Now this cellar, or room, or whatever it was, had a counter with glasses on?—It had a few boards nailed together with a piece of linoleum on it. You must have something to stand stuff on when it is being served out to the officers.

Q. You mean the inmates?—No, it is served out to some of the officers, who carry it to the inmates. I may say this: I have been in that cellar plenty of times and never tasted the beer. I have seen beer served out and never touched it, because I did not feel like it.

Q. You say you remember the particular night referred to by the chaplain?—Yes.

Q. He did not give us the date; perhaps you can?—I do not propose to, I am not going to make your case for you, Mr. Robb; you have got plenty of servants to run about. Let them run about and find out.

Q. As you say you remember the particular night, I think you can give me the date?—Well, I am not going to.

Q. What you said was this—when you got to the gate you saw a conclave of officers?—Yes.

Q. Can you give me the names of those officials?—No.

Q. I want to know the names of the conclave of officers?—You will have to find out by other sources than through me.

Q. Do not you appreciate, Mr. Anderson, if there were other officers there besides Haswell, some of them might clear you of this imputation?—Not that particular gang would not.

Q. Who was in that particular gang you saw at the gate?—I am not going to tell you. I have told you once, and you cannot wriggle it out of me in any other way.

Q. I am doing it for your own interest?—I know you are.

Q. There is an imputation against you?—Well, and I have denied it.

Q. You say there was a conclave of officers at the gate. I want to know who there was, in order that you might have them here to clear you, or the reverse?—Same old gang.

Q. Who were they. Is there a gang or a clique?—Yes.

Q. I see; how long has that been going on?—Some considerable time, I learn now. I did not know at the time.

Q. Why have you not reported it?—Because I did not know they were a clique at the time.

Q. They might not have been a clique. You had better give us the names?—No, I am not going to.

Q. I really appeal to you?—You can appeal if you like.

Q. For your own sake, tell us the names of these people?—Do not worry about the matter, sir, I will look after myself.

Q. Then you admit you were seen both by Haswell and the chaplain?—Haswell was at the gates, and Conoley came round the corner, and I nearly trod on his toes.

Q. You say that both their statements are deliberately false?—To put it mildly, I say they were mistaken.

Q. Haswell could not have been mistaken, because he says he has seen you on several occasions?—You know Haswell as well as I do now; you can give that statement its proper value.

Q. Haswell, you discovered?—I have recently. I did not know his character till I began to inquire just now.

Q. Well, let us have it all out at once. What have you got against Haswell?—That will all come forth at the proper time.

Q. Let us have it now?—But you cannot have it now, you will have it when I am ready.

Q. You know you gave Haswell a testimonial as to his excellent character at the end of last year?—I opposed it.

Q. But you did not like Haswell, then?—No, I had my doubts about the man.

Q. I should like to know what you have against him?—You will know all in due course, or the Local Government Board will.

Q. I think in justice—the Local Government Board are inquiring into the whole matter?—I know all about that.

Q. Have you something against him?—Whatever there is about him you will know in due course.

Q. Then you have something?—Whatever there is, if there is anything, you will know in due course.

Q. Do not you think it is terribly hard these things should be hanging over the two officials?—What things?

Q. These vague insinuations?—I have had worse than that on my head.

Q. Now you are repeating the process. Do not you think you ought to have mercy, and tell us what you have got against them?—At the proper time.

Q. Then you reserve particulars of that conclave of officers, and the insinuations against Haswell and the chaplain?—I do. There are several other things I want to mention.

(Mr. Grant.) You say there are several other things you want to mention?—I think the Inspector is going to ask me.

Q. You said you had a glass of beer with Mr. Madeley about once a month?—Well, roughly speaking—I never took any account—but I should say, roughly speaking, about one visit in four.

Q. And you go once a week?—Yes.

Q. That is, taking it quite roughly, you only had a glass of beer once a month?—Yes.

Q. Let us see what Mr. Robb's talk about dignity comes to. Take the 18 gallon cask. I find the 18 gallon cask holds 144 pints each, 288 half-pints, because a glass is little less than half-a-pint—we may say fairly an 18-gallon cask would hold 300 glasses. You had one a month. That would be twelve in a year?—Yes.

Q. And in the five years you would have had sixty?—Yes. I may say it is only within the last 18 months I have had any beer at all.

Q. Then it comes less still?—Yes.

Q. You have had, then, about 20 glasses in the whole time?—I should say so; about that.

Q. That would be one-fifth part of an 18-gallon cask?

(Mr. Robb.) Less 10 per cent.—There was no waste in my glass.

(Mr. Grant.) There was no 10 per cent. there. What does this beer cost, 18 gallons; have you any idea at all?—No, I have not calculated. I know you can get a good glass of bitter for 2d.

Q. It was about a shilling a gallon, or something of that kind, was it not?—Yes, it works out at about 1s. 4d., I think.

Q. The total amount of beer you had with Mr. Madeley might come altogether to about 1s. 6d.?—Certainly not more.

Q. Now, you are asked about Madeley's position. What was his salary?—£210, I think.

Q. Take it at £200, the figures given to me. That was £200 a year?—Yes.

Q. And he had free house?—Yes.

Q. Light?—Yes.

Q. Water?—Yes.

Q. Coal?—Yes.

Q. And other provisions?—Yes.

Q. All he had to pay for out of £200 was his clothes and pleasures?—Yes.

Q. Well, I should be very glad to have £200 a year to pay for my clothes and pleasures. He was a man of good position?—Yes.

Q. And the glass of beer, or the 20 glasses you may have had with him was nothing to him?—I should think no.

Q. And nothing to you?—No.

Q. If he came to your house, would you have offered him a glass?—I should have given the same to him.

Q. Would you think that was consistent with your conduct as a guardian to offer a glass of beer to a man

if he happened to come to your house?—Certainly, I should.

Q. Would you consider it consistent for any other guardian in the country, if the master came to his house to offer him refreshment?—I understand it is the general custom. If the most menial officer under the board came to my house, I would ask him to have refreshments. If he was a teetotaler I would give him a cup of tea and something to eat.

(*The Inspector.*) What sort of beer would the master have in his cask?—Bitter ale.

Q. What sort of beer was it for the inmates?—Stout.

Q. Now, you have been engaged in the docks for some years, have not you?—Yes.

Q. And you want to speak about it?—I want to speak of the last two years, as to the conditions of employment.

Q. What are you?—A stevedore. I may say I was brought to Poplar 36 years ago, and I have been here ever since in the shipping industry. I was 12 years at sea, and the remainder of my time I have been a stevedore.

Q. Having worked at your trade, Mr. Anderson, you were chosen as secretary of your particular union?—General secretary.

Q. And, therefore, you can speak from experience as a worker in the trade union?—I was branch secretary five years, and then I was elected general secretary. As to the general conditions of work in the docks these past two years, this last winter and the winter previous—I had not already made a note as to that—but I see that Mr. McCullum referred to that while he was in the witness chair; and he admitted he did not know much about the practical work at the docks. I do, and I can say, with the exception of 1895, during the whole of my 35 years' experience of Poplar, as boy and man, I have never known the state of poverty to be so great. It has been absolutely deplorable. Out of our membership in Poplar, I can honestly and conscientiously say that for weeks and weeks at a time, not a quarter of our membership has been employed.

Q. How many members are there in your union?—4,000, spread round the coasts—roughly speaking, about 1,200 in Poplar.

Q. Are any of those 4,000 employed almost permanently?—Yes.

Q. Do you know what it comes to per week?—A very small proportion—about 2½ per cent.

Q. They would have a special ticket, would they not?—Not because they were engaged permanently by the employer, but because they are standing at a weekly salary.

Q. What proportion were casually employed?—The whole of the remainder.

Q. Some of that remainder would get employment very much oftener than others?—Yes, according to their ability.

Q. What are the conditions of membership of your union?—A man must be able to do the work.

Q. Has he got to pay a contribution?—Yes, he pays a weekly contribution.

Q. How much?—It varies sometimes. There is a standing contribution of 4s. 4d. per quarter, and then there are levies and various other things.

Q. If he cannot pay his contribution does he cease to be a member of your society?—Oh, no; we give him privileges—time to pay; we give him three months' grace.

Q. So that would enable you to know pretty well what sort of employment your men were getting?—Yes.

Q. Are there any benefits attaching to your union?—Incapacitation benefits, strike, and lock out.

Q. Not out-of-work benefits?—No.

Q. You could not do it?—We could not do it on the contribution.

Q. Every year have you had men out in the same sort of way?—Yes.

Q. Not in the same proportion?—No, with the exception of 1895, when we had the six weeks' frost so that practically everybody was out of work.

Q. What do you say as to trade now?—I should like to go back to 1895 first. You see the condition of

things, generally, had been so much better prior to the six weeks' frost than men were able to tide over the six weeks far better than they had been able to get over the past two winters.

Q. What you say is that the last depression was longer, and the men's means exhausted?—It has been going down for the past five years, and I think we have got right down to the bottom of our resources.

Q. Has it improved now?—Only slightly. I am comparing the summer season you see.

Q. Do you make returns from your union to the Board of Trade?—Yes, every month.

Q. How do those returns compare with this time last year?—There is a slight improvement.

(*Mr. Grant.*) You can give the Inspector the figures for every month, can't you, showing the number of men who have not kept up their contributions?—Yes, and showing the number of men who, after six months' have had to cease membership.

Q. But I want to know first of all—your books would show when a man, say for instance, October, 1904, your books for that month would show the number of men who had failed to pay their contributions for that month?—The men struck out?

Q. No, the men who failed to pay their contributions?—The arrears.

Q. Do they pay monthly or quarterly?—Quarterly, as a rule.

Q. The first week in the quarter or the last?—The first week in the quarter.

Q. Let us have Christmas, 1904; your returns would show the number of men in the quarter who had failed to pay their quarterly contributions?—Yes.

Q. And would show the number of men who in that quarter were struck out because they did not pay the contributions?—Yes.

Q. Well, I think that would be useful.

(*The Inspector.*) It is all summarised in the Board of Trade returns.

(*Mr. Grant.*) What I should suggest is, we did get out returns, first of all counting from 1904. Mr. Anderson might take 1904, 1905, and 1906?—For the Christmas quarters?

Q. No, no; take these three years, and then see in each quarter, March, June, September, and Christmas, first of all the number of men each quarter who failed to pay the quarterly contribution then due; and, secondly, the men who were struck out altogether and ceased to be members in that quarter because they were six months behind. If you could show all this for the three years it would be a useful figure for us, and if you could show also for each quarter the total number of men in this district. How does Poplar show in your books. You do not show it, I suppose, as a union?—No, as a district. We have got five branches in Poplar, but all the members do not necessarily reside in Poplar.

Q. But, besides the five branches in Poplar, what is the next nearest branch you have got?—Over at Canning Town.

Q. How many there?—One.

Q. What is the nearest to that?—The nearest further away from there is Tilbury.

Q. That is a long way off?—But that does not affect us much. There are only about 90 members.

Q. I suppose the nearest branch you have got is somewhere on the other side?—Yes, on the other side.

Q. Would you mind taking these six branches, the five Poplar branches, the one at Canning Town—

(*The Inspector.*) They were not all five in Poplar?—There are five in Poplar.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Five in Poplar, one at Canning Town, and one at Tilbury?—One at Deptford, and one at Rotherhithe.

Q. I think we might take these six, but if you would like to have Deptford, Mr. Anderson, I have no doubt, would be able to get it?—All this is subject to the approval of my executive committee.

Q. Of course, but I think a useful word from you to the executive would explain the circumstances?—I will explain the circumstances.

Mr. Anderson,

20 July.

Mr. Anderson.

20 July.

(The Inspector.) You have heard Mr. Martley's evidence. What he said was this—the condition of casual labour in the docks has steadily improved during his experience?—Casual labour? It is distinctly worse.

Q. The employment may be worse, but there are fewer casual labourers than there were?—Well, the Dock Company have made a number of men permanent, but the condition of those remaining is very much worse.

Q. I suppose the best men would be taken on?—Yes, and at the least excuse they are chucked out and made casual.

Q. Is that all you have to say?—No, sir; it has been inferred, or implied, that directly a man is out of work he rushes up to here in consequence of the invitation of somebody or other; and he rushes up here with a big sack over his shoulder and goes away with a sack full of food. I absolutely deny that. I have had to induce men. I have had cases where neighbours have come to me, or lodgers in the same house, and told me of people who have been absolutely starving, and they have starved rather than come to this place for relief. I have gone and found them—I have gone up into the room and seen a man and wife and six children sitting without a fire, without a scrap of anything in the cupboard or on the table; and they would not come down here. I have had to implore them to come round here and get some food. That is not a single instance either, and one of the reasons why I have always supported out-relief as against taking men into the house is this casual labour. He may be in a permanent gang, and if he is not out every morning that gang may be taken on and his place filled, and possibly he loses his position in the gang, perhaps for six months. That is the constant dread always in the mind of these men. They must be there every morning. We have five calls a day—a call at 7 o'clock, a call at 8 o'clock, a call at 9 o'clock, a call at 1 o'clock, and at 6 in the evening. I have known men attend each of these calls every day for six weeks, and not get a hand's turn, and yet they are bound to go on living in hope, hoping upon hope the next time to be called to bring in two or three hours' employment so as to obviate the necessity of going into the house.

Mr. J. T. MCCARTHY; recalled, and further examined.

Mr. McCarthy.

20 July.

(Mr. Grant.) I think you are one of the Post Office staff, are you not, at St. Martin's-le-Grand?—Yes.

Q. And when were you elected a guardian?—In February, 1903.

Q. And you were put on the house committee?—Yes.

Q. And then elected chairman of the house committee?—In 1904. I cannot tell you the exact date.

Q. Now, is your employment at the Post Office such that you can go there when you like, practically, to do your work?—To the Post Office?

Q. I mean so long as you put in there a proper number of hours a day, you can choose whether you work morning or night?—No, no. The working hours are laid down, but by reason of seniority you are given a choice of duties.

Q. The result is you may sometimes be at work at the Post Office in the morning, and at other times you might be at work at night?—Yes.

Q. And, as you are senior, you can choose very much whether you will take those duties?—That is so.

Q. Now, you were very proud of the fact of being elected chairman of the house committee, were you not?—Yes.

Q. And you determined, as far as was in your power, that you would see that the house was made a thoroughly good house, and, as a result, you were there every day?—Yes.

Q. During the time you were elected chairman, and the records show it. Now there are five charges against you; first of all you are charged with drinking the guardians' beer. Now, what do you say to that?—Drinking the guardians' beer?

Q. Drinking beer belonging to the ratepayers?—I deny it.

Q. Is that true?—That is not true.

Q. You heard Mr. Anderson's statement of what the beer store is like, and how it is kept. Is that correct?—Yes, that is correct.

Q. If they did not get out-door relief?—They would starve or else go into the house.

Q. So that the master who employed them, or the dock company which employed them have their industry on the giving of out-door relief by the guardians?—I do not think that follows. It does not affect ours. A man who has been receiving relief, or a man who has been out of work, when he goes to resume his employment gets exactly the same rates of pay as if he had been working all along.

Q. Quite so. That is not quite my point. You have said these casual men wait weeks, attending every roll call, in the hope of obtaining employment?—Yes.

Q. I suppose that form of employment of hired labour is for the convenience of the dock companies?—No, I am not referring to the dock company; it is the master stevedores.

Q. Or for the master stevedores?—Yes, well, they cannot estimate their requirements.

Q. Therefore, it is convenient to them to have these men waiting for employment?—Yes, they are to some extent interchangeable.

Q. These men cannot possibly wait for employment earning nothing, unless they received a subsidy from the guardians?—They would either have to starve or go into the house. I have seen some go into the house rather than starve, with the consequence that they are there to-day. I could show you a dozen there to-day who will never be able to come out, I am afraid.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Whitfield is on his way here, sir.

(The Inspector.) I do not know whether it is necessary to call Mr. Whitfield. I do not think it is. You had better leave that in my hands.

(Mr. Grant.) If you please.

(The Inspector.) Of course, we accept his statement.

(Mr. Grant.) Of course, but I should like a few words with Mr. Butcher as to what he meant—

(The Inspector.) But if he writes it—

(Mr. Grant.) If he writes it, it will do just as well, as far as I am concerned.

Q. And have you gone to the beer room with the master?—Yes.

Q. And have you had beer there with him?—Sometimes.

Q. And has that always been drawn from the master's cask?—Yes. I may say I have not always had it when I have been there.

Q. But you have had occasional beer with him?—That is so.

Q. Have you ever had any beer from the casks which were there for the inmates?—Not that I know of.

Q. Now, it is said you had brandy and lemonade belonging to the guardians. Is that true?—I should not take brandy and lemonade.

Q. So far as you remember, have you ever had any brandy and lemonade at all?—Never.

Q. And then it was stated you had meals with the master?—Yes, I should say that I have had a meal with him occasionally—about once or twice a month.

Q. How did that occur?—We sat there talking, and he would invite me to lunch or supper as it might be, or perhaps it would be waiting for him.

Q. And then you would have a meal with him?—Yes.

Q. Has Mr. Madeley been to your house?—I believe he has once, but I am not positive.

Q. It is said next that you were seen drunk on the workhouse premises. Is that true or false?—Absolutely false.

Q. Now Mr. Greaves said you were in the habit of drinking with him in public-houses?—I never saw Mr. Greaves, to my knowledge, at all. I saw him coming up stairs to-day and he was pointed out to me.

Q. Mr. Robb said:—“(Q) I want to know. You see ‘you were a contractor holding contracts. I want to know who of your employers at that time were in the ‘habit of meeting you at public-houses, discussing matters of business with you?—I have had a drink with ‘quite six or seven different guardians without anything ‘wrong accruing from it. (Q) What were their names,

"please? Perhaps the best way would be to go through the list. Was Mr. Crooks one?—No. (Q) Mr. Jungblut?—Yes, I have had a drink with Mr. Jungblut. Mr. Jungblut: Who paid for it?—I think we paid for one each. (Q) Mr. Anderson?—No, I do not think so. (Q) Mr. McCarthy?—Once, I think; a long time ago. Is that true?—I have never been in a public-house with Mr. Greaves.

(The Inspector.) He says, I think, "a long time ago."

(Mr. Grant.) He says: "Once, I think, a long time ago." Now, then again:—"Well, after receiving one or two letters regarding the slowness of delivery, Mr. Madeley wrote to me to meet Mr. McCarthy at the house one evening at 6.30. (Q) When was that?—I should think in June or July, 1904, as near as I can say. (Q) You met Mr. McCarthy at the house at 6.30?—Yes. (Q) Did you meet Mr. McCarthy?—Yes. (Q) Where?—In Mr. Madeley's office. (Q) What took place?—Mr. McCarthy put it before me what a serious matter it was for me to deliver things so slowly. I endeavoured to point out that it was almost impossible to deliver some of the things, and I invited both Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Madeley to bring the matter before the board. (Q) You asked them?—Yes. (Q) What happened then?—Mr. McCarthy said that, as he could not deal with me he would leave Mr. Madeley to deal with me. (Q) Did Mr. McCarthy leave the room?—Yes. (Q) What did Mr. Madeley say?—He said he would get me £10 if I would surrender the contract." What do you say as to that?—I have no recollection of this, although I have had the porter's book searched for June, July and August, and in regard to Mr. Greaves ever having been in the house in that period, except on August 8th, when it was mid-day, I have never seen Mr. Greaves in the house.

Q. Did you ever make any suggestion to Mr. Madeley, or did Mr. Madeley ever make any suggestion to you, that £50 should be offered to Mr. Greaves to surrender his contract?—Never. There is an entry here of Mr. Greaves coming into the house on the 8th August at 1.5 p.m.

Q. Give me the dates when he came in and went out?—That is the only date.

Q. But it gives the time 1.5, out 1.15. Have you got a record of the time you went in that day?—On August 8th?

Q. Same day?—7.55: out 11.

Q. So that the time Mr. Greaves went, you were not there?—That is so.

Q. What Mr. Greaves says is, "in June or July 1904, as near as I can say, I met Mr. McCarthy at Madeley's house at 6.30"?—I am going by the porter's book, and have no recollection of that interview; but I have had the books searched. Mr. Greaves is not recorded as being in the house except on this particular date.

(Mr. Robb.) You, I understand, hold an important post in the Post Office in addition to your office as guardian?—Yes.

Q. And you say you were very proud when you were appointed chairman of the house committee, and were determined to see the house made a thoroughly good house?—To carry on the good work which had hitherto been done.

Q. You never drew any distinction between what you were going to do in the future and what had been done in the past. Do you think you have been successful?—Yes.

Q. Do you think the discipline of the house has been well maintained?—Yes, with the subordinate officers.

Q. With the subordinate officers. And then you draw a distinction between the officials?—I do. I mean to say with the chief officials the discipline is not so well maintained.

Q. You threw yourself with great zeal into your duties?—Oh, yes.

Q. In fact, I think they occasionally detained you at the workhouse until the early hours of the morning?—Oh, no, you are wrong.

Q. Well, February last year, 1905, I see, according to entries in the porter's book, you went into the house at 7.40 and came out at 12.10 a.m.?—Well, I cannot say; if that is there, I suppose it is correct.

Q. Was the whole of that time occupied in discharging your official duties?—Oh, I was with the master, possibly; but, still, I should like to see the entry.

Q. What duties would there be, to detain you in the house?—I have no recollection of that particular date.

Q. Past 11 o'clock [at night?—It is just possible this was—there had been many complaints of smoking in the young men's dormitories, and I frequently went round with the night watchman between 10 and 11 at night to see whether these complaints were justified. The Local Government Board had been written to, and I went round with the night watchman.

Q. What time would the inmates retire?—8 o'clock.

Q. Would it be necessary for you to remain till past 12 to ascertain that?—Oh, yes, I think you will find the complaints of the Local Government Board that smoking had taken place at night.

Q. February 2nd, 1905; then on February 10th in the same year, you can probably tell us, I am not sure whether it is a.m. or p.m.?—If I was there that would be the case.

Q. 12.35 and left at 1.40 on the tenth?—That would be midday.

Q. I see it was a customary thing for you to be there till 10.30 or 10.55?—Very likely.

Q. You were constantly in the house at such times as 7.30 till 10.50, and so on. On the 22nd July you went in at 9.45 and came out at 11.30.

(Mr. Grant.) What year?

(Mr. Robb.) The same year?—I have no recollection of that date; it is quite possible.

Q. In September, on two or three occasions, you did not leave till a quarter or 20 minutes to 11. On the 7th November, 12.45 and 1.30. I assume that must be—?—Mid-day.

Q. Not mid-day, I think, because I see you are in the house that morning at 12.15. You would not go away for half an hour and go back again?—Very likely; I should say that would be mid-day.

Q. Then here is an evening entry by the porter for the present year. June 20th you went into the house at 12.30 and came out at 1.20 a.m.—Quite so.

Q. Was that your official duty?—No, I was invited in by the master.

Q. That is the occasion, I believe, the porter alleged you were the worse for drink?—I understand that is so.

Q. Then you did not go in officially?—Oh, no.

Q. You went in to enjoy the master's hospitality?—Quite so.

Q. Do you think it was in pursuance of your desire to make it a good house, you went in at that time?—I see nothing wrong in being on friendly terms with the workhouse master.

Q. Do you think it is conducive to good discipline, and to set a good example to the officials, for the chairman of the house committee to come in at 12.30 and not go out till 1.20?—Yes, I do not see anything in it.

Q. You see no distinction between going into a public institution, and the house of a private person?—You must understand that I was invited into the master's private house, and I have a right to accept his hospitality at any time.

Q. I think you claim that this beer and these meals you had as a matter of absolute right?—Oh, no; I claim that the master has a right to invite me or anyone else that he wishes to dine and supper.

Q. And to supply you with refreshments out of his rations, paid for by the ratepayers?—I did not know they were out of his rations.

Q. Surely, as chairman of the house committee, that would come within your knowledge?—No.

Q. Did you ever inquire into it?—Well, when a man asks me to have a meal with him, I do not inquire whether he has stolen it; I sit down and take it for granted he has paid for it.

Q. We have been told this was a pretty constant thing?—What was?

Q. Your having dinner, and so on?—You have been told an untruth.

Q. Well, you heard what the doctor said?—Yes.

Q. You know what the master himself said?—I do.

Mr.
McCarthy.
20 July.

Mr.
McCarthy.
20 July.

Q. "Where did Mr. McCarthy get his meals?—He has 'had dinner with me occasionally'?"—Quite so; I do not deny it.

Q. Where did you get your lunch on those days that I see entries of here. You were there on the 9th January from 12.10 to 1.30?—At home. I do not live very far away, you know.

Q. On these occasions that you did not leave—I see day after day you left at 1.35, 1.40, and so on?—Quite so, my lunch time is two o'clock.

Q. I suggest you had lunch in the workhouse?—Well, sir, I suggest I did not.

Q. And you never inquired who was providing or paying for the refreshment you had?—Which?

Q. That which you partook of at the master's house?—The luncheons and suppers were so rare that it never occurred to me that such matters would be questioned. I took it that the master was thoroughly entitled to invite persons to have lunch or supper.

Q. I suppose that most evenings when you went in you went into the master's house?—Yes, I think so.

Q. You would not spend three or four hours inspecting the institution?—Oh, no.

Q. And it was only very rarely that you took refreshments?—Quite so, yes.

Q. Have you had baths there?—No, oh no.

Q. Where did you take baths?—Baths, what do you mean?

Q. I suggest you made use of this bath?—I suggest you are incorrect. I state it is wrong.

Q. What kind of provisions were supplied to you?—I really did not make note of it, but, whatever he had, you may rest assured I partook of it.

Q. Ever had salmon?—Very little; yes.

Q. Oysters?—Yes.

Q. Beef steak?—No, I cannot eat steak; got no teeth.

Q. Stewed eels?—No, not stewed eels.

Q. And beer?—And beer, yes.

Q. Now, do you consider it quite consistent with the position of which you were so proud, to accept this hospitality at the hands of your servant?—I consider it is right that the chairman of the house committee should be on terms of friendship, if possible, with the master of the house.

Q. You think it is right he should be on such terms of familiarity that he should go in and have meals when he likes?—I was not on those terms.

Q. Do you consider it consistent with your position as a guardian and chairman of the house committee?—What?

Q. What. Why to accept these things, these free meals and free beer at the master's expense?—All these things and all that free beer do not amount to very much. I do not suppose I dined or supped with him more than twelve times during the whole year.

Q. Do you regard it as right in principle?—I could not see anything wrong in it.

Q. You see no objection to it in principle?—Not the slightest.

Q. That this man should give you benefits when you had control of his salary and allowances?—His salary was already decided. I did not have to vote on it.

Q. Were you one of the guardians who voted £50 for the disturbance when the electric light was installed in his house?—No.

Q. You would not approve of that?—I cannot say. I should want to know the circumstances first.

Q. Do you think, if you had to vote on a question of that kind, your judgment might not be biased by all this hospitality?—Not the slightest.

Q. Did you ever consider the man's own position—that he was supplying a member of the guardians with hospitality of this kind?—Really the value of a glass of beer was so insignificant to me that it never occurred to me.

Q. What view did you take of the effect of all this on the moral tone and discipline of the house?—As far as I can see, it never affected the discipline of the house.

Q. Do you know that the inmates were talking of the beer cellar as the "Madeley Arms" and the "Horn of Plenty"?—No, I heard it here for the first time.

Q. Do you know that the chaplain told us the moral effect on the inmates was very grave?—Yes, but I do not take all the chaplain says as gospel.

Q. He is not a reliable person?—If you want a story of the chaplain I could give you one.

Q. I do not want a story; I want your opinion. He is not a reliable person?—In my opinion, no.

Q. Nor Haswell, the porter?—I should certainly say he is very unreliable in that statement he made, because he could not possibly have seen me drunk.

Q. Well, he said it very distinctly?—Quite so; I admit that.

Q. Is he a person whose character?—I know nothing about his character.

Q. You signed a certificate, did you not, given by the master?—I would only do that as voicing the multitude.

Q. It would not be an expression of your personal opinion, but you did sign a certificate testifying as to Haswell?—The application for a testimonial came to the meeting of the house committee, and if the committee decided he was to have a testimonial, the chairman as a matter of form, would sign it.

Q. Now, you said you were very friendly—I suggest to you on very familiar terms—with both the master and the matron?—Quite so.

Q. When did you first become aware of the master's relations with a nurse?—At the end of July, I should say; but I am not sure.

Q. Last year?—Yes.

Q. Did not you think it your duty as chairman of the house committee to take any action in the matter?—First of all, let me say I did not take the information as chairman of the house committee at all. It was given to me privately, but subsequently some of my co-guardians heard of it.

Q. But you, being chairman of the house committee, having learned in your private capacity, July, 1905, that the master was carrying on an intrigue with a nurse, did you feel justified in continuing with him in that position to March of the present year?—She was not a nurse in the institution.

Q. She had been?—Oh, quite so.

Q. And you thought you were justified in continuing with him in this position?—I cannot say that I thought we were justified, but what we did do, was eventually to break the relationship off, and, we think, successfully.

Q. After that, we have been told that you allowed the master to attend the contract meeting to advise you as to what tenders you should accept?—I do not think so.

Q. One witness says: "the master said 'have Whitbread's beer,' and it was passed"?—That would be the contract meeting of this year. I do not know whether the master was present, I am sure; was he present?

Q. It is so stated on the minutes. And then you took no action upon that?—Oh, yes; I took the advice of several of my colleagues.

Q. Did you consult Mr. Crooks about it?—I did not.

Q. He was your chairman?—Quite so.

Q. He would be the proper person?—He would, but I am afraid he would be too drastic in his methods.

Q. I suggest you took no action whatever until Mr. Crooks happened to see an extraordinary irregularity in the porter's book concerning the master?—No action was taken by anyone till Mr. Crooks took action.

Q. What action did Mr. Crooks take?—Mr. Crooks had better answer that question.

Q. I would rather have your version?—I would rather not.

Q. I want to say this in justice to you. My suggestion is that you were unduly familiar to both master and matron, having regard to the position you held as chairman of the committee?—Knowing the position the master and matron were in, I acted on the suggestion of my colleagues, and tried to bring peace.

Q. As to the statement that you went into the house in those early hours in the morning?—The early hours you speak of happened about twice. On each occasion I met

the master at Fenchurch Street Station upon coming home. My business keeps me out late.

Q. You were present at the contract meeting this year?—Yes.

Q. How came it you accepted the highest tender for beer. Highest out of about half a dozen?—I suppose the majority voted for it. I could not tell you how I voted.

Q. Did not you inquire into the matter with that in view. Between Whitbread and Thorne Brothers, in an expenditure of £300 there was a difference of over £100. Did not you think it was your duty to inquire into it?—I heard an expert say that Thorne's was bad, so I could not vote for Thorne's.

Q. Did you hear Mr. Madeley say one was best. Do you consider him an expert?—No, he did not take much beer.

Q. Can you tell us why Cartwright's tender was accepted in excess at £264 over other tenders?—Last year?

Q. No, this year. No, you are right?—I proposed Watts, the lowest tender.

Q. Why did the majority accept the other?—The opinion was that Watts was on the verge of bankruptcy, and I believe he did fail.

Q. Was there any division on it?—I cannot tell you.

Q. The information you had led you to recommend the lower tender?—No. There was no information in the matter. Watts was the lowest tender and I knew he would be accepted, but when I had moved it information was given that he was on the verge of bankruptcy, and I withdrew the nomination.

Q. Now, of course, as chairman of the committee, you looked closely into all matters?—As far as possible.

Q. Particularly as you were visiting the house two or three times a day. What did you do?—Went round the house.

Q. You went later in the same morning?—I did not often go late in the morning.

Q. Take February 11th last, "went in at 11.40, came out 12.45." What had you been doing?—Going round the house.

Q. Go and inspect the stores?—I did inspect the stores.

Q. Every day?—Not every day.

Q. You walked round the house. Did you keep any record?—No.

Q. Never made an entry in any book if you found anything out of order?—I should make a note and have it altered.

Q. Did you make any note in any complaint book?—If I have seen anything wrong I have had it altered.

Q. Have you made any entry in any complaint book?—No, not that I remember.

Q. As you have had so much time visiting so often, after the contract day you looked into the tender forms?—After the contract day?

Q. You, as chairman of the committee looked into it?—Sometimes.

Q. Did the discrepancy in Mr. Pyle's tenders come under your notice?—No, I do not think so.

Q. It was surprising to hear what you heard at this Inquiry?—Yes.

Q. Did Mr. Lough point out the extraordinary variation in the two years?—I believe Mr. Lough did about 18 months ago. We took certain things off Pyle's tender.

Q. Did you go into it?—With Mr. Lough, yes. I was chairman of the contract committee, and we recommended certain alterations in Pyle's tender which were carried out.

Q. What were the alterations?—I cannot tell you now.

Q. What was the date?—About January, 1905.

Q. Was there some dissatisfaction as to the form of Pyle's tender?—No, the dissatisfaction was that certain things specified, which we did not think were giving the guardians fair value, and we altered them. For instance, brass work from the list of a particular firm. We objected and struck it out.

Q. It occurred again this year?—Yes.

Q. Is it true what Mr. Pyle tells us?—One moment. I should tell this as an instance of what has been done. Let me look at the minutes. On February 8th, 1905, the committee recommend that several items be deleted from the contract.

Q. You must read in something before?—The committee also considered the contract schedules, and were of opinion that the items where discount is mentioned should not be included in the contract.

Q. In spite of that recommendation the form was not altered?—I believe it was. I am informed it was altered. Mr. Lough says it was.

Q. Mr. Pyle told us that sometimes the guardians specified a particular article. For instance, large basins, and they really meant small basins. Is that right?—I am not accountable for what Mr. Pyle says. I take it whoever made the order would be accountable for what is required.

Q. You were to make the order?—No, our officers were.

Q. You were chairman of the committee and would know what was going on. You used to examine?

(Mr. Grant.) As chairman of the committee, had you anything to do with the tender forms?—Not a bit.

(Mr. Robb.) You were chosen out of your zeal to look into that. Is there any foundation for the statement that when the guardians specified a particular article they frequently meant something quite different?—I can hardly say so.

Q. I think he said when they specified an article in copper they knew that meant tin?—He has a vivid imagination, that is all.

Q. He said that although copper was mentioned, tin was meant. That was the answer to the question?

(Mr. Grant.) It was not copper mentioned. It was for the copper. That is entirely different.

(Mr. Robb.) You think Mr. Pyle has a vivid imagination?—If he said that.

Q. You see the prices are increased 300 or 400 per cent. in certain orders. Do you consider it satisfactory?—Possibly not. But I point out it has appeared as representing over and over again a system of contracting which should be altered.

Q. But you could have done a good deal by closely examining the tender forms?—We did something in 1905.

Q. How do you account for the fact that when Mr. Pyle's prices are low his deliveries are small, and when they are high his deliveries are correspondingly large?—Let me have an instance.

Q. I have one in mind—the brass work supplied by Tullis & Sons. When 5 per cent. only was allowed off the brass work the deliveries were five times the estimated quantity. In another instance, where 87 per cent. was offered off the list?—I cannot explain, except the engineers are such very unsatisfied individuals. I am in their hands. I am not an expert as to whether they require this or that.

Q. It is a house matter?—I do not agree with the system of tendering which is in vogue.

Q. You agree that five times the estimated quantity when the discount is 5 per cent., and a fiftieth of the estimated quantity when the discount is 87 per cent.?—If it was a requisition it would have to be obtained.

Q. How do you account for it, that in almost every case where Mr. Pyle offered goods at a loss to himself any deliveries were in that year very small?—I am not able to answer that question.

Q. If you had gone into the tender closely you might have had in a stock of them. Perhaps it is a pity you did not do it?—Yes, it is.

Q. Do you think Mr. Pyle, or any other contractor, would attempt to tender in that way unless he had information. You know Mr. Pyle and other contractors were on friendly terms with Madeley and used to visit him. You know Mr. Whitlock was?—No.

Q. Have you looked at the porter's book and have seen how often Mr. Pyle, Mr. Whitlock, and Mr. Kirk were in and out of the house?—Mr. Kirk is a personal friend. He is not a contractor—I beg pardon, he is a contractor for disinfectants.

Mr.
McCarthy.
20 July.

Mr.
McCarthy.
—
20 July.

Q. Do you think it is wise to have such familiarity between the master of the house and contractors?—I do not see why, if a friend becomes a contractor, he should throw the man over.

Q. Do you think it wise that a contractor should become the friend of the master. You knew Madeley was leaving?—I used to see him go to masonic lodges in carriages.

Q. How often?—About once a week.

Q. I suggest he was living at the rate of £1,000 a year, and it was well known to the guardians?—I do not think so. I could do a lot on his money if I had to pay no house rent and buy no food.

Q. Could you have done it if you had to entertain so many friends. You were not the only guardian he entertained?—He did not entertain me very often.

Q. Have you interviewed any official since this Inquiry has been on foot?—I do not know. Possibly.

Q. Do you remember Sunday evening, 20th May?—Yes.

Q. Did you go into the house late?—What do you call late?

Q. About 10 o'clock?—No. You have the porter's book. I will give you the time—seven o'clock.

Q. Did you see Mrs. Monk?—No.

Q. Did you send out for the cook?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) This is most unfair. Mr. McCarthy ought to be able to say what took place. I have his statement here.

(Mr. Robb.) You did not put it to him.

(Mr. Grant.) He was not charged with it.

(Mr. Robb.) I did not think there was a charge.

(Mr. Grant.) Tell us what took place.

(Mr. Robb.) Did you send for Mrs. Monk, or see her?—I saw Mrs. Monk.

Q. Were you speaking to her for a considerable time, for an hour or upwards?—Not for an hour.

Q. For how long?—20 to 25 minutes.

Q. What was the object of the conversation?—I heard that Mrs. Ferneyough wanted to see the acting master and myself together. I sent a note to another guardian asking him to meet me. He met me and in their presence I saw Mrs. Ferneyough, the cook. I ask her what she wanted to say. She said some gentleman had been to her representing himself to be from the Local Government Board, and took down a statement. It quite upset her. I said, "Did you ask for his card?" She said, "No." I said, "You foolish old woman!"

Q. It was necessary to go to the house on Sunday evening and send out for this poor old woman. Is that the only explanation?—It is the truth.

(Mr. Grant.) Let Mr. McCarthy state what took place?—That is with reference to the cook. Mrs. Monk wrote to the guardians and myself that she was dissatisfied with her position and thought of resigning. We pointed out what a silly woman she would be to turn up her position after so many years' service—close on ten years.

Q. What is the qualifying period for a pension?—Ten years.

(The Inspector.) What is Mrs. Monk?—The master's servant.

(Mr. Robb.) Mrs. Monk is the person who waited on you at meals in the master's house?—She would not wait on me.

Q. She would wait on the master?—The master would wait on me.

Q. I suggest you saw Mrs. Monk with regard to evidence?—I can tell you I did not.

Q. I suggest you were speaking to her for an hour about the matter on Sunday evening?—You are wrong.

Q. At all events she has not been called to give evidence on behalf of the guardians, although it is suggested her evidence might be material.

(Mr. Grant.) I do not know who has suggested it. I want to ask one question. You went to the workhouse on the 20th May in consequence of a communication you had received?—I received a communication. I sent a message to Mr. Ford and asked him to meet me to hear what the cook had to say.

Q. Then she told you about this man who had been cross-examining her, and said he was from the Local Government Board?—That is so.

Q. Did she tell you he had questioned her as to the people Mr. Madeley was in the habit of entertaining?—Yes.

Q. Did he speak in a courteous way?—Her complaint was that he was aggressive.

Q. Did he tell her what would happen to her?—That she would be one of the principal witnesses called with reference to the Inquiry.

Q. You did not know who the man was?—No, and she was very agitated. I told her she was a silly old woman, and should not give information without first of all getting their cards.

Q. Mrs. Monk came in, did she not?—She approached us, I think, as Mr. Ford and I were going out. I am not quite sure.

Q. At any rate, you and Mr. Ford saw Mrs. Monk?—Yes.

Q. She was worn out and tired, and wanted to leave, and you advised her to keep on and qualify for the pension?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) Would you ask why the visit is not in the porter's book?

(The Inspector.) 20th May, Sunday. Mrs. Ferneyough entered the house at 8.15 and left at 8.40. Is not the cook resident?—No, sir.

(The Inspector.) Mr. McCarthy entered at 7.5 and left at 10.15. Mr. Ford at 7 and left at 10.15.

(Mr. Grant.) Did you know the officers were allowed to interchange their rations?—Yes.

Q. Was your view that the rations they were allowed belonged to them?—Decidedly, I say so now. I disagree with the President's opinion.

Q. You disagree with Mr. Davy, who says they should return any surplus?—I consider it payment for work done.

Q. You never thought of asking if the food came out of his rations. Some he must have bought himself—oysters for instance?—I am sure of it.

Q. The master and matron can draw their rations, and can do what they please, so long as they do not send them out of the house?—That is my view.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Robb said he was going to call Mrs. Monk.

(Mr. Robb.) I was speaking of the Inquiry generally.

(Mr. Grant.) I regard her as being one of Mr. Robb's witnesses. I think she is one of the witnesses who has been seen by this gentleman from the Local Government Board. We shall hear whether someone has been masquerading in the guise of the Local Government Board. I want to have a statement made by Mr. Robb carefully recorded by you.

(Mr. Robb.) You had better be careful. Mr. McCarthy has seen me. I do not want to betray a confidence. I have told Mr. McCarthy I never imputed anything to him, except a familiarity which is not consistent with the chairman of the house committee, and the master. If Mr. Grant goes further it is at his peril.

(Mr. Grant.) We are tired of that.

(Mr. Robb.) I have someone here to offer.

(The Inspector.) I am prepared to say something of the same sort.

(Mr. Grant.) If you are prepared to say it, I do not wish to go on.

(Mr. Robb.) I am prepared to emphasise it as far as possible. I never wished to impute to Mr. McCarthy anything beyond a degree of familiarity which my clients regard as derogatory to his position.

(Mr. Grant.) I have nothing more to ask.

(The Inspector.) I want to ask if any form of complaint was made of the master's frequent absences?—The absences were on Sundays when he was entitled to be off.

Q. There was last autumn. Would they be from Saturday to Monday?—I think they were from Sunday morning to Monday morning.

Q. Was not that a subject of complaint?—I believe it was.

Q. What time of year was the complaint?—Between July and October.

Q. Was it stated to you that the master went to watering places for the week ends?—No. I think he was keen on bicycle tours.

Q. Yes. Even £200 a year will not go very far in paying for Saturday to Monday visits?—I understand a cyclist gets a long way on small sums.

Q. Not by himself?—Not by himself.

Q. That was the reason you assumed the duties of master?—There was an assistant master.

Q. I understand you did that out of good feeling towards the master?—That is so.

Q. You must have known the master was spending a good deal of money?—I assumed it cost him a lot.

Q. Did you think it discreet to accept the hospitality of the man after you had known he had gone very wrong?—I do not think I did after that occasion. I am not quite sure of the date. If I did—I suppose I must have done—it must have been indiscreet.

Mr. H. WHITFIELD; sworn and examined.

(The Inspector.) Do you remember the bedsteads supplied to Mr. Butcher for the guardians?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) Were they No. 1017, 26s., less 7½ per cent.?—Yes.

Q. Is it the same bedstead 1017 on the list, except that it had the bottom rail a little higher?—Yes. That is the only difference.

(The Inspector.) Does it make any difference in the prices?—None.

(Mr. Grant.) Was there any secret commission paid Mr. Butcher?—None.

Q. It was suggested by Mr. Palmer that there was a secret commission between you and Butcher?—There was none. I only gave 7½ per cent. under pressure. He came to me with the order, and I quoted 5 per cent. He insisted that he should have a little more, and afterwards I consented to the 2½ per cent. more.

Q. Do you remember a telephonic message from the Bow Iron Works?—Yes.

Q. Did you know who was speaking?—No. He wanted a quotation for a lodging-house. He said he knew Mr. Butcher of Poplar, and they were to be like the ones at the Poplar House. I said he would have a quotation.

Q. You sent a quotation on 25th June?—That is right. It was sent by messenger to the Bow Iron and Metal Works. I wanted to have a report. I had not had any previous dealings at the Bow Works.

Q. Was your quotation for the bedstead 1660?—It is a badly made figure.

(The Inspector.) There is no 1660 on this list?—No. The "6" is simply a bad made figure.

(Mr. Grant.) You left out the castors?—I said flat iron feet.

Q. There was a difference between the two points—between Nos. 1017 and 1060?—Yes. You have to take off the 7½ per cent. from the 26s. This quotation is nett cash. It brings it down to 24s. 2d.

(The Inspector.) I suppose you always expect a better price from a public institution than from a private customer?—A public institution requires a better thing than a common lodging-house.

Q. But those are good bedsteads?—They are excellent bedsteads.

Q. If the guardians had applied to you, would you have given the 7½ per cent. discount?—Not unless they

Q. You remained on very friendly terms?—I am to-day.

(Mr. Grant.) He said he heard of it in July. I think you will find that this matter came to the knowledge of three separate guardians in three separate ways; Mr. McCarthy first, then Mr. Lansbury, then Mr. Crooks, who felt it was so serious, they dealt with it on their own responsibility. Then it was communicated to the guardians, who took action. I only want you to see how the thing works.

(The Inspector.) Mr. McCarthy can go.

(Mr. Robb.) It was said Mr. Smith would give evidence to-day and Mr. Whitfield.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Smith and another man were alleged to have done certain things, but not with regard to the board of guardians. The case of the Poplar and Stepney Asylums Board is going to be considered. Mr. Smith is a member of the board and he asked me not to let the matter come on before this afternoon.

(Mr. Robb.) I take it they have another opportunity. Therefore, Mr. Greaves can be relieved.

had asked for it. Mr. Butcher came to me and said he must have something.

Q. You wanted to keep your customer and gave 7½?—When he first asked I said he must have five, but under pressure he secured 7½.

Q. In November, 1902—there is an account—December 15, January 12, 1903, you supplied bedsteads, and then you did not allow any discount?—No.

(Mr. Robb.) Are you in the wholesale or retail trade?—We are the manufacturers.

Q. You do not limit your supply to the trade. You would supply anyone with single bedsteads?—I do not know. It depends upon whom the person happens to be.

Q. You are a manufacturer of safes as well as bedsteads?—No. Another firm of the same name.

Q. You supply anyone in competition with the trade?—No, we would not.

(The Inspector.) If you did, it was a personal favour?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) And your prices would vary?—Our prices would vary according to pattern and quantity.

Q. Mr. Palmer rang you up on the telephone and said he knew Mr. Butcher, and he wanted bedsteads similar to the beds Mr. Butcher had supplied to the Poplar Workhouse?—He said he wanted something for a common lodging-house.

Q. I suggest he wanted similar beds?—I say he did not. He told me he wanted bedsteads for a common lodging-house to be something like the ones in the Poplar Workhouse.

Q. It is quoted 33s. here?—Yes, 33s.

Q. And your quotation is for iron bedsteads at 19s. 6d. each?—There is one difference in having no castors.

Q. It is 30 or 40 per cent. off?—It is easy to work it out.

Q. I want 1017 in the list and the price of it?—I am sorry I have not got the list. It is out of print.

Q. How is it you show it "nett" in your invoice?—It means that it is subject to nothing but the counting-house discount.

(The Inspector.) Is not the bedstead ordered by the guardians the best bedstead on the list?—Yes.

Mr. McCarthy.

20 July.

Mr. Whitfield.

20 July.

SEVENTEENTH DAY.

Monday, July 23rd, 1906.

(The Inspector.) I do not know whether we will wait for Mr. Robb.

(Mr. Grant.) I was waiting to see whether there was

any small witness I wanted to call before Mr. Crooks; but I think I had better not. Has the clerk got the Bethnal Green tenders?

Mr. W. CROOKS, M.P.; sworn and examined.

Mr. Crooks,
23 July.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Crooks, you are the chairman of the Poplar Board of Guardians. How many years have you been chairman?—I think this is the eighth year.

Q. Now, I think, you have been resident in Poplar all your life, have not you?—I was born in Poplar.

Q. And, I think, born in the workhouse, were not you?—No, but I was born next door to it.

Q. And your trade?—A cooper.

Q. Now, you were born in Poplar, and you were educated at the schools here?—George Green Schools.

Q. Apprenticed to your trade here?—Yes.

Q. And when did you begin to work as a master-man at your trade?—Not till I had finished my apprenticeship; I had a long innings of work before that. In 1861 I worked at a little milkshop, since demolished, where the doctor's house now stands.

At the entrance to the workhouse?—Yes. Then I got 6d. a week—went between school hours. At that time my father had a serious accident and lost his arm, and practically left mother to keep herself and the seven children. The guardians, I think the public would like to know, allowed us the luxuries of five loaves and 5s. per week; and, then, having regard to the ages of the boys, thought we could very well do without it, and in October or November, 1861, I think (the books would show) I was, with one brother and three sisters, taken into the workhouse, together with my father where we remained a little while. I do not know whether this interests the Inquiry, or not. I was sent to the Sutton schools. The question will come on later as to the treatment then and now.

Q. You can speak from personal experience?—I think you may take it that every day I spent there has burned itself into my brain. I really know something about it.

Q. You were apprenticed as a cooper and served your time?—Yes.

Q. And after you served your time, started work as a cooper in your trade?—Yes.

Q. How long was it before you were elected secretary of your union?—I never was secretary. I was an active member of the committee—appointed on the executive committee.

Q. I was wrong. And then was it while you were working at your trade that you were first elected to a public office?—Oh, yes; I worked many years at my trade after being elected to public offices.

Q. When were you first elected to a public office?—I think it was in 1886.

Q. And what was the office?—I was elected trustee. There are peculiar Acts governing this parish. It is too long a story. It goes back to 1817 to the borough councils. The vestry, created in 1817, had power to appoint 24 persons who were rated to the poor rate at £24 a year, and I was selected by the vestry of 1886—I think it was 1886.

Q. As a trustee?—Yes, and then created a library commissioner.

Q. Then was the next office the board of guardians?—The next office was election to the London County Council.

Q. In 1889?—No, in March, 1892.

Q. You were not on the first county council?—Not on the first; I have been on ever since.

Q. Well, in March, 1892, you were elected to the London County Council. When was it your wages fund was established?—Oh, it was established then; that is to say, about March of that year.

Q. That is to say, your comrades down here elected you on the London County Council where you required your whole time, and took you from your trade, and subscribed among themselves a wages fund, out of which, I think, they paid you £3 per week?—As a matter of fact, I worked at my trade a week after I was elected to the London County Council.

Q. And what was paid to you from the wages fund was the amount you were earning when working at your trade?—Yes.

Q. You simply shifted from one job to the other?—That is so.

Q. And you worked more hours as a London County Councillor than at your trade?—A very great deal.

Q. That was in March, 1892; and from March, 1892, to the present time you have been a member of the council. You have served on a great many committees?—A great many.

Q. And been chairman of several?—Yes, chairman of the bridges committee, and chairman of the public control a considerable time. On the bridges committee I had the privilege of steering through Parliament the Rotherhithe Tunnel proposal, and on the public control committee the Infant Life Protection and many of those things which naturally fall to the duty of a chairman of an important committee.

Q. Then, in November of 1892 I think you were elected to the Poplar Board of Guardians?—Yes, I think it was in November, 1892—any way, towards the end of that year.

Q. I am given that date. Were there men elected with you?—I think Mr. Lansbury was elected at the time, and, I am not quite sure, but I think Mr. Kay.

Q. Of the dockers' union?—Yes, of the dockers' union.

Q. Was there at that time very great and deep-seated dissatisfaction amongst the residents in Poplar with the management of the workhouse, and the general management of the affairs of the Poor Law?—Yes, that was so. As a matter of fact, I was the first man, of my class anyhow, who had ever been elected in open vote, as it were. That is to say, there was no ballot. Ballot papers were delivered by a policeman and collected.

(The Inspector.) Was he nominated for the Metropolitan Asylums Board?

(Mr. Grant.) He could not be nominated for the Metropolitan Asylums Board without being on the board of guardians. Perhaps we had better follow your career through first, and then come back to that. You were elected a guardian in November, 1892, and subsequently elected chairman. I think you were elected chairman in 1897—five years afterwards?—Yes.

Q. And you have been chairman of the board of guardians ever since?—Yes.

Q. When you were a guardian you were elected on the assessment committee?—Oh, yes.

Q. That, of course, was probably one of the most important committees of the guardians?—Quite the most important.

Mr. Crooks

23 July.

Q. It has to deal with all the rating of the union?—Yes.

Q. Were you also elected subsequently chairman of the assessment committee?—I was chairman of the assessment committee for six years.

Q. Do you remember when that began?—I think it was in 1895.

Q. We can correct the dates. Chairman of the assessment committee for six years?—Yes.

Q. That would be till 1901?—Until the borough council took it over.

Q. Were you nominated a member of the Metropolitan Asylums Board?—I was nominated a member of the Metropolitan Asylums Board when Mr. Chaplin was President of the Local Government Board.

Q. Did he nominate you?—He nominated me.

Q. Under his powers under the Act?—Yes.

Q. And have you been a member of that since?—Yes, that is eight years. I am, like, in my third triennial period. I was re-nominated by Mr. Long twice.

Q. What is the period—three years?—Three years, yes.

Q. And you are now serving your third period on the Metropolitan Asylums Board?—Yes.

Q. I know generally your career. Were there any other local positions you served. Of course, when the borough council was formed you were elected a member of that?—Yes.

Q. And you were Mayor of Poplar, in what year?—1901-2.

Q. And then—the crowning honour—you were elected a member of Parliament for Woolwich at a bye-election?—In 1903.

Q. And re-elected at the General Election of 1906?—Yes.

Q. Very good. Then, Mr. Crooks, taking it generally, you may fairly claim to have an intimate knowledge of affairs in Poplar?—Yes; I hope it will not be thought egotistical. I sometimes think I know a little too much.

Q. You know all there is to be known about Poplar?—Of its best and of its worst.

Q. You told me that when you were elected in 1892 on the guardians there was great dissatisfaction with the administration, both in-door and out-door, I think?—Yes.

Q. At that time you and Mr. Lansbury, I suppose, were members of what might be called the progressive party on the board?—I am afraid—well, there was very little distinction whatever in those days. The advent of Lansbury and I was looked upon almost as a revolution.

Q. Your going on to the board at all?—Yes.

Q. Just correct that date, will you, Mr. Crooks. I misled you, I gave November, 1892. Mr. Lough tells me it was March, 1893?—Oh, no, I am sure Mr. Lough is wrong. As a matter of fact, there were elections following each other very rapidly. There was an alteration of the qualification.

Q. Under Mr. Fowler?—No, first Mr. Ritchie brought it down to £10, and that enabled a man like me to stand, and then the advent of the Liberal Administration abolished the qualification.

Q. Altogether?—Yes, and made it one of residence.

Q. That would be 1892?—So there was another election.

Q. It does not matter; a few months does not matter one way or the other, but I wanted to be correct. Can you tell me, first of all, what was the state of the workhouse at the time when you came on the board?—May I read?

Q. Yes?—The condition of things in the house was almost revolting. Dirt, empty stores, inmates without sufficient clothing, many without boots to their feet, food of the worst possible description, wash tubs overflowing with waste which the poor people could not eat. It was almost heart-breaking to go round the place and hear the complaints and see the tears of the aged men and women with the continual cry that 'poverty is no crime, but here it is treated as such.' The more able-bodied women were especially ill-clad, and so disgusting were the conditions under which they were

compelled to work, and the food which was given them for the work, that they were frequently in open revolt. Discipline was unknown and the frequent explanation was that prison was better than this what does it matter: and one day I went into the workhouse and found two rows of long seats full of women, some looking sullen, others crying. They had in front of them a basin of what was alleged to be broth, but which was simply greasy water, and they said they had to go out and wash blankets on that. I appealed to the master to give them some thing to eat, as they said they would sooner go to prison than go to work unless they had it. Many of these women were continually in prison. After a few heated words with the master he gave them some food. The improvement in the food of the people did not lead to the house being more attractive, that is to say, that men and women were not more desirous it seemed to me of staying in than they were before. They got out at the earliest possible moment, but the discipline was better maintained. So far as the stores were concerned, as was conclusively proved in the Inquiry of 1894, they were empty.

Q. As to the Inquiry of 1894, do you remember who conducted it?—Yes, it was conducted by Mr. Lockwood.

Q. And on the 11th December, 1894, the Local Government Board, through Mr. Knollys, the assistant secretary, wrote to Mr. Lough, giving the result of their inquiries into the alleged irregularities in the store department of the workhouse. Perhaps I may just read what the report says:—

"Local Government Board, Whitehall, S.W.,
"11th December, 1894.

"Sir,
"The Local Government Board have received from "their Inspector, Mr. Lockwood, the report of the official "Inquiry recently held by him respecting certain alleged "irregularities in the store department of the workhouse "of the Poplar Union prior to Mr. Deason's resignation of "the office of master of that establishment, together with a "copy of the evidence of the witnesses examined at the "Inquiry.

"The allegations were that on the present master "taking office it was discovered (1) that prices paid for "certain articles were greatly in excess of contract price, "and that for one year and nine months the guardians "had paid 5d. a yard for thousands of yards of calico, "the contract price of which was only 1½d. and 1d., "and during all that time the master's requisition book "showed it as being in contract; (2) that the clothing "stores were practically empty, and the inmates were "thereby deprived of the necessary weekly changes; (3) "that the inmates were wearing under-flannels and "drawers that were little better than rags, together with "stockings and socks that were worn out.

"With regard to the first allegation, the Board consider "that the explanation given as to the alteration of invoice "No. 131 from unbleached to B, striped calico, is sufficient "to justify the assumption that it was not made with any "fraudulent intent, but the facts connected with the purchase of flannel and calico during the period in question "are not, in their opinion, in any way satisfactorily "explained.

"The facts appear to be as follows:—

"For the year ending Lady-Day, 1893, tenders were "invited for those amongst other articles, and the "estimated quantities that would probably be required "were given as under.

"Stout Welsh flannel—estimated quantity 1,000 yards "tendered for at 9d. per yard.

"Grey flannel—estimated quantity 500 yards— "tendered for at 1½d. per yard.

"3,718 yards of the first were supplied instead of "1,000, and none of the second.

"For the year ended Lady-Day, 1894, 1,000 yards was "again put down as the estimated quantity of the first, "and up to Christmas, 1893, 1,660 yards were supplied, the "price being the same. 1,000 yards was put down as the "estimated quantity of grey flannel—this was tendered "for at 2d. a yard, and none was supplied.

"The master's explanation of the large increase in the "consumption of the more expensive flannel in 1892 is "that a large number of aged and infirm people were received back in the Poplar Workhouse from the Stepney "Workhouse, but the Board do not find any explanation of "the repeated large under-estimate of the more expensive "flannel, or of the reason why, when none of the cheaper "flannel was consumed in 1892-3, it was estimated that

Mr. Crooks,
23 July.

"double the quantity would be required for 1893-4—as a matter of fact, none again being used.

"With regard to the calico, the estimated quantity required for 1892-3 was 400 yards, tendered for at 5d., 'Ditto unbleached,' 3,500 yards tendered for at 1d., 4,532 yards of the first were supplied, and none of the second.

"In 1893-4, notwithstanding these facts, the estimates were repeated as before; the prices were 5d. and 1½d. 2,452½ yards of the first were supplied up to Christmas, 801½ yards of the second. No explanation is given of the repetition of the estimated quantities that would be required.

"Another article calling for special notice is grogram. In 1892-3 the quantity required was estimated at 180 yards, and it was tendered for at 1s.; 676 yards were supplied. In 1893-4, 300 yards were put down as likely to be required; it was tendered for at 2½d.; and up to Christmas 134½ yards only were supplied.

"Under Mr. Deason's successor, calico at 1½d. a yard has been used for the same purposes as those for which calico at 5d. a yard was used by Mr. Deason. There does not appear to be any evidence that the articles supplied were not intrinsically worth the prices paid for them, but there appears to have been unnecessary expenditure of the funds of the union through the action taken by Mr. Deason.

"As regards the other allegations, there seems to have been considerable irregularities in connection with the clothing stores on the female side, for which Mrs. Deason must be held to have been partly responsible, and also in giving the inmates their weekly changes. The Board do not, however, think that the evidence proves that there was more than some inconvenience from this, and that in some cases women had to wear flannel petticoats and other garments much longer than was right without their being washed; nor do they think that there was evidence to show that inmates were required to wear underclothing that was 'little better than rags.'

"There is, however, a serious aspect of the mismanagement which existed in dealing with the clothing, which is referred to in the report made by the medical officer of the workhouse in his report book on the 16th of March, 1892. The Board consider that in some cases the representations of the medical officer as to the need for increased clothing where the question of health was involved did not receive such immediate attention as it should have.

"In conclusion, I am directed to state that the Board think that, under the circumstances, they should remit the question of the proposed superannuation allowance to Mr. Deason to the guardians for their further consideration.

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"W. E. KNOLLYS, Assistant Secretary.

"G. H. Lough, Esq.,

"Clerk to the guardians of the Poplar Union."

Now the report, Mr. Crooks, from the medical officer which I handed to you, would you just read it?—I will do it in a second. As I said it was a common thing for the stores to be empty.

Q. Take that report first?—It is a copy of a report of the medical officer of the workhouse dated 16th March, 1892:—

"On March 5th Sarah Threw, aged 29, suffering from anemia and subject to epileptic fits was seen by medical officer and directed to have a flannel vest with sleeves. Seen again on March 12th. Patient complained that she had spoken to the matron but could not get the flannel clothing, the patient appeared to be suffering much from the cold. This has been supplied since this was written on March 12th. On March 8th the weather being very cold, John Hays, aged 59, suffering from debility and cough applied to the medical officer, who directed that he should have flannels. This man applied on the 9th, 10th, and 11th, and on each occasion special direction was given that he was to have flannels, but the flannels were not given to him; on the 11th as he had become seriously ill with bronchitis he was sent to the sick ward. In the opinion of the medical officer this man would not have been so ill if he had been supplied with sufficient clothing as advised. The flannels were supplied on March 12th. (Signed) THOS. F. BOWKETT."

Q. Now that is the report referred to in the Local Government Board's report of the same year. Now,

Mr. Crooks, what was the state of the stores at this time. Were there sufficient stores in the workhouse to keep the people supplied with changes of clothing?—Oh, no; there were changes for no person there—no inmate, and it was a very common thing for the old women who had worn, as they had declared, their petticoats for months and underlinen for weeks, to lend their petticoats to old men while they got their own shirts washed.

Q. Was the dietary bad?—Well, as bad as could be.

Q. Let me take the most conclusive test of that. The dietary of 1894 has been altered, I think, more than once by the Local Government Board themselves since that time?—Three times.

Q. And on each particular occasion has there been an improvement in the dietary?—Oh, yes, at that time of day the staple diet was, to use a very common phrase, "skilly." It is so nice to laugh when you have not got to eat it, but it would have brought tears to your eyes if you had seen the poor people picking out the black specks from the oatmeal, which was kept in such a bad bin that the rats had the run of it, and without any attempt to cleanse it, it was given to the old people.

Q. With the rat manure in it?—Oh, yes.

Q. Was another very objectionable feature of the workhouse at that time the separation of the married people?—Oh, it was the Local Government Board, in its wisdom, years ago arranged that old married folks over a certain age were to live together. It was a farce—old people 70, and beyond 70, parting at 6.30 in the morning, each wending their way to their respective work—the old women to the so-called needle room, and the old men to the wood shed, to meet together at bedtime at 8 o'clock at night. Their quarters were as bare as it was possible to be.

Q. Now, when you joined the board, was that condition of things greatly improved?—Slowly; we had almost to appeal, not so much to the board, but to outside people to help us; and a great many people were kind enough to send down pictures, which may be seen there now. Slowly we got the meals given in the old married people's quarters, where the married people sat round a common table if they liked, or met together in their own apartment; and if there was work to do they could go quite comfortably, having met once or twice during the day, or if they were past work they might spend the day together without worry or trouble. Slowly the guardians were converted to the fact that old people might even be allowed to have chairs with arms to them, and gradually armchairs were introduced, and a table-cloth was put on.

Q. As to the chairs, before that was there simply a form to a long table for the old people to sit at?—Yes, but they never sat at it, and were glad to walk out; and I have seen dust an eighth of an inch thick on the table.

Q. Was another reform introduced—an alteration in the dress?—Yes, after a long fight. It caused considerable excitement, not only in Poplar, but all over the country; and gradually we got rid of the pauper garb—the distinctive garb.

Q. And in the work you were doing on the guardians, Mr. Crooks, did you find you had the approval of the electors of Poplar?—Oh, undoubtedly, undoubtedly.

Q. You were re-elected after time?—Time after time, without the slightest effort. People have sent me back at the top of the poll. At the last election they withdrew all their candidates. I absolutely declined to contest the guardians again having regard to all the work I did; and Conservatives and Liberals in this particular ward where we are now arranged to withdraw their candidates.

Q. So that you might be returned unopposed?—Yes.

Q. And you were?—Yes.

Q. What is stronger proof to my mind than that, you were not only returned unopposed, but the electors sent to the board men and women in sympathy with you to help you in the work you were carrying out?—Very largely. There seems to be rather a strange conception abroad about the constitution of our board. Not for the first time, one has had to point out that in the old revolutionary days there were just two labour men on the board. By dint of perseverance in pointing out the iniquity of treating poor old helpless creatures as we did, we managed to get our own way. But even this board does not consist entirely of labour men. There

are only, by the utmost stretch of the imagination, 10 persons who could be described as working men or working women. The majority is against us if you put it on that list.

Q. If you put it on class, the majority is against you?—Yes.

Q. What is the total number of guardians?—Twenty-four.

Q. And you say that out of the whole 24, there are only 10 who could be described as belonging to a labour or socialist body?—That is it, putting them altogether.

Q. But we all know it does not follow because a man is a labour man he is a socialist?—Oh, not necessarily.

Q. Now the laundry. When you were elected first on the board, there was, I think, no laundry, but one was in course of erection?—Yes.

Q. And do you remember something that happened at that time. You were sending your linen out to be washed?—Yes.

Q. What there was to be sent—there was not much?—Well, people had to go naked while their clothes were being washed. That is the long and short of it. One need not make any bones about it.

Q. And on one occasion was the whole of the union linen returned from the laundry because it was so over-run with vermin that they would not wash it?—They refused to wash it. Soon after I was elected to the board, I had the privilege of being able to go into the house in the day time very frequently. Well, the majority of our members at the time I am speaking of—like Lansbury—were unable to get in except in the evening.

Q. They would be working all day?—Yes. I once found one woman—I daresay I could find the name; a very close relation of mine could remember her name—this poor woman was working very hard scrubbing, doing the hardest work in the house. Not once or twice, but three or four times, this poor woman asked me, if possible, to get her a pair of boots. I said “surely, no person in here goes without boots.” She had been paddling about; she had been scrubbing a stone floor. She lifted her foot, and all she had to keep her feet from the cold stones was the canvas sole that was all that was left of a once pair of boots. I went along the corridor and saw the matron, and said, “matron, there is a woman over there who has asked me three times to, if possible, get her a pair of boots.” She drew her skirt round her and said, “Oh, why do you worry about these people? they are not our class, you know.” “Worry about them,” I remember saying; “what do you mean by ‘our class’?” “I know no distinction of class, but you must remember we are here to see these people properly clothed. I do not want to quarrel, but that woman has to have a pair of boots to-day.”

Q. The woman had the boots, I expect?—She got the boots.

Q. The master and matron at that time; who were they?—Mr. and Mrs. Deason.

Q. Was there always trouble about the food?—Invariably when one went into the dining hall there were quarrels about the food. And it was worth a quarrel. I mean it was so inferior that one could forgive men for quarrelling about it. It would not be difficult, Mr. Davy, to produce two or three men of the habitual loafer class, if you like so to call them, who are still in the house, and who at that time much preferred to go to prison than be bullied and fed as they were then in that house.

Q. Was there trouble between the young men and the old men?—Yes, and in the midday, when I went into the house, I had frequently to protect some old man. There were threats, say, by a young man if an old man did not part with his dinner—“change plates,” as it were. I saw this happening, and then managed to go alongside the old man and ask him why he did it. At first he said he did not mind, but later on he said: “I was obliged to. I could not stand up to a fellow like that.”

Q. And ultimately did you cure that by keeping the young men and the old separate?—The first thing we did was to widen the gangway or avenue between the tables. That is to say, instead of them having three gangways, one in the middle and one on each side, we made one wide gangway in the middle of the dining hall. It was too far to reach across to take the old men's

plates without being observed. That was the beginning. Later on they were put into a hall by themselves; and let me say here, quite incidentally, if any person in the world wants an idea of discipline, he should have seen that able-bodied men's dining room on Sunday. He would get about as near an approach to hell as anything on this earth.

Q. What was the work provided in those days?—Stone breaking and oakum picking.

Q. What would the elder men do?—Usually wood chopping. They were usually the butt, not only for the able-bodied men in the workhouse, but also the butt for the labour master. If he wanted any work or job done he would send the old men, he dare not send the young men.

Q. Was there constant trouble in maintaining the discipline of the workhouse, or what was called the discipline?—I do not think that by any stretch of the imagination you could call it discipline. It was everybody for himself, and the devil take the hindmost. If a fellow could fight he got whatever he wanted; and if he could not, he just did not get anything.

Q. Were the inmates of the workhouse constantly being brought to the police court?—Certainly.

Q. What did you do with regard to the work in the workhouse when you took charge of the management of it. Did you abolish the stone work?—Yes, and it met with a tremendous amount of sympathy generally. The impression that it prevented a man going into the workhouse had been very largely dissipated by experience, and a committee of which I was a member went into the question of employment considerably, and a fairly exhaustive report was brought up as to the means of dealing with the people. They found a very excellent way down here at that time of sending men to Kensington to work on the test yards.

Q. Do you mean if a man applied for relief?—The able-bodied man was kept in all night, and given an order for Kensington in the morning, because Poplar could not find him employment; and this delightful experience worked out like this—that the number of orders for Kensington issued by the master of the Poplar Workhouse during the months of September, October, and November, 1891, was 546, or 43·5 per week. The number of orders used was 33, or 2·5. They came in and got a night's lodging and a feed, and went for a walk, and then came back again. The number of instances where men received an order for Kensington in the morning and returned the same day was 17; so some did not go very far, and came back and demanded admission as destitute persons. That report was signed by the Rev. Prebendary Howe, who is admitted by every person to be, perhaps, the best Poor Law chairman we have ever had, either at this or any other board; Rev. William Chandler, the present Bishop of Bloemfontein, Mr. May, Thomas Power, and Samuel Dean, who were chairmen when I first came on the board. Another committee was appointed to see if anything reasonable could be done to find decent work, and that committee consisted of Mr. Main, myself, Selby, Lansbury, Brown, Dr. Power, the chairman and vice-chairman of the board—as near as I can remember it would be Samuel Dean—Dr. Power, and, who was the other? We had two vice-chairmen.

(Mr. Lough.) Mr. Beck?—Yes, Mr. Beck, who was then superintendent of the London and India Dock Joint Committee. They went into lots of points, and presented this report. (Document exhibited.) We substituted a fair day's work for a man, so that he could be usefully employed all day rather than to have a task which enabled him to run riot all over the place.

(Mr. Grant.) You abolished the stone yard, but put something else in its place?—Oh, indeed we did.

Q. What did you put in its place?—We put wood chopping and any kind of work that came to our hand that would keep the men employed from 7 in the morning, or whatever his time was, till leaving off time at night; so that you got control over him the whole time.

Q. It was not a case of his having a piece job in the stone yard?—Oh, no.

Q. Which could be got through in half a day, but you found him continuous employment during the working day?—If the labour master saw a man idle he would send him to work somewhere or other. Any way, he was under control, which was the most important thing of all.

Mr. Crooks.

23 July.

Mr. Crooks.

23 July.

Q. May I stop for a moment there to ask about some of the things now done in the workhouse by inmates. Let us take, for instance, cleaning. Is that largely done by the inmates?—Yes.

Q. Mainly the women?—On the women's side.

Q. And on the men's side who is it done by?—The male inmates.

Q. Under the control of the officers?—Under the control of the labour master.

Q. Do you also do a very large part of preparing the food for the inmates. Take a particular instance—do you make your own bread?—Yes.

What staff have you for making bread?—I think we have three or four paid men—a foreman and first-hand and second-hand, and then all the rough work is done by the inmates.

Q. Under their control?—Yes.

Q. First of all, you bake what bread is used in the workhouse?—We bake for all inmates of the workhouse, for the out-relief, and for our schools and receiving home.

Q. And your officers?—And the officers, of course.

Q. And, I think, your bread was once described by the *Daily Mail* as equal to what can be obtained in one of the best restaurants in the West End?—I should think they were right; I do not think people could make better bread than we do, or get it at anything like the price we can secure it at.

Q. How do you check the price of your bread?—We buy our flour in the ordinary contract way, and then we measure the output from whatever market price of the bread is current in the district. We fix that as our price, and whatever profit we make we show.

Q. And whatever loss you make?—Yes, but we have not made a loss up till now.

Q. You take the current price of the ordinary bread in the district?—Say, if it fluctuates between 5½d. and 4½d., we should put it down to the date, whatever it was.

Q. You say you make a profit. That is not a profit you can show?—No, a local authority cannot make a profit, but it can say it would have spent more but for the fact that it made its own.

Q. If you had had a contract for the current market price the bread would have cost more?—Yes, and we are sure we do not get that kind of india-rubber quality, which I have a lively recollection in my early days of making balls of, because we could not eat it.

Q. That has disappeared?—Oh, I know that.

Q. Next to the bread, what else is done in the workhouse; take the clothes, for instance. Is there a considerable amount of work done at present in the workhouse in making and repairing clothes?—Yes, it is quite an institution. We make nearly everything in the house now; we buy the cloth in the rough, and the garments are made up.

Q. And there is a very great deal of repairing done?—A tremendous lot.

Q. Both of clothes belonging to the workhouse and the clothes of inmates who come in, and which are in a bad state?—Yes. I shall probably be asked about the dignity of this kind of thing, but there are men and women in the workhouse who do like to go out in a manner so that their people should not know they are inmates of the workhouse. On the other hand, a very small percentage—perhaps 2 per cent.—prefer the old condition of things, and their reason shows the frailty of human nature. Take the old lady, for instance, who was sent out quite nice. I met her in the evening, and asked her how she liked the new clothes. She said she did not like them at all. I asked why, because I was rather struck. She said: "You know nobody thinks you 'come from the workhouse now, and do not give you 'nothing.' We have to remember that we are always dealing with that class."

Q. A certain number of inmates used the workhouse as a means for begging when they went out?—Yes. Showing the laxity of the discipline in those days, and the need for an alteration.

Q. Now, is there some other work done in the workhouse by the inmates?—Wood chopping. I do not know whether there is going to be a strike. Yesterday I was interviewed by several men who were unloading coals (pretty hard work it is), and they told me they are

unloading nearly 200 tons a week at the railway trucks. I do not know whether that is the exact amount. You may be sure it will not lose anything by exaggeration. When a man does it for nothing, it is a good lot.

Q. A point or two about beer and tobacco. Did you find a glass of beer acted as an encouragement to people who were doing work in the workhouse like this?—Oh, no; I have never been very much in sympathy with it. There was a fact that certain men were engaged in cleansing cesspools and drains, w.c.'s, &c. The medical officer, who is responsible, always looked upon it as coming within the purview of the order of disagreeable work: he ordered them beer, and they got it.

Q. I believe, as a matter of fact, you are a life-long teetotaler?—Yes, I am.

Q. And, therefore, it was not an order that would have your personal sympathy?—No, if there was a complaint about it, and my help was wanted, I said that the doctor was the best judge. All I regret is that he was not a better judge.

Q. Did you have at one time a great difficulty with what were known as the ins-and-outs?—Yes, an alarming difficulty.

Q. Stopping you for a moment, there is a very useful return showing how the young men and young women in the workhouse were employed on October 19, 1905. But I will first read Mr. Gerald Walsh's report:—

Copy of report made by Mr. Gerald Walsh on the workhouse of the Poplar Union after a visit thereto on the 24th October, 1905:—

"At Mr. Lockwood's request I visited this workhouse for the purpose of ascertaining what work is given to the able-bodied men. All task work at this workhouse has for some years been done away with. Stone breaking and oakum picking has also been abolished, and with the exception of cleaning, coal carrying, &c., the only occupation given to the able-bodied men is wood chopping. On October 19th there were 260 able-bodied men in the house. I append a return showing how they were employed on that day."

"If the guardians would consent to re-establish task work, I reckon that 18 to 20 corn mills could be put up in one of the wood sheds. The old stone-breaking cells are also there, and though the space at the guardians' disposal is limited there is still a possibility of making the able-bodied loafer's life disagreeable. The guardians are getting out a return showing the number of men who have been inmates for a considerable number of years, and their ages. The return was not complete on date of my visit, but I am of opinion that one-half of these able-bodied men will be found to have been in the house for five years and upwards. A similar return has been got out with regard to the able-bodied women, which was complete, and this showed that 54 out of 138 had been in the house for five years or more. The women, however, owing to laundry work, are more usefully employed than men."

Then there is a return showing how young men were employed on October 19th, 1905. The return shows that on the whole 260 were at work, with the exception of three cripples, and six excused from work by the medical officer. The return is as follows:—

Wood chopping, tying, and sawing	87
Bed-making and cleaning dormitories	24
Bed-making and cleaning infirm wards	10
Men's dining-hall and scullery	16
Cleaning corridors and stairs	9
Cleaning windows	12
Kitchen and scullery	13
Cleaning young men's day rooms	6
Tailor's shop	2
Engineering works	18
Painting and whitewashing	2
Mattress making	1
Cleaning receiving wards	6
Cleaning drains	1
Carrying coal	6
Messengers for office	2
Lodge	1
Disinfecter	1
Laundry	6
Waste carrier	1
Linen store	1
Barber's shop	1
Larder and bread room	1
Provision stores	1
Shoemaker's shop	2
Young men's bathroom	1

Cleaning gutters	...	...	...	...	2
Office works department	...	...	...	...	1
Male officers' mess room	...	...	...	...	2
Cleaning male observation ward	...	...	...	...	3
Cleaning male sick ward	...	...	...	...	6
Mat making	...	...	...	...	1
Cleaning lavatories	...	...	...	...	4
Carpenter's shop	...	...	...	...	1
Cripples	...	...	...	...	3
Excused from work by medical officer	...	...	...	...	6

Total 260

The return of the young women employed shows that there were 140 at work, and that all were engaged in some kind of employment. This return reads:—

Laundry	...	...	...	...	46
Needlework (cripples)	...	...	...	...	20
Cleaning infirm wards	...	...	...	...	16
Dining-hall and scullery	...	...	...	...	10
Cleaning and bed-making in dormitories	...	...	...	...	8
Cleaning and nursing children	...	...	...	...	6
Cleaning school	...	...	...	...	8
Cleaning staircase	...	...	...	...	3
Cleaning sick ward and lying-in ward	...	...	...	...	4
Cleaning observation wards	...	...	...	...	3
Female officers' mess-room	...	...	...	...	2
Cleaning needle-rooms and machining	...	...	...	...	2
Cleaning receiving wards	...	...	...	...	1
Assisting in kitchen	...	...	...	...	1
Master's kitchen	...	...	...	...	1
Matron's stores	...	...	...	...	2
Cleaning officers' rooms	...	...	...	...	3
Cleaning offices and church	...	...	...	...	2
Linen stores	...	...	...	...	2

Total 140

Q. I want to ask you, Mr. Crooks, one or two questions about that. That is a return of what are called able-bodied persons in the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. Are there included in that number people such as cripples?—Certainly.

Q. And are a number who are called able-bodied persons certainly not competent to earn their living outside?—It would be quite impossible for them to live except in an institution.

Q. Some of them—I saw one man there who, I think, had lost a foot?—Oh, yes; or a man partially paralysed, a hunchback, one partially blind. Then there would be one mentally deficient—not bad enough to be certified, but a man who absolutely lacks initiative. If you took him to a job he might do it, but he would not think of going away until somebody led him away. That class of man is worth no person's money whatever.

Q. An able-bodied person, according to the returns of the Local Government Board, is simply a person who is under sixty?—Invariably; the law is very rigid.

Q. I will just go to that portion of your evidence, dealing with your difficulties with ins-and-outs?—Might I just go on? At the time we were talking about, the young men were in open revolt against anything like control. Fights and prosecutions were of almost daily occurrence. Two labour masters at that time nearly lost their lives in trying to control them, and no one but the strongest and most pugilistic kind of officer was of any use amongst them. The task was to be performed by dinner time, or very soon after dinner. They were absolutely impossible to control, they wandered about all over the place, creating all kinds of discord, and even threatened to murder the officers. When this task was abolished, and work from certain hours to certain hours substituted, this was firmly adhered to, as it was evident that the men must be kept at something for some time. At that time a man, supposing he had not got a wife and children in there, or even if he had, took his discharge in the morning, went straight to the relieving officer and got an order for re-admission. He wandered about all day begging on the strength that he had an order for admission to the workhouse, and, of course, could show it. Children were often left by these people on the doorsteps or in the recreation ground day after day, and dragged back at the hours of 9, 10, and even 11 o'clock at night, frequently the man the worse for drink, and the guardians were almost powerless to deal with them. We have a record of a man who was prevented from going out. You probably remember, Mr. Inspector

The man commenced an action against the board for detaining him in the workhouse, and the Judge complimented him upon the ability with which he was able to state his case in a court of law. That man, with all his capacity, was allowed to go in and out when he liked. He had half-a-dozen clever children who were brought up without education or training. That is a case we had to deal with. At that time we boldly and contrary to the law of the land absolutely declined to allow these men to be re-admitted the same day as they took their discharge and many and frequent were the threats that I received for keeping these men out. At this very corner I was threatened by one of the particular persons that he would shoot me. I said to him "I shall go straight to heaven, but I don't know what will happen to you." They pointed out to me what I knew, that I was breaking the law—they were destitute persons and could not be refused admission, but we did refuse them admission and it had an excellent effect on the discipline of the house and finally led to the order which at present exists, namely, that the men who frequently go in and out must give very lengthy notice. This order was made by the Local Government Board mainly through the representation of myself and Skeggs.

Q. That was the Poor Law Act, of 1899?—Yes.

Q. I want it on the notes. The Poor Law Act of 1899, 62 & 63 Victoria, chapter 37, section 4?—At that time we were able to produce evidence that men had been out of the workhouse from 100 to 240 times in a year in and out. It dealt with children of in-and-outs.

(The Inspector.) And you took credit for it?—Yes. Very likely. And Mr. Nicholls, chairman of the Shoreditch Guardians, and Mr. T. W. Russell discussed the matter, and the latter said "You cannot interfere with the liberty of the subject; they are still living in Great Britain." I said "no man has the right to walk his children about the streets day by day and prevent them obtaining education." That was the argument we used with the result that the Act was passed.

(Mr. Grant.) And one of the provisions of that Act was to extend the 72 hours to 168 hours?—That is it. At this moment I have a copy of a report made by Mr. Lockwood, of the Local Government Board, on February 22nd this year. We have the names of about 30 men, one man of whom has been in and out of the workhouse since 1884, 593 times. Few know of the difficulties we have to contend with in maintaining the discipline of the house.

Q. Your opinion is, it is far better to keep the men who are in the workhouse employed during the whole of the working time than set them tasks?—Indeed, I do.

Q. May I call your attention now—the time work is accepted as against task work?—The task work under the Poor Law Amendment Act was four hours a day.

Q. You could not have made them work longer than four hours?—No.

Q. Now, in these days of task work, would the men go out in the morning and obtain an order to return; they would go to the docks and get two or three hours' work, spend the money in drink, and come back to the workhouse?—That is quite true. I can recall from my earliest days—from 1861—and I have seen scores of fights at that workhouse caused by men who have got two or three hours' work. They had come back drunk and quarrelsome; have a fight with one or the other, and the police would be called to send them away. That went on for years, and until we signed an order that if a man had an order he must be in by 8 o'clock, or not at all, and removed from the place. We should have credit for establishing discipline even amongst the most difficult class.

Q. Were the numbers, in and out, 10,000?—10,000 in and out a year.

Q. In February this year, under the new discipline you introduced, was the number 30, and were they all detained for 168 hours, the limit?—That does not quite cover the chronic ins-and-outs. The men largely made up the additional 6,000. The difference between that and 10,000 is 4,000.

Q. You reduced it to 4,000?—Now reduced to 4,000—men who want to take their old mother or father out, women going to make a new start, men who expect to get work. The chronic in-and-out is reduced to about 30.

Q. Thirty a month?—Yes.

Mr. Crooks.

22 July.

Mr. Crooks.

23 July.

(The Inspector.) Thirty individuals?—Oh, yes, the men we have compulsory detention for.

(Mr. Grant.) The 10,000 out and in—the number of times people were in and out?—Yes.

Q. You reduced the 10,000 to 4,000?—Yes. The 30, one of these men was in 500 times in a matter of 20 years.

Q. What is your experience of the effect of a workhouse on a decent man driven into it?—The man who is obliged to go into the workhouse—the disease of deterioration sets in within a few days. He finds he cannot get on and there is no help for it but to mix with the very worst possible class, for whatever you may do in classification between the aged and respectable no one has found classification for the able-bodied yet, and then a decent man—the effect upon him is he is brought to their level, as he will be told, “He is nobody; we have been here years.” He loses what is, after all, most worth having in this world—his soul. His courage is gone. I can give a sample case. In 1861 I was put in a place—I can show you now—I was asked to eat fiery soup at which my poor soul revolted. Presently I saw my poor father coming towards me with his pockets bulging out, and saw him stopped by a labour master. He was turned back, and perhaps I am foolish enough to believe my father really cared for us, and I saw the big tears in his eyes, and he went away. I did not see him for a long time—of hours in the day, I mean—I then found out that he had saved a little suet pudding from his own dinner and he was bringing it over to me, and the labour master stopped him, as a serious breach of workhouse discipline, so I went without, and could you imagine a man with a soul who really cared keeping that soul under conditions like that? A species of deterioration must set in under demoralising and the worst conditions one could have.

Q. A man who is permanently in the workhouse becomes a pauper in the worst sense?—He does, indeed. He loses his self-reliance, and a decent man who comes in for an hour or two comes in contact with him and is forced to find the level of the man who has been there for years.

Q. All too soon. And the result is that the longer he remains in the workhouse the less inclined he is to come out and make an effort to keep his stand as a decent citizen?—It is obvious. If a man goes and applies for work, he is asked, “where have you been?” He will say the last master, perhaps. Then he gets a little rigid examination. “Where were you yesterday and the day before?” “Well, I was so ‘down I had to go there.’” “Very sorry, my poor man,” says the master, and he gives him 2d. or 3d. to get rid of “him.”

Q. He knows he is not so fit as the next man?—Invariably it is so. It may be altered. He gets two or three hours at the docks. A well-fed pauper goes out as he did in the old days and fights his less well-fed neighbour. When the man at the docks looks at him he says, “This is a strong man, I will give him an hour or ‘two.’”

Q. And he goes back to the workhouse?—Yes, of course he does not care to stick on. He wants to lift himself up. He is damned if he has a week or two in the workhouse unless you can send him right away.

Q. In consequence of that—I will take you through Laidon—in consequence of that conviction on your part and on the part of your brother and sister guardians was the experiment of Laidon tried?—Yes. But quite in our early days we saw that, and we appealed for Dunton Farm in 1894-5. It is not our first appeal, and our appeal was treated as, being labour men, it was pointed out, our limited experience and so on of this world, “you cannot influence for the benefit of men.”

Q. I will ask Mr. Lansbury to tell us the history of Laidon, but there was the simple fact that you came to the board of guardians as a worker from amongst the workers, having learned this lesson of the effect of the workhouse on the worker?—Yes.

Q. And you set yourself, and your brother guardians set themselves, to see if there was no method by which a decent man could be put back into citizenship, and you suggested various schemes, and that ultimately led you to the experiment of Laidon. Whether that succeeded or not it is too early to say?—Yes.

Q. As a consequence of the condition of the workhouse when you joined the board, Mr. Crooks, do you think you had got anything like a decent set of officers?—

No. We had them strong and that is all one can say. They were powerful—

Q. Physically?—Physically. Mentally they seemed hardly able to appreciate the proper mode of a human being after all, and the result was owing to the indifference which guardians showed in their work. It was a little difficult to say any guardian was not full of sympathy or had not a good opinion in by-gone days; but the difficulty was to get him to keep in touch with his own work, and thus we had the workhouse visited from year to year. I am not exaggerating when I say there were guardians who had never been inside the workhouse at all, and presently we discovered, when we were anxious to go, that the master had power to shut the gate upon us, and without his permission except on the regular house committee days, when we had our business to do, we had no legal right on the premises at all.

Q. How was that; under a resolution of the board?—No, I am told it was the law of the land. It was afterwards altered, you remember, Mr. Davy.

(The Inspector.) Yes?—I cannot quote the actual Act. It was something like 1894 an Order was issued by the Local Government Board owing to the stir that we were making at the time, as elected guardians we had a right to see how our people were treated, and an Order was issued and we were allowed to go in as frequently as we thought fit.

(Mr. Grant.) That was in 1894?

(The Inspector.) In Sir Henry Fowler's time?—Yes, Sir Henry Fowler made the Order.

(Mr. Grant.) The guardians were kept off the premises they were controlling and paying for except on the days when they went there for business?—Yes.

Q. That was altered in 1894. Order of Sir Henry Fowler, 26th January, 1893, providing that any guardian at any time might visit or examine into all the workhouse. Well, now, was there a good deal among the officers at that time, 1893-4—did you have a good deal of trouble with them?—Yes. Let me tell you one little incident. The bakehouse got on fire in the workhouse and in the early morning the fire engines were rushing in and the bakery was well lit. One good fellow exclaimed amid the general cheering, “The only ‘thing wanted to complete this now is for Crooks and ‘Lansbury to be on the top of it.’”

Q. That was one of the officers?—Oh, yes—amidst the general approval of the rest of them.

Q. There were some, I think, Mr. Crooks, some officers were dismissed for drunkenness?—Oh, yes. I have noted for my own guidance the condition of the workhouse in 1893. The condition of the workhouse prior to 1893, and I venture to say can be said of most poor law institutions, was that you did not get the best class of men and women to serve you whether it was attending to the sick or the infirm. More than once medical comforts which were given for the sick were consumed by the inmates, but if a record was kept and could be produced a very startling condition of things would be disclosed. I give you a case straight away—a very simple one. A woman, an inmate, Haggerty by name, who got out and got the worse for drink. She was treated very barbarously from time to time when she returned. The memory of this lingered with her and she found—of course, in a relation of mine—a pretty good friend who saved her from going to prison. Even she completely changed, and became a better woman. She came to my house at seven o'clock one morning and began: “You ‘know, Mr. Crooks, what they call me when I am the ‘worse for drink, do not you?’ And I said, ‘What is ‘the matter?’” She said, “I have been sitting all night ‘with a dying man and not a nurse has been in the room. ‘I have been twice to the night nurses’ room and they said, ‘go and look after it and in the room was the night nurse, ‘the day nurse, and the labour master, and they had taken ‘with them the bottle of brandy left for this dying man to ‘be given to him from time to time. The man died in my ‘arms. I went and knocked at the door and told them he ‘was dead and now I have run out to let you know.’” Well, in a very little while I was down at the workhouse. It was certainly very early in the morning; and they were all suspended or dismissed on the spot. Well, you can see at once that you cannot expect people in the house, even with people with finer feelings, to respect people who are of that character—may I go further?—or retain their self-respect in an institution like that. Gradually

Mr. Crooks.
23 July.

we got rid of those people and introduced a system altogether different, and the people are treated in the sick wards to-day as patients rather than criminals. All these officers gradually went, and I hope and believe, I am pretty sure, that officers moral and sober were substituted, and so far as the house is concerned it is equal to any house in the country anywhere.

Q. Let me just ask you as to that. That was 1894 when you came there. Changes were made, and the result of one of the changes was that Mr. and Mrs. Madeley were appointed as master and matron?—The result of the Inquiry held of which you read out the report. We were continually fighting for an improvement of the house. I am afraid the head officials were not very friendly to us. They clearly understood, however much they were able to put the old guardians off they were not so capable of putting us off, and that meant a large increase of labour to them. A man whose resignation was accepted was asked to resign, and the inquiry was as to whether he was to be pensioned at the highest amount, £140 a year, or not at all. He finally got £80. That led to the purging of this institution—leading to the resignations.

Q. Then Mr. and Mrs. Madeley were appointed master and matron?—Yes.

Q. And were 12 years master and matron?—12 or 13 years.

Q. Until last year, when you heard in the autumn of the immoral relations between the master and a nurse, Beattie, had you any reason to complain of Mr. Madeley?—Not once.

Q. Had he and his wife worked hard to keep the institution up to the standard wanted, and as far as you could judge he had, and his wife joined heartily with him?—I looked upon him as a model master.

Q. Not only in your judgment; was he complimented by officers of the Local Government Board?—As a matter of fact we became, I understand, Mr. Davy will put me right presently if I am wrong—we became a model by which new Inspectors might learn their duties by coming down to see how our board carried on its work, so as to enable them to understand how all workhouses ought to be conducted.

Q. You were a standard by which other workhouses were to be judged?—Yes.

Q. On this point about Mr. Madeley and nurse Beattie, did you ever notice anything until this business cropped up of having improper relations?—I assure you, no.

Q. As far as your judgment goes, was it one of those extraordinary infatuations which sometimes take a middle-aged man, where he throws everything to the winds because of his passion?—It is absolutely beyond me. I cannot understand it at all.

Q. What happened is this, that having served you well as a master for more than 12 years he has thrown away his position, he has thrown away his pension, he has ruined his wife, he has brought his children down and gone away with this nurse Beattie to Canada?—I understand he has gone away, yes.

Q. I just want to clear up that point?—May I go straight on?

Q. May I just finish that point first. You first heard in October last year?—October.

Q. How did you hear?—Out of doors, I think. No guardian told me. I was stopped in the street I think.

Q. By somebody?—Some extraordinary gossip was going about. Some person said to me: "You are having a 'high old time or your master is doing extraordinary 'things.'" I said: "If anything goes wrong on God's earth 'it is down there. What's the joke?" "It's no joke, so 'and so has gone on.'" To settle that once for all I walked down to the workhouse. I saw the master and I accused him straight away. I didn't hesitate. I said this condition of things after one's life has been spent in purifying this institution. Lansbury and I have given practically our souls to this place, and you pledge it in a few hours. He fenced with me a good deal about it, said he practically hadn't done anything, but kept pretty closely to the Orders of the Local Government Board. The nurse, he said, had left the institution, therefore whatever had happened was nothing to do with us. He also said that he had never broken a single rule inside the workhouse. I called his attention to the fact that whatever he might say he was absent from the workhouse with this nurse who was then working out a month's holiday, this holiday

being really her month's notice preparatory to leaving. I therefore said that that excuse would not do as she was still our servant. He shed tears, sat down on a form and implored me to give him a chance. I said I could do nothing of the kind. He cried a good deal. We then went into the house and his wife added her appeal to his appeal that I should not take action there and then, but that if I would let it go over for a little while the woman should be sent out of the country, and he and his wife, who had become reconciled, would give me no cause to regret it. I declined to give them any such promise, knowing all the difficulties of administering an institution when a scandal of this character had become public property: I was loath to act hurriedly. Apparently his wife and he had become reconciled. They were giving frequently proof of this and I was very hopeful that it might be possible to quietly allow the question to be forgotten. You see, supposing for a moment I had acted as I ought to have acted, I do not hesitate to say with the fulness of knowledge I possess now, I ought to have suspended him there and then. What was running in my mind was a sympathetic board, either like our own or the Local Government Board would say: "Very well, you have dismissed this man, 'properly dismissed him. Therefore we give you credit 'for doing your duty.'" The wife would have immediately applied for the position of matron, and you would have found the greatest difficulty in refusing her that appointment. That was what was running in my mind. Then what were you going to do? Appoint Mrs. Madeley matron, you get a new master. What would be the discipline of the house? The old matron would dictate to the new master, and for months there would be chaos, and we should have the battle to fight over again. I said "I will wait and see what happens." So it went on. Clergymen were going to the house, but instead of helping, as one would think, they injured one in the object I had of saving the place as far as I could. Instead of helping, they made the thing more embarrassing; I told them I would not lose sight of the case. I felt the responsibility of it very greatly. I continued watching to see whether the master was going straight, and observed that he was absent from the workhouse on more occasions than a reasonable amount of recreation would entitle him to. I was very angry about this, and I told my colleagues that he could not stay with us another minute, but that he must leave the institution the next morning. At that meeting of the board I had a cab waiting at the door to take me to a very important meeting. I went off the next morning. I do not know who told him—at ten o'clock the next morning his resignation was in the hands of the clerk.

Q. The 6th April, I think?—Yes, the 6th April. Mr. Davy and the President of the Local Government Board, they know the position I was taking up. I told them in no circumstances would I be a party to obtaining a pension for Mr. Madeley. The reason for that was that the gentleman in question was not only behaving badly but he said the guardians were trying to get rid of him by pensioning him off. A dangerous and malicious lie! I don't know one who wanted to do that. I speak for my colleagues. He put in two certificates as to his illness. He sent them to the Local Government Board. If mistake we have made, all I have to say is, it was done with the purest motives as far as I am concerned. That is his remaining in the house from October to April, giving him a chance. Few people in this world who had seen the abject despair of that man would have acted as I did without condoning an act he had done. I wanted the discipline of the house maintained. I do not see after all—it was a domestic thing—I do not see the world would have been the worse for not knowing it.

Q. Till quite recently you were not aware of the fact that Mr. McCarthy had been informed of it?—Yes, I heard of it afterwards. There was something to be said for the majority who knew. They said, "Well, we 'didn't want to tell Crooks about this. He has worry 'enough of his own."

Q. They tried to relieve you of the burden?—I do not say a word against them about it. They were actuated by the best motives in not telling me.

Q. I think on Mr. McCarthy's suggestion, Mr. Crooks, this nurse Beattie was first of all sent out of the country some time in the previous year?—I was shown an address in Belgium where she had gone to. One would see that I was trying to avoid the ruin which has come.

Q. Not only ruin to the master and matron?—I would not say so much about her, but it was the innocent

Mr. Crooks
23 July.

sons and daughter and herself I was thinking about all the time.

Q. The effect on Mrs. Madeley was that her husband having resigned she had to resign too?—Yes.

Q. And lost her claim to a pension?—Yes.

Q. And had no pension from the guardians?—That is a matter in which the Local Government Board itself will have to give an opinion at the proper moment whatever they propose to do—that is out of our hands. We make the appeal which may be considered sympathetically.

Q. She was receiving rations, receiving free quarters, coal and £100 a year. From no fault of her own at all, merely from the act of her husband, she is thrown out of her position and left without pension and control?—Absolutely ruined.

Q. Now that you know all the facts, Mr. Crooks, about the whole thing, do you still remain with the conviction that as a master, with the one exception of this extraordinary lapse, Mr. Madeley had done good work?—One must say so.

Q. And the same of Mrs. Madeley?—Mrs. Madeley was a pure, just woman. I had constant means of being in her company. For years and years I have never seen by look or word anything that might call a blush of shame to that woman's face.

(The Inspector.) She always, I understood, had a high character?—Always. The falling from illness was another thing entirely.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Crooks, to sum up the history of the thing, this, what we might call the immoral ulcer in the workhouse, was the history something like this: Mr. Madeley, a man of middle age, having served the guardians well, suddenly conceived an extraordinary infatuation for a nurse in the workhouse named Beattie; that that comes to the knowledge of Mr. McCarthy, and under his action Beattie was sent out of the country, and as to Mr. Madeley, the matter was dealt with?—Yes.

Q. He did not communicate with you or the guardians what he was doing. Then, after a time, Mr. Madeley or Beattie, one of the two, comes back to England. Then you heard of it; found the master was leaving the house for considerable periods. You take the matter in hand, and first of all you hoped it might be got over by the reconciliation of the master and the matron. You found that impossible, and the master was suspended, and on the 6th April sent in his resignation?—He did not quite get as far as that. On the evening of the 4th April I discovered that he was absent 162 hours in 30 days. It is quite outrageous, having regard to the responsibility on my mind; I said, "tomorrow morning he goes," but on that morning before I was out his resignation was in this office.

Q. I want to get to the history. He went out, and the action you took was as Mr. McCarthy, the chairman of the house committee, with your knowledge, had been unable to deal with the situation?—Yes. As far as the matron is concerned, the evidence has been given about her frequent absences. Many years ago she had a very serious operation, in which, I venture to say, the fatalities are about 98 per cent., and she recovered, and of course occasionally, and never without permission or notice, has she been absent from her duties. She was not able to get assistance, but I have known periods when the returns for the Local Government Board were got out while she was in bed, and she was surrounded with books and had been doing her work there.

Q. The suggestion of witness that she was away without the knowledge of the guardians is untrue?—Yes, and it all depends upon the point of view of the witnesses whether there is any gall.

Q. On that I want to say one thing. Madeley sent in his resignation to the board; a special meeting was called, and at that meeting the resignation was accepted?—Oh, yes, without the slightest hesitancy at all, except that I know I was asked several questions at that moment by Mr. Diamond as to whether I had seen him or taken any action. I said I had not seen him and had not taken any action.

Q. Now let me take the statistics about the Poplar union. The union, I think, comprises three parishes—Poplar, Bromley and Bow. The Poplar union and the borough of Poplar are the same in area. You have a population according to the census of 1901 of 168,822. The rateable value in 1905—the last quinquennial—was £839,736. Out of that the classification of rateable hereditaments was: docks, £67,000; railways, £69,000;

gas, water and other companies, £54,000; government property, £1,000; municipal buildings, £52,000; factories, £163,000; licensed houses, £16,000; houses rated at over £20, £105,000; houses rated at under £20, £259,000. A penny in the £ raises £3,000, and the assessable value works out at £4 16s. per head of the population as compared with £8 18s. for the rest of London?—That is so.

Q. Now the rates for the year 1906 were 12s. in the £. That was an exceptional rate, was it not, you haven't had 12s. in the £ for the last ten years?—No. It was an exceptional rate.

Q. Out of that 12s. was the guardians' expenditure 3s. 5½d.—roughly 3s. 6d.?—Yes.

Q. Their heads are M.A.B. 7½d.; sick asylum 1s. 2d.; borough council 3s. 0½d.; London county rate, 1s. 6½d., and other calls make a total of 12s.: I think for the previous year your rates were 10s. 1d.?—Yes.

Q. And the guardians' share 3s. 9d.?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) With reference to that return of rateable value and the position of Poplar. A considerable amount of Poplar consists of docks?—The acreage is considerable with no houses, and the rates for that would not compare favourably.

Q. Notwithstanding that the docks have a value of £67,000, rated as houses they would bring in more?—Yes, but I fully expect to hear in answer to that, that the docks find employment, but it also finds us paupers in considerable numbers.

Q. My point was this: The rateable value of Poplar per head in that way would be given as a test of the poverty of the people?—Yes.

Q. Again, the low rated houses in Poplar form a large part of the total rateable value?

(Mr. Grant.) Yes. That is one of the elements which explain the low figure, £4 16s. You see, I do not know what the area of the docks is, roughly?—Seven acres.

(The Inspector.) The point is that Poplar is poorer than it appears to be?

(Mr. Grant.) It shows a population against arid ground. The guardians' expenditure, Mr. Crooks, in 1905 amounted to £162,765?—Yes.

Q. And out of that—to that is put £65,481 payable to public authorities, making a total expenditure of £228,147?—Yes.

Q. I need not take you all the way through the way that money is expended. Perhaps I had better take two figures—in-maintenance in the workhouse, schools, farm colony, children's receiving homes, workhouses of other unions, amounts to £40,368?—Yes.

Q. Maintenance in hospitals, certified homes, children boarded out, £6,023, and the out-door relief, including non-resident poor, £34,382?—Yes.

Q. So that in-door relief in the workhouse costs more than out-door relief?—Yes.

Q. The other items. The next I take is salaries, rations of officers, £23,872, no other item over £20,000. The total receipts you receive from the rates is £152,908; from the grant-in-aid £19,989; from the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund £40,830; contributions from relatives £1,677, and the balance made up by small items, making a total of £227,455?—Yes.

Q. Total of all the guardians' debt at the end of the year £182,710?—Yes.

Q. The amount of the guardians' call on the local rates £152,908, equal to 3s. 9d. in the £ on the assessable value of the union. Out of which the sum due to other public bodies represents a rate of 1s. 7d. in the £, leaving 2s. 2d. of the rate for which the guardians were responsible out of the average total rates of 10s. 10½d. in the £?—Shall I read the other?

Q. Wait a moment. Is that the statistics?—I have the statistical report. This is our own return: "In considering the burden of local rates, it is undesirable to take the figures for a single year. An important return which has been prepared by the statistical officer of the London County Council, shewing the comparative position of the metropolitan boroughs and Poor Law areas in respect of rating for county and local purposes, based on the averages for the four years ended 31st March, 1905, sets out very clearly the inequalities of local burdens. This return shows that the total rates range from 9s. 8d. in Poplar to 6s. 4d. in the City of London, the average being 7s. 0½d., and the guardians'

"rates range from 2s. 6d. in Poplar to 2s. 8d. in Westminster, the average being 9d. The produce of a penny rate ranges from £819 in St. George's-in-the-East to £19,928 in the city of London, Poplar being £3,033. The rate of in-door and out-door pauperism to population, based on the mean number of paupers on 1st January and 1st July ranges as follows: In-door, from 52 per 10,000 in Hampstead to 704 per 10,000 in the Strand Union, average 153. Poplar, 200. Out-door, from 8 in Whitechapel to 272 in Bermondsey per 10,000, average 95. Poplar 233. It is pointed out that if the ratio of pauperism were the same in each area and the expenditure were the same in proportion, the guardians' rate must still necessarily differ inversely as the assessable value per head. The return further shows that if the assessable value of Poplar instead of being £4.8 were the same as the average for the whole county the local rates would have been 2s. 6d. in the £, instead of 4s. 7d. If the assessable value per head were the same as that of the Strand Union the rate would be 4d., Marylebone 1s. 8d., and Kensington 1s. 9d." The point of that is to show that the burden of pauperism in London at the present time is not equally distributed?—Certainly not.

Q. Has their salvation been the poorest districts?—Yes.

Q. While the rich districts escaped from the fact that they sent their poor down to the poor districts to seek work?—Well, the poor naturally come where there is a chance of getting a meal.

Q. You go on: "On the other hand Marylebone's local rates are 2s. in the £ on the assessable value of £13.3 per head of the population, but if the assessable value were the same as the county average the rate would be 3s., and if the same as Poplar, 5s. 6d. In the same way if Poplar's assessable value per head were applied to other unions the local rates would range from 2s. 6d. in Bethnal Green, Deptford, Charlton, and Stoke Newington, to £3 7s. 1d. in the city of London."

(The Inspector.) Are these taken from the county council returns?—Yes, I put the whole in and you can see how it works out. The argument is our 12s. rate means an appalling sum, and as a matter of fact if we had Marylebone's assessment to-day we could do all our work in Poplar we are doing, luxuries included, enormous out-door relief, for 6s. 4d. or 2s. cheaper than they can. And the same way if applied to other unions. That is to say, if it had to raise 6d. on the Poplar assessment their contribution would be £3 7s. in the £ instead of £12.

(Mr. Robb.) I do not know whether statements are to be handed to me as I handed them to the other side. It is impossible to follow all these figures even at this rate?—This return has been on sale now for nearly a year.

Q. I am not dealing with this alone, but when Mr. Brodbank gave evidence I handed in a copy of every statement which was given in evidence?—It was taken from our returns.

(Mr. Robb.) I think you will appreciate, I cannot follow all these figures given at this rate.

(The Inspector.) Is that the statement?—Yes. As a matter of fact I saw nothing absolutely new in Mr. Brodbank's return. We have had them for years.

(Mr. Grant.) Just give Mr. Robb a return. Give him the reference of this statistical return you are quoting from?—It is the statistical return of comparative rating in London. Report by the statistical officer to an order of the local government committee on a resolution of the council, passed April 18th, 1905, "That it be referred to the local government, records and museums committee, to report upon the comparative position of the Metropolitan boroughs and poor law areas in respect of rating for county and local purposes."

Q. Just give me the number of it?—It is numbered 886 and the price is 3d.

Q. I have got one here, now. Mr. Lough has got it?—A comparison of the boroughs of Poplar and Kensington in which the area and population are about equal discloses the fact that if the estimated expenditure for the year 1904-5 of the county and local authorities chargeable on the Borough of Kensington (with 914 less in-door poor and 3,178 less out-door paupers) exclusive of contribution of the Common Poor Fund and equalisation funds, had been chargeable in the Borough of Poplar, the rate would have been 13s. 10d. in the £ instead of their actual 6s. 6d. While conversely if the Poplar expenditure had

been charged on Kensington (with Poplar's higher pauperism as stated) the rate in Kensington would only have amounted to 4s. 1d. in the £ instead of 11s. 6d." If it would interest you—

Q. I want you to go on. "As a further illustration of the inequality of London rating, and to show how far the alleged extravagant expenditure of the Poplar Guardians is responsible for the high rate of 12s. in the £, it may be pointed out that if the estimated expenditure on the relief of the in-door and out-door poor had been reduced by one-half, the effect on the rates would have been a reduction of 1s. 6d. If the whole of the expenditure on out-door relief was eliminated with any concurrent increase in the cost of in-maintenance, the reduction in the rate would have amounted to 10d. Finally, if there had been no expenditure whatever by the guardians for the whole year, the amount paid to the other public services would still have been 8s. 6d. in the £, or 1s. 5d. above the average for London, including poor-law expenditure, and 2s. 1d. more than Kensington?—That is to say, if we killed all the paupers in and out and had no one left, the rate would be 1s. 5d. above the average of the whole of London in spite of the luxury."

Q. We are coming to a new point, sir. I see in the statistics you just mentioned, under Equalisation of Rates Act, Poplar receives a grant from the rest of London, does not it?—Yes.

Q. But the proportion on which that grant is based was fixed some years ago?—Well, it is particularly hard the way it works out in. The old system was 5d., and it works out in a very peculiar manner. The Metropolitan Common Poor Fund gave you 5d. a day.

(The Inspector.) The London County Council?—On the certified number of adults in the workhouse; that is to say, I think we are certified for something like 1,300 odd; for every person over the certified number we get nothing, and we are subject to a deduction for children. I do not object to the deduction. I do not want to keep children in the workhouse, as it encourages the children. To get the children out you ought to do it. It works both ways, and the ratepayers do not realise the difficulty with the application of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund. We have 70 children, I am told this morning, in the workhouse because of an outbreak of scarlet fever. We cannot get rid of it. On each of these 70 we shall be deducted 5d. out of our 1,315. So on the surface it looks as though we get a good deal more than we really do, but the London County Council contribution is exceedingly unfair, because it is based upon an average number of paupers—average number of inmates previous to 1888—the average attained 18 years ago. So we now get £10,530. If that was brought up-to-date on the average of five years previous to March, 1905, we should get £15,458.

(Mr. Grant.) Almost exactly £5,000 more?—Near enough.

(The Inspector.) The whisky money?—Of course, in the other case, the whisky money was very largely, and was intended to be, used for technical education.

(Mr. Grant.) On that point we had a good deal of evidence about salmon and other things supplied to Mr. Madeley. Have you any knowledge at all of anything being supplied to the officers except the rations which they are allowed by the rules of the Local Government Board?—As far as I remember, I know of no luxuries charged for outside the ordinary diet allowed for officers by the Local Government Board.

Q. Except these?—That is so.

Q. Just a moment. I think the officials are allowed to substitute sometimes one ration for another?—That is all.

Q. When allowed meat they substitute poultry once a fortnight?—Yes.

Q. Substitute rabbits or fish?—Yes.

Q. In the year ended Lady-day, 1906, I find from the tables the allowance of meat for officers according to the dietary table was 22,339 lbs. for the whole of the officers, and the amount consumed 15,367½ lbs. Poultry in lieu of meat once a fortnight, 1,349½ lbs. Rabbits in lieu of meat 701 lbs. Fish in lieu of meat 1,998 lbs.; making a total of meat consumed 19,415½ lbs. So that the officers did not consume in that year 2,923½ lbs. of meat which they were entitled to?—No. A little incident happened last week.

Mr. Crooks,
23 July.

Q. Finish the incident later. Then the price of meat. The contract price of mutton was 8s. 11d., of beef 7s. 6d., which works out on an average at 8s. 2d. a stone. Taking 2,923½ lbs. at about 8s. 2d. a stone of 14 lbs., the saving is £85 0s. 10½d. ?—That is so.

Q. These are the figures taken out by Mr. Lough ?—Last week I went to the house, and to my blank amazement—this may interest Mr. Robb—I saw salmon steaks, and naturally after all the evidence I was very much shocked to find it was possible to get salmon in the workhouse at all and I wanted to know how it got there. We went into it rather minutely, only to discover that one of the officers, or rather two of the officers, had decided to exchange their meat for one of these pieces of salmon and of course it was changed. They wanted to know whether I objected. I said no, I did not, but there was an inquiry going on, that was all.

Q. Now, Mr. Crooks, I want just to correct a date ?—Yes, I have seen it.

Q. Your first election was not in November, 1892, as I gave it, but March, 1893 ?—Yes.

Q. There was a general election of guardians in December, 1894 ?—That is right.

Q. Now, a great point is made against you, Mr. Crooks, that there has been an increase of cost in in-maintenance in the workhouse ?—Yes.

Q. In 1895 was the cost of in-maintenance 4s. 4½d. per head per week ?—Yes.

Q. These were figures got out by the then ratepayers' association, dated 28th February, 1896 ?—Yes. It may be interesting to have this little return. You will find the names almost identical.

Q. The ratepayers' association of 1896 is also the municipal alliance of 1905 ?—Very largely.

(Mr. Robb.) No.

(Mr. Grant.) Give us two or three names ?—Pickford & Co., Moreton & Co., Banks & Bros., Carver & Sons, Cutter & Sons, Bullivant & Co., Stuart & Co., Stead & Stead, T. T. & C. Berry, W. R. Johnson, Hawkins & Tipson. I miss the founder's name, Adin Sheffield, an old guardian.

Q. Now, according to their return the cost of maintenance was 4s. 4½d.; your present cost 6s. 5½d. Are you exceptional in that, or has the cost of maintenance in every institution gone up ?—As far as I have been able to examine, that is so.

Q. The Metropolitan Asylums Board. What is the increase of in-maintenance in the asylums ?—The asylums increase was 2s. per head per week. It is difficult of course to compare like with like, but I think institution life is much the same. That is to say, the average weekly cost of maintenance of patients chargeable to the various counties respectively at 31st March, 1891, to 31st March, 1904, which are the only figures I have at my disposal at the moment—other figures I will read in a second or two—show that in 1891—

(Mr. Robb.) Do you mean 1891 or 1901 ?—I mean 1891, the cost of maintenance was 9s. 2½d. for London and went up to 11s. 6½d., or an increase of 2s. 4d. and a seventh.

(Mr. Grant.) Now Kent ?—In Kent the increase has been 3s. 10d.

Q. Lancashire ?—11½d.

Q. Middlesex ?

(Mr. Robb.) That is not quite right—2s. 4½d.—9s. 2½d.

(Mr. Grant.) 9s. 2½d. taken from 11s. 6d., and some fraction gives you 2s. 4d. and a fraction.

(Mr. Robb.) No.

(Mr. Grant.) 2s. 4d. is good enough for my purpose.

(Mr. Robb.) Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) In Middlesex it is 2s. 6d. ?—2s. 6½d.

Q. Surrey 2s. 9d. ?—Yes.

Q. Yorkshire 1s. 2d. ?—Yes.

Q. In the same years in Poplar it has risen from 3s. 6d. to 5s. 11d. ?—Yes.

Q. Increase 2s. 5d. ?—Yes.

Q. The average cost of maintenance per head in the counties shown, including London, shows an increase of 2s. 3d. ?—Yes.

Q. In London it has increased by 2s. 4d. ?—Yes.

Q. In lunatic asylums where one would imagine there would be a dead level of cost the increase from 1900 to 1904—five years—is 1s. 7d. ?—Yes.

Q. Fourteen years ago nearly every commodity was cheaper than it is now ?—Yes.

Q. Taking the contract price on the asylum rates, the lunatic asylums of London ?—Yes, on the London County Council.

Q. In 1891 English beef and frozen mutton and frozen beef were 6s. 9d. and 7s. 7d. respectively ?—Yes.

Q. And in 1905 English beef was 8s. 3d. and frozen beef and mutton 7s. 9d. ?—Yes.

Q. Showing an increase of 1s. 6d. in English beef and 2d. in frozen meat ?—Yes.

Q. Tea in 1891 was 10d. ?—Foreign meat is entirely done away with in all institutions except the schools.

Q. Tea in 1891 was 10d., and in 1905 1s. 1½d. ?—Yes.

Q. Sugar 13s., and in 1905 17s. 2d. ?—Yes.

Q. Margarine, even, has gone up 10s. 6d. per hundred-weight ?—Yes.

Q. You will hand in, I think, a memorandum giving details of the increase of cost of provisions from the L.C.C. ?—It was published in last week's agenda, and is in the agenda also for to-morrow. I have cut it out.

Q. I have not seen that yet. May I just look at it. Perhaps, Mr. Crooks, you will just hand it to Mr. Davy. I want to get it a little more fully than that. Mr. Crooks, I propose to put in a memorandum giving fuller details for the benefit of the Local Government Board in regard to this increase in cost ?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) I hope we shall have copies of this. We have not got it at present ?—There are plenty of them. They have been published for weeks and weeks.

Q. Mr. Crooks, we have handed you copies of all our statements ?—It is so good of you.

(Mr. Robb.) It is quite impossible to follow the figures given at this rate ?

(Mr. Grant.) As a matter of fact, I have not seen that page at all myself.

(Mr. Robb.) Take it, Mr. Grant. I shall see it. I should like to ascertain from you whether Mr. Crooks is speaking to difference in prices paid by the guardians or difference in market prices ?

(Mr. Grant.) I think Mr. Crooks made it clear ?—General increase in contract prices.

(The Inspector.) The finance committee called attention to the increase of cost ?—The finance committee of the London County Council called attention to the fact, and it is very striking, that 16,920 patients in the asylums from 1904 back to 1891 were costing £100,000 a year more, notwithstanding the advantages in buying from the central authority for all the institutions.

(Mr. Grant.) As a consequence that was referred to the finance committee—referred to a committee ?—To the asylums committee.

Q. I think they compared the heads of expenditure, and I see, Mr. Crooks, from this table, which is taken from the minutes of the London County Council, and the only items upon which there was a decrease were malt liquors, wines and spirits, and cocoa, and all the others are increased ?—Yes. Weekly cost of patients went up from 9s. 3s. in 1901 to 11s. 5d. in 1905.

Q. You notice provisions ?—Yes, working out there at 4s. 1d. and some fraction, which is just a little beyond the guardians' value.

Q. Provisions here work out almost exactly 4s. 2d.—4s. 1½d., you might call that 4s. 2d., and provisions have risen in these 14 years from £72,000 to £183,000, and salaries and wages have risen from £57,000 to £159,000. There is an increase in salaries and wages of nearly 7d. per week, and an increase in provisions of about 5½d. per week; but, sir, as I said, I want to put in some other figures dealing with this. I want to put a memorandum before you—of course Mr. Robb shall have a copy—showing in tabulated form the increase; I mean things of which provisions only form a part ?—Now, the average cost in other unions—where other people in London have gone up—I understand Hampstead was 3s. 5d. for provisions, 6d. for clothing, 2s. 10d. for officers, making their total maintenance 6s. 9d. in 1900, and in 1905 they

had gone up, provisions about 2½d., clothing another ½d., other necessities, 2s. 6d., nearly 2s. 7d., making a total of 6s. 8½d., against our alleged 6s. 5½d.

Q. Yes?—And although it does not show that the unions we have been able to get are quite as high, all show increase.

Q. Yes?

(Mr. Robb.) Can you tell us the number of paupers at Hampstead?—They have been given out in table form every day.

Q. You know they are very small?—Yes, what a fine job the officers must have, must not they?

Q. It affects the price per head?—Of course it does.

(Mr. Grant.) In regard to the quoted figures for the county council—they, I think, enjoy the advantage of having a central purchasing board, have not they?—Oh, of course. May I say when tenders are received, they are opened publicly so that they may be initialled so that no additional tenders may come in, and then a staff of clerks—a staff of clerks mind you—analyse the tenders, and then they are gone very carefully through and tabulated. And then there is a contract committee which sits for days and goes through the individual items, and then they are submitted to the full asylum committee for approval. I think it is a very excellent system, but you see it means a tremendous lot of detail, and in the end there is very little difference from ourselves.

Q. But the result of that system is, of course, first of all, that every contractor knows the quantity that he is contracting for. He is asked to tender for a certain quantity, and he knows also that he will be dealt with by a body, as to which any attempt to influence is out of the question?—Yes, a man tenders, and we frequently have complaints from contractors. Somebody declares our margarine is lard, or our coals are bricks, and our coal tar is not comparable to new milk. You get that every day, even the county council.

Q. But that system, Mr. Crooks, does enable the county council to buy in very large quantities, and thereby enables them to get the benefit of the best market?—Certainly.

Q. And that is the system which, I think, your board has more than once pressed upon the Local Government Board as the system they might adopt for the work-houses of London?—A resolution was passed immediately after the contracts of last year, that the way we were doing we were not getting justice, and the board then wrote a letter to the Local Government Board asking them to form some kind of scheme that would create a central authority for the purchasing of commodities for poor law unions in London. But you notice with regard to our tender forms that many of the smallest items are scheduled year after year.

Q. You mentioned the tender forms of other unions?—Oh, yes, of which we have got a great quantity here. We had a tremendous fuss made last time about the case of the ivory-faced, gilt-edge visiting cards. I went down to the stores, and I discovered the ordinary kind of visiting card at 1s. 9d. a hundred. Take the case of the meat, which, I think, in cross-examination lasted a considerable time, as to whether we specified for the best of everything. I hold in my hand Westminster, whose 2d. is of the same value, as we have already found out, as our 3s. 6d. They begin with meat, officers, best English or Scotch. Wether mutton, English, of the best quality, consisting of legs and shoulders, if required, legs to weigh from 9 to 11 lbs., loins weighing 7 lbs., closely trimmed for chops as may be wanted; ox-beef, English, of the best quality, consisting of buttocks and ribs in equal proportion, delivered free from bone and excess of fat; suet beef, best English or Scotch, for Christmas Day such quantity as may be required. Scotch ox-beef, consisting of buttocks and rump, &c., each weighing about 24 lbs., best English or Scotch suet as ordered, and so on. I do not find any material difference. It is so awful that we should say—I think I can remember one or two items that we certainly, with all our luxurious extravagance, never indulge in. Now, take Van Houten's cocoa, 2s. 11½d. a lb. on the Bethnal Green contract. We are asking nothing. Calves foot jelly—these are things we have not got. I know too that our best British tapioca is 6d. Theirs is 1s. 4d. I look at these pickles and there discover, while ours is 8d., theirs is 1s. 4d., and so I see little luxuries such as these, and I wonder whether we

are really deserving the name of the Hotel Cecil, which we have got.

Q. Mr. Crooks, these tender forms were used year after year. They are altered as occasion requires, and you find by comparing your forms with those of other unions that very similar forms are used there?—They are almost identical with those in operation all over London. There is very little difference indeed.

Q. And in all of them—all those you have examined, you find illustrations which may be picked out, out of hundreds of items—best pickles, for instance, which means a few bottles for the officers?—Exactly, there is nothing in it. We are talking of calves-foot jelly, which may be a bottle for somebody in the sick ward.

Q. Exactly, and so on?—I want to say on that, on the matter of tenders, it will be found by comparison with other unions that they compare favourably, and that they invariably adopt the same system as we have.

Q. I do not want to take you through it, because you have not handled tenders recently, but I am going to ask Mr. Ford to tell us the history of the last few years in dealing with each individual contract. But taking it generally, has your system of dealing with tenders on the Poplar Board been the system you have found in existence on other bodies you have been connected with, and other boards of guardians you have obtained information from?—Yes, with the exception I have already told you, that a whole staff of clerks is kept at the county council for the analysis of the—

Q. There they have got a special system?—Yes.

Q. I have got now the Bethnal Green tenders here, for grocery only, if you want to take any items from that?—There was the accepted tender. I have got the price beside our own.

Q. And here is the tender for meat?—I have got our own to compare it with.

Q. They are all there now, Mr. Crooks?—Their meat contract is best English killed and fed ox, good quality and thick flanks, and then it goes on, legs and shins, best Canadian, English killed, and English killed wether legs. Fresh killed sheep. I note, all free from shanks. The charge against us was that we had taken the shanks off and therefore could not judge.

Q. On examination of the different forms of any union of the size of Poplar you can find something, if you like?—Just think of this black currant jelly.

Q. Was that Bethnal Green?—Bethnal Green.

(Mr. Robb.) There is no sick asylum at Bethnal Green?—I could set England on fire with "Paupers and black currant jelly."

Q. Is it fair to compare a tender where there is no sick asylum with a tender where there is a sick asylum?

(Mr. Grant.) It has been suggested?—Yes, but I would like to remind Mr. Robb, in case he forgets it later on when he talks about infirmaries, that we have sick wards also.

Q. Now, Mr. Crooks, with regard to the contractors. You have always been conscious of the difficulty of dealing with contractors who all the time are trying to find out what information they can about the things guardians are likely to want?—Exactly.

Q. And as it is the contractors' business all the time to be looking out for information, and is not the guardians' business all the time to be circumventing the contractor, in the long run the contractors get the better of the guardians any way?—They do.

Q. A man who has had a contract from the guardians for a number of years, for 10 or 12 years, would get to know, merely from what he had sold to the guardians, what they were likely to want in the years to come?—Yes.

Q. And he could price his tender better than an outsider who knew nothing about it?—Yes.

Q. Put a low price on things not likely to be wanted and put a high price on where he knew large quantities would be required, and could put a high price on some things he thought were likely to be wanted that year, although they were not likely to be wanted afterwards in an ordinary year?—Quite so.

Q. And all these difficulties make up the difficulties of guardians in dealing with contractors?—Yes.

Mr. Crooks.

23 July.

Mr. Crooks.

23 July.

Q. Were you in the chair when the tenders were opened and dealt with?—I do not think I have been absent from a contract night for years.

Q. What do you say to the assertion of Mr. Diamond that there was no proper discussion of the tenders at all, and the whole thing was cut and dried?—I think poor Mr. Diamond is an unfortunate individual who walks about imagining things. How could Mr. Diamond possibly know? He was a new guardian, to begin with. He has no knowledge of the duty of a guardian in committee or out of committee, and his evidence in the box demonstrated it. The first year that this big hubbub was made, he was never present at all. He was not here. He knew absolutely nothing about the opening or accepting of tenders. But he came in a fortnight later with a schedule of figures he had got from somewhere or other and began saying we had all been got at. When we took him through this list we found that he was entirely wrong, and then he wanted to get another set of figures. I mean from the example of the last few days of figures submitted, and amended and ended and taken away, you can easily realise that even spies, well paid though they may be, are not always reliable persons to take evidence from. And it is evident to me, poor Mr. Diamond, innocent and well-intentioned though he was, was led astray. And as you yourself in cross-examination demonstrated quite clearly, whenever we had cause we went to a division, and I myself voted with him, but to allow him to claim that he alone is—

Q. The person who was protesting?—Who was professedly honest. One could only say he had arrived at the state of mind in which people are not always allowed to remain at large. Let me give you another case. This is important. The question of interference with the relieving officers has come up more than once. I only want to demonstrate this to show you whether he could be trusted. He had gone to a guardian, I think it was Mr. Deason, and threatened him with pains and penalties if he made an entry in the book of a person who was applying for relief—

Q. You said a guardian. You mean a relieving officer?—I mean relieving officer, he threatened.

Q. Diamond threatened an officer?—With penalties if he made an entry of an applicant for relief.

(Mr. Robb.) How does Mr. Crooks know this. Why did not we have this from Mr. Deason?—Do you want it?

Q. Yes, I do?—All right, you can have it.

Q. I mean if this Mr. Deason?—Why is Mr. Robb interrupting my examination?

(The Inspector.) I think he is complaining that Mr. Crooks is giving hearsay evidence?—I can make it quite clear. At our board meeting, not the last but the one before, Mr. Diamond brought this case before the board, and said the guardians had insisted on the entry being made by the relieving officer while he himself had warned the man not to make such entry. I thought it right to say to Mr. Diamond that it was the duty of the relieving officer to make any and every entry of every applicant, and he himself was preventing the man following out the law. Never mind about the relief to be given. It was another thing altogether, but the entry must be made by the relieving officer. Of course, he said he was sorry. I am only saying this to show how much more he will know later on than he knows now. As a matter of fact, we always spent four hard hours over our tenders every contract night. We go through them, and a member perhaps will challenge an item or a dozen items, and he is always answered properly and civilly. I look after that, and I have always said to any member "Please do not allow any of these tenders to go through if you have questions to ask."

(Mr. Grant.) It was said again by Mr. Diamond that he was convinced the whole thing was settled beforehand, cut and dried at a hole-and-corner meeting?—I do assure you, sir, that I have never known a single instance of guardians meeting together to discuss certain persons' tenders. How could they know who is in? They are taken out of a box, which could be produced. It is here. The large box is locked up, and persons delivering tenders put them in. It is opened in this room, and the tenders taken out and laid along the table for me to initial before we know anything about them. How can there be any hole-and-corner meeting to give people jobs? And how can he, of all people, be able to tell that?

Q. He only suspects it?—Are we to be convicted on suspicion of an irresponsible man?

Q. I am going to give you the dates of the actual letters written to the Local Government Board about the contracts, but I have not got them at this particular moment?—Some are here.

Q. Do not trouble about them, Mr. Crooks, because Mr. Lansbury has got them in his book. He has got these particular dates, so I will not trouble Mr. Crooks about them. Now I want to go to the dietary. You have told us there have been considerable improvements in the diet since you have been on the board. I believe altogether three changes have been made. Have all those involving increased expense to the guardians all been carried out with the consent of the Local Government Board?—In every instance. On the last dietary Order—it is a little bit interesting—the last dietary Order was made after the Departmental Committee, and Poplar was set as a maximum, if I may put it that way, the result was that after the Departmental Committee decided as to what was to be the dietary it left optional many things; that is to say, the doctor had a variety, of which he could order three or four, and these were postponed from time to time in the unions of the kingdom, not because they could not get the articles, although there was considerable opposition to the improved dietary, by a deputation to the Local Government Board—Mr. Long, who was then President, asked the poor law unions deputation at which I was present, he said: "Gentlemen, do I understand you do not desire to feed your people properly?" And when it was put to them in that way they immediately changed their ground and said, "Oh, it is a difficulty in book-keeping." So the end of it was that the Order, this present dietary that we are working under, came into operation, book-keeping or no book-keeping. Poplar had to go back. That is to say, our dietary was a little worse than the accepted dietary. Since which, when it was pointed out the old folks, who had been used to a cup of tea in the afternoon, were now not getting it, they made one of those wonderful Orders which no man can understand, that they were to have dry tea and dry sugar. Where they were going to get the water from without boiling it was, as a matter of course, left entirely—

Q. At the discretion of the guardians?—Not to our discretion, to our imaginative faculties: perhaps it was thought they could turn on the electric light, or something of that sort.

Q. Did one Order of the Local Government Board instruct you to give tea, cocoa, coffee with milk, to the infirm, in addition to the ordinary diet?—That was so.

Q. And again in June, 1904, in an amended dietary scale, they substituted roast beef for barley soup?—Yes.

Q. And did the additional cost of that, as compared to that dietary of 1901, mean an annual charge of £1,239 at Poplar?—That extra Order we got to deal with these particular people cost us £1,239 a year.

Q. To carry out. Now let me come to the question of out-relief. First of all, there is a return of Mr. Broadbank's which he put in?—Will you go back to the dietary for a second?

Q. Yes?—This Circular, signed by Sir Samuel Provis, enlarges upon the necessity of treating our old people better than they had been treated up till then, and in Article 7 the very last words are—that with regard to the inmates of this class the provision in the Orders relating to the supply of tobacco, dry tea, and sugar should be made compulsory. That is to say, we should give it whether we like it or not.

Q. Now you have mentioned that, may I just take from you the purport of this consumption of tobacco and snuff. Did the Local Government Board by general Order, when Sir Henry Fowler was there, on the 3rd November, 1892, make an order that tobacco or snuff may be allowed such inmates of the workhouse, not able-bodied, or employed upon work of a specially disagreeable character, as the guardians might consider should be supplied, and the quantity to be allowed each case, or any class of cases, be such as the guardians might by resolution prescribe?—Yes.

Q. And did your board on the 3rd May, 1893, on the motion of Mr. Lansbury, seconded by Mr. Kay, resolve that one ounce of tobacco or half an ounce of snuff be allowed weekly each inmate of the workhouse over 60 years of age for his or her consumption. Those are the persons not able-bodied. Now the minutes of the board of guardians for the 15th November, 1905:

extract of the report of the workhouse visiting committee, that the inmates be provided with the following special fare for Christmas Day: dinner (I have taken out pudding), one ounce of tobacco, and the minute is signed by Mr. McCarthy, chairman. Moved by Mr. McCarthy that the report now read be received. Resolved that recommendations (a) to (i) be adopted. Recommendations (a) to (i) include the ounce of tobacco on Christmas Day. You find resolutions for the allowance of the tobacco to men in the workhouse on Christmas Day, similar to this one in November, 1905, have been passed for upwards of 30 years?—Yes.

Q. As to tobacco, is there an average of 825 ounces issued weekly during the year ended Lady-day 1906? To men over 60, 760 oz., to men under 60 for labour 65, making a total of 825?—I believe that is so.

Q. I find that in the year ended March 31st, there were able-bodied men in the workhouse, 270 under 60, and there were sick and infirm 57, so that the grant of 65 ounces to men under 60 for labour comes to this: That only 65 men out of 327 get any tobacco at all. Now as to snuff. There was an average of 232 half-ounces of snuff issued during the year ended Lady-day, 1906, and if the whole of the women under 60 had claimed under the order of the board the number of half-ounces would be 350 in the week. Then as to the amount of tobacco and snuff issued weekly up to Lady-day 1905 and 1906, together with the number of men and women chargeable. I take July 14—719 men chargeable over 60, 230 men chargeable under 60, making 949, and there were 748 half-ounces of tobacco issued. There were 320 women over 60, and 135 women under 60, and 111 half-ounces of snuff issued. So in neither case was the full quantity issued, and the total for the year was 43,710 ounces of tobacco and 6,018 of snuff?—Yes.

Q. At the time I take, July 14, there were a little over 1,400 persons in the workhouse weekly. Now I want to deal with the out-relief, with this figure of Mr. Broodbank. Have you got the appendix before you—page 15?—No, I have not got it. (*Document handed to witness.*)

Q. I have got the minutes here before me, 7th February, 1906. In the third and fourth weeks of the Lady-day quarter, if you look at the appendix, 12th July, 1906, page 15, which Mr. Broodbank said he compiled from the Poplar Board of Guardians' minutes, you will find this:—That he has set out, first of all, "distributors' stores" account, kind (food, &c.), and in the second column, "relieving officers' account, money." And what he has done if you take—you see in the third week there is a charge there for kind, £247 2s. 11d. There is one in the last column, £836 16s. 3d., as representing money. But you will see from the minutes, which I will hand to you, that the blunder Mr. Broodbank has made is that he has added £247 2s. 11d. in kind into the columns of money, and also—?—Do not be too hard on him.

Q. And he has also taken—there is also an item, £3 18s. for milk, which is really kind, and the fact of it is his accounts have this fact, that apparently we spent in that week over a thousand pounds, when, as a matter of fact, the total we spent in relief was £837. But, practically, what he has done is he has taken the item of £247 and added it in twice, and he has done it all through the account. The whole of that is the same blunder right through.

(*Mr. Robb.*) What is the date of the minutes?

(*Mr. Grant.*) 7th February, 1906. That is what Mr. Broodbank has done.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Let us have it on the 7th of February.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I am going to read it. 7th February, page 496. He has first of all taken out the following sums from the out-relief stores' account representing the value of stores distributed and waste—£247 2s. 11d. That £247 2s. 11d. he has taken out in the third week. The next item on the minutes, it also appears mostly to have been supplied to the out-door poor, is £3 18s. He has left out that £3 18s. altogether. Of course, the £247 ought to have been added to the £3 18s. milk because that is kind, and this year the committee examined the relief accounts, from which it appeared the following sum was expended in relieving persons chargeable to the union—£836 16s. 3d., which comprised £247 2s. 11d. for kind and the £3 18s. for milk and the money relief. He has fallen into the error of imagining the £836 is money alone, and he has put it down as money alone.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Now if you look at the minute, would you say that any person could have taken it otherwise, seeing each of the two figures is totalled similarly?

(*Mr. Grant.*) He has not taken each of the figures.

(*Mr. Robb.*) They are given as entirely separate figures. If there is any blunder—that is compiled out of the guardians' own figures?—And lack of knowledge on the part of Mr. Broodbank.

(*Mr. Robb.*) There is nothing to show that the figures are totalled at the end. Each item is given as a separate figure and the totals of each are added together by themselves.

(*The Inspector.*) They do not come in the actual money paid?

(*Mr. Grant.*) No, sir, they do not, but they say "the following sums expended in the past two weeks?"—The book-keeping is strictly in accordance with the Local Government Board Orders as to book-keeping.

Q. Not only that, but the ordinary clerk without any knowledge of workhouse accounts, just the average 25s. a week clerk, taking that page would have said the stores distributed are £247 2s. 11d., milk supplied is £3 18s., and would have added these two together making £251, and the amount distributed £836 16s. 3d.?

(*Mr. Robb.*) Do you say it is money on the minutes. "The following sums have been expended," and then 836, simply figures, is given as the total?—Every person who gets out-door relief in kind is entered as being relieved to the extent of 2s. 9d., 3s. 10d., 4s. 6d., or whatever it is, in value and not in kind at all. Anyone who had the slightest knowledge of the poor law must—

(*Mr. Grant.*) We are not complaining of it, Mr. Crooks.

(*Mr. Robb.*) If it was intended to total them, why were they put in here as separate totals, and why were they stated as sums paid. If there is any blunder, it is the guardians' blunder.

(*The Inspector.*) In Form A the amount is in money and not in kind.

(*Mr. Lough.*) In money and kind separately.

(*The Inspector.*) Where did you get that form from?

(*Mr. Lough.*) From the "Exemplification of the General Order for Accounts."

(*Mr. Robb.*) It is rather hard to accuse Mr. Broodbank of a blunder arising out of the guardians' own minutes, and Mr. Broodbank has only taken out the guardians' own totals.

(*Mr. Grant.*) If he had taken out the whole of the minutes he would—

(*The Inspector.*) The whole matter would have been simple if the words "in kind" were inserted?—But we are not to answer these fictitious figures.

(*Mr. Robb.*) They are your own figures?—Our figures: all right, it is your want of knowledge.

(*Mr. Grant.*) If Mr. Broodbank had taken the accounts instead of taking the minutes, he would have found them all set out.

(*Mr. Robb.*) It is all very well to say that. Mr. Broodbank had no other source of information but the minutes.

(*Mr. Grant.*) On the contrary—

(*Mr. Robb.*) He went to the office and asked to see the books, and was refused, and now he is taunted with having taken out the guardians' own totals, which are apparently wrong.

(*Mr. Broodbank.*) If Mr. Grant will refer to the analysis of the figures, he will find the figures put out in full.

(*Mr. Grant.*) It is said we refused the accounts. When we look at 1904, the Poplar Municipal Alliance asked for our accounts for the year, and we sent them to them, and they asked for our accounts for five years, and we sent them, too. And in the face of this, Mr. Broodbank says we refused access to every document.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Mr. Lough said the book to be consulted was the union ledger.

(*Mr. Grant.*) The annual accounts show it.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Mr. Broodbank asked to see the union ledger and was refused. Will you show me where in the annual accounts this information could have been obtained?

(*Mr. Grant.*) Not these individual items.

(*Mr. Robb.*) We are dealing with these individual items.

Mr. Crooks.

23 July.

Mr. Crooks.

23 July.

(Mr. Grant.) Because you make a blunder you come here.

(Mr. Robb.) Will you show me where in the annual accounts you give this information?

(Mr. Grant.) That is not the point. What we had better do is to cancel that page of the appendix?—Keep it, it will be a monument of his blunder.

Q. We will put in a correct page; that will be the best way. Now, Mr. Crooks, let us get on to the next point?—Please do.

Q. In regard to the out-relief, I think you have had a larger experience than the Poplar Municipal Alliance in dealing with problems of out-door relief at Poplar?—I think so.

Q. Did you first come in contact with it in the years 1893-4?—Yes.

Q. And do you remember very well indeed the bad winter you had at that time?—I do.

Q. I think on that occasion the guardians were largely helped in dealing with distress in the district by private philanthropy?—Yes.

Q. Mr. Hills, of the Thames Ironworks, Limited, was keen to help men out of employment, and offered you £1,000 if you would find another £1,000 for work?—What happened in 1893-4 was this: Things were gradually getting bad, as I have said to you before. I can remember quite plainly every depression we had gone through in the house since 1866: in 1866 when the condition of trade was appallingly bad, in the first year of my apprenticeship, and one remembers the charges of lack of discrimination in the distribution of relief and the control of the unemployed. I saw on the spot where the receiving wards now stand in the union hundreds of men waiting there for 3d. and a 2 lb. loaf. And when the wagon was driven down from Mr. Haddon, the baker, who was then a contractor, the men seized the van and shared the bread out between them, tearing one another almost to pieces as they were the bread and devouring it. That is my first experience of distress in the land. In 1892-3 the Rector of Poplar called a committee together—during the 1893-4 winter, and a good deal was done in the way of organisation to deal with the unemployed.

Q. You were a member of that committee?—Oh yes, indeed. The story is a very simple one. I had just come rather prominently into public life, and he called all the denominations of the various creeds in Poplar together, and in a room in the rectory unfolded his scheme, that they were the people who ought to be doing something for the distressed poor. And I looked round the room, and seeing everyone a parson, rather satirically remarked: "What does this lot expect to do?" He said, "Well, we do not know." "Well," I said, "You will never do anything with gentlemen like these: what you have got to do is to get hold of the trades union secretaries, or the secretary of a temperance society, or the secretary of a friendly society, and ask him to come in and help you, and he will be able to discriminate between the waster and the deserving man." And that was the creation of that committee.

Q. Dr. Chandler, after your advice, added to his committee a number of representative men from the working classes?—That is so, and they then investigated in an extraordinary fashion from week to week.

Q. Let us have a little more about that committee. Did they have funds which they used in relieving distress?—Yes, and it was contributed to very largely by good people. I think the Bishop of London's fund which sifted through Canon Scott Holland, amounted to something like to £50 a week.

Q. Altogether that committee handled something like £5,000?—I cannot say that winter, but the next winter, when Mr. Hills started one or two schemes.

Q. Before you come to that. In that committee, which we will call Dr. Chandler's committee, to identify it, the Charity Organisation Society lent you a secretary, and every one of the members of the committee became personal investigators into the distress cases?—Yes.

Q. Were you holding meetings every day of the week?—Frequently; but when it quieted down we held them Tuesday and Friday, and many and ludicrous were the incidents. Let me give you one. The then vicar of St. John's, Millwall, or Cubitt Town, came round, and cases used to go round the table like the sun. The rector took the chair, and wherever you sat you brought up your

case, and then, perhaps, the person would have so much in kind or money, or there would be a recommendation for three days a week, and it turned out many times that the vicar himself had been deceived. One of the members of the committee knew the person was a fraud, and the vicar of St. John's twice or three times during one evening brought up a case in respect of which the remark was made: "He is a wrong 'un. Where did you get him from?" Then he said: "Now here is a man who was out of work so long; wife and so many children; really a most deserving case. I therefore move he has the scale," which would bring out from another speaker, "Well, I have known him ten years, and I have never known him to do anything. You had better put him under the table." That showed the investigation was pretty keen.

Q. The committee worked through the winter, Mr. Crooks?—Yes.

Q. And, I think, your judgment on it would be that their investigations were as complete and thorough as any committee you have ever known?—I have never known a committee to equal it.

Q. It was drawn from all classes in Poplar?—All classes in Poplar.

Q. All worked together cordially, and every case was investigated by everybody on the committee?—Yes.

Q. Next winter was a worse one, I think?—That was the winter of 1894?

Q. Of the great frost?—No, that was following. You see we worked in 1893-4. Mr. Hills started several schemes at West Ham, and then he sent a note to me and asked me to visit him, and I did with our then assistant clerk, and he enlarged upon this particular scheme. He was willing to pay half, and asked if it could be taken up. I said, "You see, there is danger in that, if you pay the half it will probably be the whole. To finish the job would take twice as long, and there would not be any advantage in it. You had better get something under proper control." He then placed £1,000 at our disposal conditionally that we should obtain another £1,000. I closed with the offer at once and went straight away to the then Poplar District Board and placed the proposal before them. They accepted the £1,000, and took up a lot of work of repaving by-roads, and altogether they spent something over £5,000 that winter. In the meantime the committee worked in quite its usual way as it had done the previous year, investigating every case and recommending men to the district board for employment. When we came to starving families, which we did very often, we simply fed them up until the man was able to get to work. Wherever we thought a man could work we sent him, with this result, that when a man had agreed to go to work and he failed to go to work, and returned for relief, we immediately struck him off. We said "We cannot afford to play fools with this; if you cannot turn up to work you certainly cannot be in distress. Now we are going to give you this chance; put you at the bottom of the list, and when we come to you send you again. In the meantime we cannot help you."

Q. Now, in 1894, the winter I think was a fairly open winter?—It was very open and we were very hopeful. Of course where the investigations are rigid you naturally get a good deal of discontent among people who are naturally discontented. Those who had been helped and were a good class were satisfied that some efforts had been made to keep them floating, so we said it will perhaps do no harm if we let them run, we need not start the committee again, and we did not start the committee.

Q. Then in February, 1895, the great frost set in?—Yes, that awful frost.

Q. First of all, was there no work at the docks at all?—Everything was frozen up. Men who would be at work in the winter were frozen out because nothing seaborne could get into the Thames at all. Take the district of Poplar. Take the average working man in a district like ours, who lived from hand to mouth. A sudden breakdown like this unfortunately makes it worse at once. But when this goes on for nearly six weeks men, women, and children are not only starving and hungry, but frozen as well. The one bitter remark was made by the people—"It is hard enough to be hungry, but it is worse to be freezing." A man feels the pinch of hunger more in the cold weather than he does in the warm weather. Take one result. We had cleaned ourselves out of home, and on a

Mr. Crooks.
23 July.

particular Saturday morning I met a man who is a decent hard-working man, but who at this moment was doing all he could to hold his head up. He said he had not had a mouthful since the previous Thursday, and had five little children at home, with not a thing to put on. His wife had sold them for food. We were shocked, and we went and made up a packet of cocoa and bread, and took it away and gave it to this poor man. Who can say that this was charity wasted? The *Evening News* raised funds. Soup kitchens were opened, and food given away freely. We worked hard at it, and it is only right to say that but for the help given by the *Evening News* and the public generally, we should have had much more distress. As I have often said since: "I hope never to live long enough to see that relief repeated."

Q. Coming to the Poor Law?—The stone yards were opened.

Q. That was under the Poor Law, in 1895?—Stone yards were opened.

Q. And you at that time were on the board of guardians?—Yes.

Q. Were you in favour of opening the stone yards?—I was not.

Q. Why were you opposed to it?—I was opposed to it for the same reason that I object to a decent man coming into the workhouse, if he can be maintained outside. Stone yards were thrown open. The lack of discrimination was even more accentuated in that case than can be levelled at us during the past three years. Every one who applied for relief had the workhouse test or a work test put in operation, and they were sent to the stone yard, with the result that some of them could not break a pint of stones a day. Usually I went round to them once a day and found a few very decent men who felt their position very keenly. On the other hand you had men who did not want. I took a census at one stone yard, and I regret since this Inquiry opened I did not keep it. I burned it at Whitsuntide. It panned out like this. A young man, 19 years old, had never done any work. "Why are you here?" "I am entitled to be here as well as anyone else." Fancy that kind of thing. The experience cost us a few thousand pounds, for the cost of breaking stones, as compared with the trade union rate of wages of half a crown, was £3 2s. 6d. per yard, to say nothing of the moral degradation of it all. I believe I could produce half a dozen men who went without food rather than that they should lower themselves to go into the stone yard. Many brave men went in, and many brave men stopped outside of it.

Q. Half a minute, Mr. Crooks. Ultimately that stone yard was closed up?—Ultimately it was closed down.

Q. What was the result. Was there something like a riot?—Things were uncomfortable to say the least of it.

(The Inspector.) What time of the year was it closed up?—We closed it down about the first week of April and this place was besieged. They told me after that I went in danger of my life, but having regard to what I had gone through that did not matter much.

Q. And your experience, Mr. Crooks, of the stone yard tried in a time of special depression is that you never want to see a stone yard open again?—No, and as far as my voice and vote goes there will not be another opened as a test for working men.

Q. We come next, Mr. Crooks, to the winter of 1904-5. Your relieving officers have told us that it was only comparable with the hard winter when the frost was, in 1895. Some said it was as bad and others said it was not quite as bad. At any rate will you tell me this. For four or five years past has the position in Poplar been steadily getting worse amongst the unemployed labourer here?—Yes, I think it has. It is very difficult to say because there are two sides to that. I want to make the case of the worker perfectly clear. The poor of this district are very poor. Possibly they may be ashamed of their poverty. But they have not been compelled to look on it as a crime. I suppose, generally speaking, love of home and love of cleanliness is as keen amongst our unemployed people as amongst the well-to-do people. I am proud of the poor of Poplar, because of their manliness and womanliness. Generally, they are keen good people who are not ignorant of their position.

(Mr. Grant.) They are people who because of the conditions of life in Poplar never have had a chance of getting above their conditions?—That is so, and they feel it. Of course one can go on for hours showing the

character of these people. Let me give you an instance. I am not going to use platitudes, but I am going to show you that amongst the humblest of our people in one of the poorest of our courts, now happily demolished, I took a professor of economy, who said it would be cheaper if the country would take the whole of these people away and feed them up and clean them and let them grow up healthy men and women than leave them as they were. I was obliged at that moment, it is not necessary to give names, to call attention to three houses in the Triangle. I said "That woman on Tuesday last rushed down to me and said 'Mr. Crooks, will you drop something in that woman's lap in the corner, will you?'" "I saw her crying and said 'What is the matter with you?'" "She ain't been living here long. Her husband is out of work, and she sent four little kids to school this morning. I do not want to say she is hungry, but we only had one loaf between us all and cut it up into slices among all the children. She is crying because they will be out of school presently and she will not know what to say to them. They are not like our kids, for we had to tell them to wait till their father comes home." Here was a woman in the poorest part of the East End, being brave enough to cut up a loaf of bread between her own and other children never knowing when the next loaf would come. And then we are asked to look at these people as degraded by their association with us. I am proud of them myself.

Q. Now, about the winter of 1904. Was that a winter as bad as that of 1895?—I think it was, and certainly one far more difficult to deal with. You see, we had no agencies at all at work. I have tried, and we have tried our best to shut down promiscuous charity. That is to say, some one would come along and leave money, and run away, and leave you with the trouble of dispensing it. I am afraid I am bringing myself too much into it. A man called at my house with £500. He said: "I am so anxious about the poor people, Mr. Crooks, and I have brought down this money for you to help the poor with." I said: "Have you? What are you going to do?" He replied: "I am going away to the south of France. I cannot bear England in the winter." I said: "Take the £500 with you. You might want it." He said: "Do you refuse it?" I said: "Absolutely. A man who will come down here and give me £500 is a coward, to say the best of it. What you ought to do is to come down here and spend it. Never mind trusting it to me. Come down and see that the proper people get it. It is not so hard to raise £500 as it is to distribute it properly amongst decent poor people, and I am not going to share with you the glory of 'your £500.' The result was, I think, that this money was taken to an adjoining parish and was spent, I got a share of it and a big share, for the poor people. I object to people coming down here with their money and not taking one atom of the responsibility of distributing it: letting the importunate get it while honest poor hides its head and is not able to show itself.

Q. In the winter did the guardians take a census in order to ascertain what was happening?—Yes.

Q. You took a census of 12 streets in each of the three parishes in the union and it showed these results—population of houses canvassed 18,463?—Yes.

Q. Number of wage earners, 6,733?—Yes.

Q. Number of unemployed, 1,624?—Yes.

Q. Percentage of unemployed to wage earners 24.12?—Yes.

Q. Number of unemployed exclusive of wage earners 2,578. That is correct?—Yes.

Q. And in consequence of that or after it, did Mr. Long promote a scheme with the view to obtaining some organisation to deal with this matter?—An appeal was made to him.

Q. And it had the support of—?—Myself, Major Evans Gordon.

Q. Of Stepney?—Yes.

Q. And Mr. Buxton?—The member for the borough of Poplar, and Sir Harry Samuel.

Of Limehouse?—Yes, Captain Cecil Norton—

Q. Yes?—And Captain Jessell—

Q. Of St. Pancras?—Yes, and Mr. Percy Thornton—

Q. Of Clapham?—I think it is so. We appealed to him that something must be done, with the result that he created a central committee.

Mr. Crooks.

23 July.

Q. Did you, as the result of that organisation, get a return of the unemployed in your district, as follows—Poplar parish, 1,918 applicants, Bromley, 1,646 applicants, and Bow, 796, so that you had a total of unemployed in this borough of 3,460 persons out of work?—Yes.

Q. These were heads of families?—Yes, all heads of families.

Q. Men who were prepared to work if they could get it?—Yes.

Q. Or returned themselves as such?—Yes.

Q. And out of this 3,460 the borough council found employment for 1,350, the central committee for 133, and the guardians at Shentfield for 21?—Yes.

Q. Leaving 1,956 who were not found employment?—Quite so.

Q. Now, as to the acuteness of this distress in the winter of 1904-5. Could there be any doubt about it whatever?—I do not think anyone questions the distress at all.

Q. It was an epidemic of distress?—Yes. It becomes acute. Naturally we are chronically poor, but it was very acute just then.

Q. And you were face to face with persons who were out of work—who wanted work?—Yes. I suppose Mr. Davy will refer to that when he is asking me questions. We have a far larger residential population of workers than we are given credit for. We send away every morning thousands of men out of the district to work. When the building trade is shut down and depression generally is abroad over London and the suburbs, we have a number of men planked down on us. Suppose the casual labourer is waiting at the docks for a day's job, the others are added to him. So that the chronic poverty becomes acute.

Q. And the consequence is that depression in trade and the depression in general actually reacts on Poplar?—And that tremendously.

Q. Yes, tremendously. Now do you say, as we have had it said here, that the policy of the Poplar board of guardians has had the effect of attracting persons from other parts of London because of the kind treatment that is given to them here?—I do not believe it.

Q. Is there any evidence to support it?—I have never heard a single word to encourage me to believe it.

Q. Repeat your answer please?—I have never heard a single word which would encourage me to believe that people were attracted to Poplar by the generous treatment of the Poplar board of guardians.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Crooks, you said so this morning. I took this note this morning. "The poor naturally come 'where there is a possibility of getting a meal.' That is the note I took this morning?—Of course, but I was talking about work then.

(Mr. Grant.) Did you take a census of people who applied to the committee for work this winter. Did you take a census for the express purpose of ascertaining whether people did come in from other districts in order to share in or take advantage of what Poplar had?—I did.

Q. And that census showed that out of the total number who applied only 38 were resident in the union for less than 12 months?—That is so.

Q. Thirty-eight. And the number of cases in which out-relief was refused or house orders given were 24, removals to other unions numbered 8, still under inquiry for settlement 5, and in one case only the settlement can be ascertained, making 38?—That is so.

Q. Yes. Now the number of persons chargeable to the union and out-door relief for the year ending 19th September, 1905, was 3,028?—Yes.

Q. Out of those the residents under one year was 27?—Yes. Under 2 years, 80; under 3 years, 112; under 4 years, 77; under 5 years, 188; under 10 years, 511; under 20 years, 774; under 30 years, 550; under 40 years, 353; under 50 years, 127; and 50 years and over, 229. So that by far the larger number of persons who applied for relief had been residents in this district more than 5 years?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) As you know, I spent a good many hours with relief committees in the preliminary investigation, and I was much struck that in no single case did applicants come up for relief who were not old residents?—Yes.

Q. On the other hand, we have had it said by Mr. Martley that the policy of the Poplar board of guardians does prevent immigration?—Yes, the answer to that is—it came up last week in the house. I pointed out that the law of settlement had a good deal to do with it. For that, of course, you cannot blame the Poplar guardians. We look for great things, Mr. Inspector.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, Mr. Crooks, in this exceptional winter was there any other remedy for what you did, except what you have told us?—I really do not know of any. Let me therefore state my case in my own words. The organised demand for relief is a very easy charge. In a district like ours where casual labour predominates, there is always a large aggregation of men at given points. Here is the fruit season for instance, in which you get a large aggregation of women waiting outside the fruit factories to be taken on for a few hours casual labour. But in the winter time you get the men who have no work to do and no use looking for it. There are no places where building works are moving or buildings to be pulled down, and there is no chance of two or three hours work to obtain a meal. Here is an aggregation of unemployed men. Being hungry they become unemployable, I do not mean starving. Nothing to eat. Nothing to go home to. They immediately begin talking and say among themselves "What are we to do?" Please remember we are not dealing with a thick-headed mob now, but with intelligent men, who whatever their crimes may be have the right to talk things over. What is the outcome? They discover, I do not know anyone can expect anything else—but here is an aggregation of men, who begin by making a demand on the local authority to start work. Failing work, food. They are asked "Where do you live?" "Poplar." "All the Poplar men this side." "All the Bow men stand here, and the Bromley men there." "You Stepney men had better go home. West Ham get out of it too." You thus get an organisation, and this so-called organisation to demand relief resolves itself into an aggregation of men quite orderly, without any need of police to protect the rate-payers of the district. They come to the borough council to ask for work. They then come on here to the board of guardians. We have been charged many times with organising the men and addressing them. I tell you that if twenty hungry men anywhere came to me and asked for my advice I should certainly give it to them. And then you get a knock at your door in the morning, and a voice says, "Will, can you give me some food to feed the children before they go to school?" "What is the use of coming to me. I cannot help you, boy." "That is what you all say." And then, "What are you guardians for? Ain't they got to help us? We have been to see the Mayor, and he says he cannot help us." "We do not want to make a row, but we must live." Sometimes they will bring the little children up pulling their father's coat, or their mother's apron strings, not knowing that an appeal was being made to feed them. I can say that for several months at a time I have never had my breakfast without having to go out and answer appeals like this. It is quite easy for a man who has studied economy to tell us what we should do under these circumstances. Let me quote an authority to help me. This is from the Right Hon. Member for West Birmingham. He quotes the Charity Organisation Society, "Mr. Loch, well known for his efforts in connection with the Charity Organisation Society, takes 'this view with the earnestness and confidence which distinguish all his utterances. He seems to believe that if 'we could only have a sufficiently deterrent administration 'of the Poor Law and would stick to it long enough 'without regard to the sentimentalists who make an outcry whenever a man or woman is starved in the streets, 'we might extinguish pauperism altogether, and the poor 'would be no longer with us. Mr. Butler, in his ingenious 'satire of Erewhon, tells us that the inhabitants of that 'extraordinary country treat all forms of illness as crimes 'calling for penal discipline, and some philosophers among 'ourselves seem to imagine that pauperism at least might 'be cured if only we could be induced to make it a capital 'offence. Mr. Loch perhaps does not go so far as this. 'But he quotes in a recent article the returns from one 'or two selected unions where out-door relief has been 'almost entirely abolished, and where the offer of the 'house appears to be the rule, to show that in these cases 'the number of paupers both over and under sixty has been 'greatly reduced. We should require, however, to know 'much more than we do of the history of these unions, 'the present conditions of their poor, the state of the

Mr. Crooks,

23 July.

"surrounding parishes, and the details of the administration before we accepted them as conclusive guides. If the specific were as certain as Mr. Loch supposes, how comes it, that in spite of his natural anxiety for economy, which is felt by every representative body of ratepayers, the example has not spread, and that this policy of stringent administration is only followed in a few isolated cases? Its success may well be due to the exceptional care and ability which have been expended by individual workers in these unions. The discretion, the firmness, and the personal attention which they have given cannot be supplied by general regulations or an official system. Excessive stringency would infallibly bring in its train scandals which would be intolerable to the public conscience, and which would lead to a dangerous reaction in the direction of laxer administration." And now, having regard to that and the number and character of people coming to the guardians. I ask in the name of common sense—what is a board of guardians to do with its awful responsibilities and its awful obligations. Guardians live amongst the poor, they are not carriage folk; they do not go to the West End and talk things over fountains of eau-de-cologne. What else can they do but try to keep body and soul together in this battle?

Q. Before you get any further on, let us deal with the point just made. Did the guardians act as they did in view of temporary necessity?—That is so.

Q. And if you broke up a man's home, and drove him into the workhouse, you were changing the man from a decent citizen into a permanent pauper?—That is so.

Q. And that is why you were feeding men in such a poor district in the winter of 1904-5?—Yes, and our action has been more than justified by those who would have joined the ranks of the unemployable but for the assistance given. Let me say that under Article 10, which has been quoted against us, and which we have been charged respecting our action, that the Local Government Board saw perfectly well the difficulty we were in. They asked that separate books might be kept for the unemployed men. We kept them, we appointed investigators to make investigations about the men, and we all imagined that our action had their approval. Certainly no objection was offered to our action.

Q. Your opinion, to be more accurate, was that you had the co-operation of the Local Government Board?—That is so.

Q. They were told of what was happening. They were asked for help. They sent down instructions to you to employ these additional visitors or investigators, and all through the winter knew what you were doing. And you were under the impression that you were acting with the sanction of the Local Government Board in dealing with the distress?—I have not the slightest hesitancy that Mr. Long did strongly approve of the action we were taking in keeping body and soul in our people. I am certain of that. They have never given us the slightest hint that we were not doing the right thing.

Q. I want you to answer this. In page 4 of Mr. Day's Memorandum occurs the statement: "The Local Government Board informed the guardians that each case must be reported separately, but the guardians reported none of them, and continued to give relief in kind to able-bodied men without work as being cases of sudden and urgent necessity"?—Yes, they were entered separately and in a separate book.

Q. But the guardians reported none of them. Is that a fact?—As far as I know they were kept in a separate book. We dealt with them by a separate committee, but whether the facts were actually taken up in strict accordance with the law as laid down in Article 10, I cannot say. But having regard to what has happened—

Q. Let me say this: If it had been pointed out to you at any time that you were not keeping some record or making some return which the Local Government Board wanted it would have been immediately prepared?—It would have been supplied the same day.

(The Inspector.) You could not. You had too many?—The very day these facts would have been sent up. They were separately entered. A separate record was kept.

Q. It would be rather—?—But quite apart from that. The Local Government Board are unfair, because they could have sent down a clerk or two, or some officials to have gone through the facts. Of course, the

point of the whole thing is that we have been reckless, and this Inquiry is as to the industrial and financial condition and the general administration of the guardians of Poplar. What I am trying to show is that our administration was good, as I have shown from the financial standpoint, and far and away more economical than that in other parts of London, and that our rates, when compared with the money some people have to play with, were marvellously economical. Of course, they will ask about the 12s. rate in Poplar, but the poor rate, as I have said, is only 4s. 7d.

(Mr. Grant.) Perhaps you had better finish first?—The unemployed came here on the meeting night of the guardians.

Q. That is the meeting we have heard so much of?—Yes. Mr. Martley spoke to them. The board adjourned from here to the waiting-room and we continued our business in the presence of the men, namely, receiving the deputation. Our answer was that whatever could be done to stem off starvation would be done. The other two meetings I have addressed, no, three I have addressed altogether, were meetings of specification and not of agitation at all. On the first occasion they turned up here in large numbers, the officers were alarmed, and they came over to my house and said "Would I come over and see the deputation?" I came over and after listening to the three leaders, I said "Well, if your case is as you say, I want each man in his division to take his side. You men who live in Bromley, will you come over to your own relieving officer in a proper manner? You will get no relief until your names have been properly taken and investigations made. You men who do not live in the division need not wait; because you cannot and will not get anything here." The other occasion was when they stormed the office on Christmas Eve and demanded double relief. I said "I am sorry whoever has led you here, whoever he is. Some person evidently has. The guardians decided to give double relief to the aged and infirm poor who were on out-door relief and chronic cases. This does not apply to those in receipt of temporary relief." Some dozen or so fellows would not leave, they said, unless we gave it to them. "Very well, then," I said, "you will stop here till you die. We have no money here, and the guardians cannot act contrary to their orders. You will get nothing. Be sensible men. If you are hungry, you will be relieved." They went away quite orderly.

Q. That was the second occasion. And they made this demand, under some misapprehension, for double Christmas relief, and they did not get it?—No, they did not. The third occasion was when I had to go to London, and I went to meet them at the Town Hall, where they were just lining up to come here. I asked them why they were going there, and they told the same story. I said: "It is quite impossible. You cannot get anything." They said they were going to have a try. I said: "I will not advise you to, because it raises false hopes." They said: "Can we send a deputation?" I said: "You may please yourselves," and the result was that two men did come, and it was explained to them that the guardians had no power to deal with them except as cases of urgent necessity from week to week. When one is charged with recklessness, I think I went to a great deal of personal sacrifice; I went in and amongst the men, and explained to them as well as I could the position, and I am bound to say, having regard to their circumstances, they always treated me in a generous manner. Men cannot always feel the same on an empty belly as on a full one. In spite of all this, we are charged with reckless extravagance.

Q. And indiscriminate wastefulness?—Yes, in looking after our poor. We received this letter from the—

"Local Government Board,

"Whitehall, S.W., 8th June, 1906.

"Sir,—

"I am directed by the Local Government Board to state that they have received from the Secretary of State for the Home Department copies of certain returns of deaths from starvation, or accelerated by privation, in the year 1905, which have been furnished by coroners having jurisdiction within the administrative County of London. A statement extracted from such returns is enclosed herewith, showing the particulars of the deaths which appear to have occurred within the Poplar Union during that year, and I am directed to request that you will be good enough to inform the Board as regards each case mentioned in such statement (1) whether any application had been made by or on behalf of the

Mr. Crooks.

23 July.

"deceased to the guardians or their officers for relief, and if so, what was the result of such application. (2) whether the case had in any other way been brought under the notice of the relieving officer, and if so, under what circumstances. (3) whether admission to the workhouse had been offered to, or further by or on behalf of, the deceased, and if so, what further steps were taken by the guardians or their officers. The Board will be glad to receive the desired information as early as possible, and also any further observations which the guardians may desire to submit.

"I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"JOHN LITHBY."

Q. How many cases were there?—There were two. The first case was Rebecca Delara, East India Dock Road, charwoman, 59 years of age, unmarried, date of inquest, 21st January. Whether receiving out-door relief at time of death, and if so what amount—no; whether admission to the workhouse was offered or refused—no; whether any, and if so, what officer of the union or parish was examined at the inquest—none; verdict, pleuro-pneumonia, accelerated by cold and exposure. Found dead in the street. There are some people too proud to come to the Poor Law. The second case is John Henry Ford, 25, Bright Street, Poplar, son of James Ford, hawker, four weeks of age; inquest, 22nd November; whether receiving out-door relief at the time of death—no; whether admission to the workhouse was offered and refused—no; whether any, and if

so, what officer of the parish or the union was examined at the inquest—none; verdict, asthenia and bronchitis, due to mother's want of food, accelerated by want of proper clothing. Found dead. This is the relieving officer's report:—The father of the child made application to me on November 17th, 1905, for food for his wife and child. He stated that they were in want through being out of employment. I visited his home the same day. So far as appearances went, I found his statement to be correct. There were three children in all—George, four years; Thomas, two years; and John, one month.

Q. And the application was on the 17th November, and the death of the child was—?—The inquest was on the 22nd. Here again 3s. 10d. was given to the man, wife, and two children, the third child of course was living on the mother. And after all that, we are charged with reckless extravagance, and yet people die from absolute want of food. It was perhaps much better for the child, but think of the sufferings and anguish of the mother.

(The Inspector.) Have you the returns for all London?—They have only given the Poplar ones.

(Mr. Grant.) It would be of great convenience to break off now. I was coming to a fresh point. It would be of great convenience to adjourn now. Mr. Crooks has been in the box all day.

(The Inspector.) We will adjourn now.

EIGHTEENTH DAY.

Tuesday, July 24th, 1906.

Mr. W. CROOKS, M.P.; recalled, and further examined.

Mr. Crooks.

24 July.

(The Inspector.) Are you ready, Mr. Grant?

(Mr. Grant.) I did not know you were ready. One or two points on the shorthand notes that I should like to dispose of before going on with the general examination-in-chief. Mr. Jacobs in his examination by Mr. Robb said: "Have you ever supplied private carriages for any of the guardians?—There have been cases that I supplied a carriage or two. I think Mr. Crooks has had one from me. Perhaps he will be surprised. (Mr. Crooks.) Have I really? (Mr. Jacobs.) When you put up for the Council at Canning Town. (Mr. Crooks.) I have never put up for Canning Town. (Mr. Jacobs.) Mr. Peckham will supply you with the date. (Mr. Lansbury.) Can we have the names? (Mr. Crooks.) He is not on his oath for thinking. (Mr. Jacobs.) You had a brougham from me. (The Inspector.) Who is Mr. Peckham? (Mr. Jacobs.) I happened to drive over, and asked how you were getting on at the election. (Mr. Peckham.) That is entirely false." Now, Mr. Crooks, is it a fact that Mr. Jacobs has supplied a carriage at any of your elections?—Never.

Q. This is untrue?—Quite untrue.

Q. Then it is stated Mr. Crooks and Mr. Lansbury were unopposed and did not want a conveyance. As a matter of fact, as far as Mr. Lansbury, it was Mr. Jungblut?—Mr. Jungblut and I were unopposed for this ward.

Q. Unopposed in this ward. That is on the shorthand notes. Now I will call your attention to some correspondence between the guardians and the Local Government Board last year in regard to outdoor relief. I expect you have this already, Mr. Davy. It is a letter from Elizabeth Jarvis to Sir William Harcourt:—"8, Rifle Street, South Bromley, Bow. Sir,—I take the liberty in writing to you to ask you if you will please intercede for me in this matter. My husband was sent to prison for four months on an assault on me, his wife, and I have applied to the board of guardians for food for the children. I have five of them; but they refused it me, and told me and my

children could go in the workhouse, but I do not want to go there. I can manage for my rent. A friend has let me have her rooms and I can pay her when my husband comes home. We have lived in Poplar 14 years, and have never applied for anything before, and my husband was never locked up or summoned in his life before. I have sold all that I can to get food with. I think it is very hard they will not give me food for the children; others can get it that I know do not deserve it. If you will please intercede in the matter for me I shall be for ever thankful to you, for my children's sake. I am, yours humbly, (Signed) Elizabeth Jarvis. To the Right Honourable Sir William Harcourt." Then on 25th May that letter seems to be passed on by Mr. L. Harcourt to the Local Government Board, and the Local Government Board on 25th May wrote to Mrs. Jarvis:—"Local Government Board, Whitehall, S.W., 25th May, 1906. Madam,—I am directed by the Local Government Board to acknowledge the receipt of your letter on the 7th instant, and to state that, subject to the regulations in force in the Poplar Union it rests with the guardians to decide in what manner relief when it is needed should be given, whether in or out of the workhouse. The Board cannot interfere with the discretion of the guardians in this respect, nor for the purpose of ordering relief in any individual case, being expressly prohibited by law from so doing. The Board, however, will send a copy of your letter to the guardians. I am, Madam, your obedient servant, (signed) J. S. Davy, Assistant Secretary. Mrs. E. Jarvis." Then on 25th May the Local Government Board sends a letter to the guardians with a copy of the letter from Mrs. Jarvis, and a copy of the Board's reply, and on the 31st May Mr. Lough replies to the Local Government Board:—"Clerk's Office, 45, Upper North Street, Poplar, E., 31st May, 1906. My Lords and Gentlemen,—I am directed by the Board of Guardians of this Union to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th instant (No. 54,331 A.), forwarding copy of a letter which the Board had received from Mrs. Elizabeth Jarvis, together with a copy of the Board's reply.

"I am to state that the application for relief made by Mrs. Jarvis has received the careful consideration of the guardians, and they are of opinion, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, that the best form of relief would be the admission of Mrs. Jarvis and her children to the workhouse. I am, my Lords and Gentlemen, your obedient servant, G. Herbert Lough, Clerk to the Guardians. The Local Government Board, Whitehall, S.W." So that in that case, Mr. Crooks, the guardians were not giving out-door relief, and were complained of for not giving out-door relief, and the Local Government Board said the matter was in their discretion, and it was simply left with them?—Yes. Of course, the sting of the letter is in the last words. It raised a hope by indicating that the "Board will send a copy of your letter to the guardians."

Q. It raised a hope in Mrs. Jarvis's mind?—Generally speaking, whenever a man has been convicted for any length of time, it has been the accepted rule that he should not have out-relief, but that the children and the wife should be taken control of in the house. That is laid down as a cardinal truth, almost. We have taken the children before now in like cases, and left the wife out.

Q. Here is another case of a man named Willis, who, in this year, wrote to Mr. Burns, President of the Local Government Board. His letter is not dated, but the next letter speaks of it as received on the 29th of May. "Sir and Gentlemen,—Pardon me in taking so great a liberty by writing to you to acquaint you of the treatment that I am receiving from the board of guardians at poplar. I am 67 years of age and out of work, and have been so for a long time, not being able to get any on account of my age, and I have been in this parish for many years and in good circumstances, but reduced through misfortune. My wife was also born in this parish, and I have three children depending upon us. I beg to say that I have had to apply for a little relief on three or four occasions, and they tell me there is no relief for me, but I must go into the house, which I have had to do each time I have been before them; for what reason that they refuse me I cannot think. I am very sorry that I should have to make this report to you, but I think that I am quite justified in writing to you and letting you know how they are treating me at my time of life and belonging to the parish. Dear Sir, I also beg to say that I made an application to them last year for a pair of boots for each of the children and a pair for my wife, to go away into the country fruit picking, and then to go to the hop gardens, which they said I could have upon showing proof that they were going, and when I did show the relieving officer, Mr. Evins, he said that there was not sufficient proof, so I could not have them, nor did I have them, as I could not show him a post card, so the poor little young had to tramp to Swanley without any, and their poor feet cut to pieces through their hesitating; so I have made another application this year with my post card and every proof that we have got from Mr. Broad, at Swanley Junction, to go down fruit picking, and now this morning they tell me that they will not give me the boots or any relief, but to go to the house, which I do not want to do, to break up my home again and to be separated from my wife and children again which is very hard at my time of life, which I do not think that you and the Local Board will allow them to crush me down in the way that they are doing, when I think that I am entitled to out-door relief, if only a few shillings to help to pay rent with what my wife can earn. I could manage instead of making me a heavier burden on the rates of the parish by taking my wife and children into the workhouse, costing three times the amount that there is not any cause to do. Dear sir, I trust that you will lay this report before the Local Government Board, and that you will do something for me in the way that I may have a little relief outside, and not to be allowed to be crushed down by these members of the Poplar board of guardians. I beg to remain, your obedient servant, (signed) James Willis, bricklayer and slater, 16, Rook Street, High Street, Poplar. To Mr. J. Burns." Then on the 12th June that letter is acknowledged in exactly the same terms as the letter to Mrs. Jarvis, by the Local Government Board. I do not want to read the letter again. This letter was forwarded to the guardians, and Mr. Lough replies on the 26th June:—"The Clerk's Office, 45, Upper North Street, Poplar, E., 26th June, 1906. My Lords and Gentlemen,—

"I am directed by the Board of Guardians of this Union to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant, No. 64,625 A., forwarding copy of a letter which the board had received from James Willis, together with a copy of the board's reply thereto. I am directed to state that the case is well known to the guardians, and to forward herewith copies of reports of three relieving officers who have at different times dealt with applications from Willis. I am, my Lords and Gentlemen, your obedient servant, G. Herbert Lough, Clerk to the Guardians. The Local Government Board, Whitehall, S.W." Then a letter from Mr. Powell, undated, Mr. Crooks?—Yes.

Q. "Guardians' Offices, 45, Upper North Street, Poplar, E. Re James Willis and family. Dear Sir;—This man and his family first came under my observation on the 7th November, 1903; he then made application for relief on account of want of work. Relief in kind was given; on the 19th of the same month he was admitted at his own request to the workhouse, and re-admitted on the 11th October, 1904. He does not appear to have made any further application in my district until 24th ult., when he applied for boots for wife and two children to enable them to go fruit picking. He was given an order to see the relief committee on the 29th ult. Guardians refused his application and made an order for the workhouse. No further application has been made since. Yours faithfully, (signed) W. Edward Powell, R.O., No. 10 District. Mr. C. Wallace, Superintendent R.O." "Relief Offices, Upper North Street, Poplar, E., 4th June, 1906. Dear Sir,—Re James Willis and family. I first became connected with this case in October, 1901, and find that I gave relief, in kind, about that date until the end of November in the same year, when mainly, through the complaints of the man's conduct by the wife, of laziness and drunkenness, I obtained an order for his admission to the workhouse. In August of 1902, the man was given boots to enable him to take up work which had been found him by his brother, but he returned in the same month, and again applied for relief. The workhouse was naturally offered him, and I enforced the order afterwards when he applied to me for relief. In February, 1903, I find he was chargeable in the workhouse, and that I summoned his sons to the relief committee. My estimate of this man's character is a very low one. He is able to work, and able to obtain it. He prefers to live by relief or by scheming of some description. His wife also was assisted with work, obtained by Mrs. Cordery, but she (the wife) also proved a failure. Yours faithfully, (signed) Fredk. A. Berry, Mr. Wallace, Superintendent R.O." "Re James Willis (wife and three children dependent). This case has been known to me for some years. In my late district, No. 4, out-relief to the value of 24s. 6d., was given during the half-year ending Michaelmas, 1905, and 18s. 6d. during the half-year ending Lady Day, 1905. He has frequently been admitted to the workhouse, and on many occasions, when applying for out-relief, has been ordered the house by the guardians. As recently as 24th May, 1906, in No. 7 District, application was made for boots for wife, James, and Emily to go away fruit picking. Order of committee—Not granted. House ordered. In No. 6 District there is a record as follows—Note, August, 1902. This man was given work through his brother as a caretaker. He, however, refused to stick to it, saying the work was too much. Further, man's character not satisfactory to R.O. On the 29th June, 1903, man admitted, when before Bow relief committee, that he had been in West Ham workhouse with family for eight months. In November, 1904, man had a contract for some brickwork at Brownhill Road schools which he failed to carry out, after receiving some money on account of the work, he spent same in drink. To my certain knowledge the guardians have afforded this man every opportunity to get employment and commence afresh, but without success. (Signed) James Evins, Relieving Officer. 16th June, 1906." I am only reading those two cases, Mr. Crooks, to show that the guardians did make most careful inquiry into the several cases they had to deal with, and into the character of the persons who came before them in the relief committee?—That is so.

Q. Mrs. Cordery tells me Mrs. Willis is still owing her money she borrowed to get over the difficulty?—You get a pretty broad view of human nature when you are a guardian.

Mr. Crooks.

24 July.

Mr. Crooks.

Q. A very varied view!—A varied view.

24 July.

Q. Now, Mr. Crooks, there is a point I want to deal with on the question of distress through want of employment. Have you got before you the sheet of notes in regard to that?—Yes, I will read it if you like?

Q. I will read it to make it easier for you. The guardians, at their meeting on the 21st September, 1904, considered a letter from the Metropolitan Borough of Islington, dated the 16th September, 1904, convening a conference of metropolitan local authorities for Monday, the 10th October, with reference to the question of the unemployed from a metropolitan and municipal point of view, and to discuss the possibility of adopting beforehand some effective means of dealing with the distress which may be anticipated in the metropolis in consequence of want of employment during the coming winter. That was the September before the very bad winter?—Yes.

Q. Mr. G. Lansbury, Mr. J. Lindsay, and Mr. A. A. Waits were appointed to attend and represent the guardians at the proposed conference. On the 5th October, 1904, a letter was received from the Islington Borough Council stating that the conference had been adjourned till the 17th October, instead of taking place on the 10th. The guardians passed a resolution in the following terms on the 5th October, 1904: "Seeing that the question of the unemployed, although most acute during the winter months, is a widespread, constant, and national question, this board of guardians considers that all local efforts to meet the case are only temporary, and merely touch the fringe of the question. The board, therefore, considers that the question should be taken up and dealt with on a national basis, and hereby requests the Government to at once summon a special session of Parliament to deal with this grave and extraordinary pressing question." Well, then, there was an extraordinary meeting of the guardians summoned and held on the 11th October, 1904, to consider a letter from the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. W. H. Long) asking for any information in connection with a scheme he proposed to put into force, and inviting the guardians to appoint the chairman or vice-chairman to meet him at his office on the 14th October, 1904. Guardians appointed Mr. W. Crooks and Mr. G. Lansbury to meet the President and submit the following proposals:—"We suggest to the President that the Local Government Board should use the power vested in them, under the Metropolitan Poor Act of 1867, to combine the several unions and parishes of the metropolis into a 'district' for dealing with the unemployed and the unemployable, such district to be managed and controlled by a board of managers similar to those now controlling the Metropolitan Asylums District, and various sick asylum and school districts of the metropolis, and that the whole metropolitan Poor Law administration, so far as the able-bodied men are concerned, be handed over to such authority with all the powers and duties now possessed by the individual boards. We further suggest that the proposed board could at once establish labour colonies in suitable localities for the reception of those needing employment, and that while such board is being constituted, the President be asked to allow boards of guardians to contribute to the funds of local committees such sums as are necessary for dealing with urgent need occasioned by want of employment, and that money so granted be a charge on the Imperial Exchequer or the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, always provided that the payment given be for work done on lines similar to those adopted by the Mansion House and Poplar committees last winter. We further suggest:—(a) That where local committees are set up they should consist of members of borough councils and boards of guardians, and they be recommended to, as far as possible, work on the lines laid down by the Mansion House and Poplar scheme of last winter. (b) That rural district councils be asked to make enquiries in their districts, if any, and what labourers are required for work on the land, and that the information thus obtained be forwarded by the Local Government Board to the proposed local committees. We also suggest that a special session of Parliament be called together this autumn for dealing in a national manner with the question, and submit the following suggestions which should be passed into law:—(a) The creation of a labour department with power to reorganise agriculture on co-operative lines,

"to take in hand the question of re-afforestation, the reclamation of foreshores and waste lands, the building of sea walls along the coast at those points where the sea threatens encroachment. (b) The grant of a sum of money to be spent by the municipalities and other local authorities in demolishing the slums of our great towns, and the erection of healthy dwellings in country districts connected with the towns by means of light railways, tramways, &c. (c) That in order to absorb many of the unemployed, the working hours of all Government Departments be fixed at 48 hours per week without reduction of pay." On the 6th October the guardians forwarded the following letter to the Prime Minister:—"Sir, I am directed by the board of guardians of this union to forward to you the following copy of a resolution adopted at their meeting yesterday:—'Seeing that the question of the unemployed, although most acute during the winter months, is a widespread, constant, and national question, this board of guardians considers that all local efforts to meet the case are only temporary and merely touch the fringe of the question. The board therefore considers, that the question should be taken up and dealt with on a national basis, and hereby requests the Government to at once summon a special session of Parliament to deal with this grave and pressing question.' I am, Sir, your obedient servant, G. H. Lough, Clerk to the Guardians. The Right Honourable A. J. Balfour." To which Mr. Balfour replied:—"Dear Sir,—Mr. Balfour desires me to acknowledge the receipt of the communication which you have addressed to him with reference to the unemployed question. As you are aware, the President of the Local Government Board made a statement upon the subject on Friday last, and to this he begs me to refer you. I remain, yours faithfully, (signed) Wilfrid M. Short. G. H. Lough, Esq." A committee was formed on the 19th October, consisting of the following representatives—this was a committee for Poplar, I think, Mr. Crooks?—Yes.

Q. And was the committee formed because you already foresaw in the winter of that year, 1904, that you would have extreme and accentuated distress?—Every reason to believe that was so.

Q. The committee was formed of these members:—Six members from the borough council; six members from the board of guardians; the Rector of Poplar; the Roman Catholic priest in charge; one representative of the Free Church Council; one representative of the Salvation Army; one representative of the Poplar Trades' Council; and one representative of the Charity Organisation Society. Eighteen in all?—Eighteen in all.

Q. The guardians decided at the same meeting to make a canvas of 12 streets in each of the parishes of Poplar, Bromley, and Bow, with the following results:— I think I put this on the notes yesterday?—Yes.

Q. And this return was forwarded to the Local Government Board on the 22nd November, with the following letter:—"My Lords and Gentlemen,—I am directed by the board of guardians of this union to advert to their letter of the 7th instant, and to inform you that they had under further consideration the distress prevailing in the union through the want of employment at their meeting on the 16th instant, when a deputation of some hundreds of unemployed men resident in the union waited upon the guardians appealing for work to enable them to support themselves and their families. The guardians desire to submit for the information of your Board the accompanying statement of the result of certain inquiries which they have instituted into the condition of the district as regards the want of employment, from which they find that nearly twenty-five per cent. of the wage earners are unemployed. During the past five weeks the number of applicants for relief has steadily increased, and during the week ended the 12th instant, 278 heads of families applied to the relieving officers of the union for relief on account of want of work. In view of this condition of affairs, the guardians decided to ask your Board to authorise them to proceed in the purchase of 150 acres of land for the purpose of setting the poor to work under the provisions of the 59 Geo. III., cap. 12, as amended by 1 and 2 Will. IV., cap. 42, and 5 and 6 Will. IV., cap. 69. I am accordingly to state that the guardians will be glad to learn that their proposal meets with the approval of your Board." To which the Local

Government Board replied. That letter was dated 22nd November. On the 3rd December the Local Government Board replied:—"I am directed by the Local Government Board to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd ultimo, relative to the proposal of the guardians of the Poplar union in the circumstances mentioned, to purchase 150 acres of land for the purpose of setting the poor to work, under the provisions of the statute, 59 Geo. III., cap. 12, as amended by the 1 and 2 Will. IV., cap. 42, and the 5 and 6 Will. IV., cap. 69. The Board direct me to state that they have every sympathy with any practical suggestions for the amelioration of existing distress from want of employment, but they would remind the guardians that in their letters of 7th August and 4th October, 1895, the Board explained to them that the enactments referred to are not applicable to the case of the Poplar union—" ?—You will remember that was our first application—Dunton Whaley Farm.

Q. Dunton?—Yes, that was the first application.

Q. Where was Dunton Whaley?—Mr. Lansbury can give the exact location.

(Mr. Lansbury.) In the same parish as the present colony is to-day.

(Mr. Grant.) I mean it is in the same district of Essex, not exactly contiguous to the Poplar Union?—Yes.

Q. "The land to be acquired under them must be situate 'within or near to' the union, and the guardians are not empowered under the statutes in question to provide buildings for the accommodation of the persons employed. The guardians can, however, with the Board's sanction, in connection with any workhouse which they may erect, provide land on which the inmates of the workhouse may be set to work; and this would seem to be the only way in which the guardians could give effect to what they desire. The Board were advised in 1893 by the law officers of the Crown that relief, under the statutes mentioned in your letter, would be parochial relief such as to disfranchise the recipient. It appears to the Board that if work is provided for the unemployed other than by way of a labour test for out-door paupers, this should be done in the manner indicated in Mr. Long's published scheme. So far as possible the Joint Committee should deal with applicants for work where they are satisfied that the cases are proper to be dealt with. Any scheme for providing work for cases which, though proper to be dealt with cannot be met by the Joint Committee, should be brought before the Central Committee." These committees were appointed under Mr. Long's unemployed scheme?—Yes.

Q. At the guardians' meeting on the 2nd November, 1904, they received a letter from the Local Government Board, dated 31st October, 1904, forwarding copies of a statement prepared by Mr. Long, containing his suggestions for giving effect to the scheme he proposed for dealing with the apprehended want of employment in the Metropolis during the winter months. Mr. Long also hopes that joint committees will be formed at the earliest date practicable, where they have not already been constituted?—Yes. I might mention, incidentally, the first men employed under that scheme—the very first men in all London went the first Monday in January, 1905.

Q. Where was that?—They went to Long Grove.

Q. What parish were they employed in?—Oh, they were in Epsom parish. They were sent down by the Central London Unemployed Committee.

Q. The first men under the central body went in January, 1905?—Yes.

Q. Mr. Long?—Having formed his committee in 1904.

(The Inspector.) Were you a member?—I was one.

(Mr. Grant.) 31st October?—We didn't get to work until January, 1905.

Q. Two months to get the machinery into order?—Yes.

Q. The guardians resolved as follows:—"Resolved: That this board of guardians welcome the scheme for dealing with the unemployed proposed by the Right Hon. Walter H. Long, M.P., President of the Local Government Board. The guardians realise, however, the difficulty of raising the necessary funds to meet

"the distress, which threatens to be acute, especially in the East of London. The guardians, therefore, respectfully urge the President of the Local Government Board to communicate with the various Metropolitan Borough Councils, with a view to inducing them to at once raise a rate of say $\frac{1}{4}$ d. in the £ for the special purpose of this scheme. If it is found that the existing powers of the Council are not sufficient for this purpose, an autumn session of Parliament (which the guardians trust will be convened to deal with the question on a national basis), would afford an opportunity for the passing of a short Bill to enable the Councils to levy the necessary rate. Resolved: That a copy of the foregoing resolution be forwarded to the Prime Minister, the President of the Local Government Board, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Home Secretary." Mr. Balfour, on November 11th, 1904, wrote:—"Dear Sir,—Mr. Balfour desires me to acknowledge the receipt of the resolution which you have forwarded, on behalf of the board of guardians of the Poplar Union, with reference to the question of the unemployed. He notes the views which the guardians have expressed upon the subject. As regards the question of summoning an autumn session of Parliament, I am to enclose a copy of a telegram which Mr. Balfour recently addressed to Mr. Keir Hardie, M.P., upon the subject, and which you have doubtless observed in the newspapers." This is the copy of the telegram:—"I much regret delay in replying to your letter. The statement made by the President of the Local Government Board on October 14th has, however, correctly represented the view of His Majesty's Government. Every effort will be made to assist authorities in working out on practical lines the scheme developed at the recent Conference, and I sincerely trust that it may lead to a material reduction of hardship in localities especially affected. If I thought an autumn session of Parliament would contribute to this result, I should be prepared to accept the suggestion. May I ask you kindly to communicate the purport of this message to the signatories of the memorial?—Arthur Balfour." Whether an autumn session of Parliament would contribute to the result would be a matter of opinion, but your guardians at any rate felt some step of that kind was immediately necessary?—As you read up to now, we thought we would lay down some practical and statesmanlike proposal. Nothing was done, and we were left with a mass of poverty to deal with.

Q. The Islington Borough Council forwarded a letter, dated 20th October, 1904, stating that the Prime Minister has been requested to receive a deputation from local authorities with reference to the unemployed question, and requesting the guardians to nominate a representative for such deputation, so that, should the Prime Minister accede to the request of the recent Conference, no time may be lost in arranging the matter. And, submitting minutes of recent Conference, also forwarded copy of letter from Prime Minister. At meeting of guardians on the 16th November, 1904:—"A notice was handed to the chairman that a large deputation of unemployed were in the waiting hall, on the ground floor, who were desirous of seeing the guardians. Resolved: That the board do proceed to the waiting hall to receive the deputation. Messrs. W. Salmon, A. F. Salmon, and W. M. Barton having addressed the board on behalf of the deputation, and the chairman having replied, the guardians then returned to the board room. Moved by Mr. Watts, seconded by Mr. Bundock, and it was Resolved: That, subject to the approval of the Local Government Board, the guardians take steps to acquire 150 acres of land for the purpose of setting the unemployed to work. Moved by Mr. G. Lansbury, seconded by Mr. C. E. Sumner, and Resolved: That the Metropolitan Asylums Board be respectfully requested to lend the Gore Farm hospital and grounds—now empty—to the guardians of this union for the purpose of using it as a labour colony for the men unemployed in the borough of Poplar, who cannot obtain work under the borough council, the guardians undertaking to join with any other board of guardians in working the colony, and that a deputation of the guardians attend the meeting of the Metropolitan Asylums Board in support of this resolution. Resolved: That applications for relief from able-bodied men out of work be dealt with under Article 10 of the Out-relief Regulation Order, 1852, and that the clerk be instructed to obtain special relief lists and application books for the relieving officers to enter cases

Mr. Crooks.

24 July.

Mr. Crooks,
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24 July.
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"dealt with under this Article, and to report such cases "fortnightly to the Local Government Board. Further "resolved: That the clerk be empowered to employ "such assistance for the out-door staff as may be found "necessary." In replying to the guardians' letter, with reference to the loan of Gore farm, the Metropolitan Asylums Board stated that the land attached to the upper hospital consists of areas, courts, and roads, and that the lower hospital, which itself is not in occupation, has attached a certain number of acres of land mostly used for sewage irrigation, which has been kept in a state of cultivation, and would afford no opportunity whatever for setting the unemployed to work. Under these circumstances, we instructed the clerk to reply that the guardians have no desire to proceed with their application. The guardians resolved to urge the London County Council to put in hand at the earliest possible date all contemplated works in the Metropolis, with a view to providing employment for as many as possible during the winter. At the meeting of the guardians held 30th November, 1904, the chairman submitted the following correspondence between himself and the Prime Minister:—"Poplar Union Offices, Poplar, E." "21st November, 1904. Sir,—I am desired by the board "of guardians of the Poplar Union to express their "thanks for your letter of the 11th instant, with reference to the question of the unemployed, forwarding "copy of a telegram which you had addressed to Mr. "Keir Hardie, M.P., upon the subject. At the same "meeting, a deputation of some hundreds of unemployed "workmen, resident in the union, waited upon the "guardians, seeking assistance, preferably in the form "of work. The guardians observe that in your telegram "to Mr. Keir Hardie you state that every effort will "be made to assist authorities in working out on practical lines the scheme developed at the recent conference, in connection with which a local committee "has been appointed in this district, but, having given "the matter much thought, the guardians regret that "the scheme, beneficent as it was intended to be, will "not, for financial reasons, be of much advantage in "helping to solve the present difficulty. The telegram "further stated that if you thought an autumn session "would contribute to a material reduction of hardship "in localities especially affected, you would be prepared "to accept the suggestions, and on this point the "guardians desire to submit for your consideration the "appended statement of the result of enquiries which "they have instituted relative to the condition of the "district with regard to employment, which tends to "show that nearly twenty-five per cent. of the wage "earners are out of work. It was in view of the probability of the present conditions that the guardians "were led to suggest the calling of a special session of "Parliament, and having sought the views of other local "authorities as to the necessity of this course, they "have received replies from 56 unions, 20 town and "borough councils, 56 urban district councils, and 4 "rural district councils in support of the proposal for "an autumn session of Parliament, while only 3 unions "and 1 urban district council have expressed disagreement therewith. The guardians venture to think that "if it were possible for you to be present (quite privately, of course) at one of their meetings, or that "you could arrange for someone to attend on your behalf, to note the nature and extent of the distress "which the serious lack of employment entails, you would "find ample evidence of the desirability of a special "autumn session of Parliament to deal with this "pressing problem." You thought, Mr. Crooks, the laxity in dealing with the question at headquarters was due to the fact that they did not realise the urgent necessity that existed here?—Yes. One point I would like to make there. I felt if possibly Mr. Balfour or any one got in touch with the question, the whole complexion of the thing would be changed. Then go a little further now. The weather is warm. It would be a moral impossibility to have held this Inquiry in the cold weather in that year. It could not have been done. So keen was the distress, so acute was the feeling about it all, that you could not have held an Inquiry like this at all.

Q. In this place?—In this place.

Q. Now, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Balfour replied on November 28th, 1904:—"Dear Mr. Crooks,—I am well aware "that in many parts of the Metropolis, and more particularly, I fear, in the district in which, as a guardian, "you are immediately concerned, much temporary dis-

"tress prevails at the present moment. How best to "deal with the situation thus created has, as you know, "been the subject of most anxious consideration on the "part of the President of the Local Government Board; "and Mr. Walter Long has established a scheme—now, "I understand, in actual working." It was not at all in actual working?—There was no work for quite six weeks after.

Q. "Which will have the effect of organising and "generalising methods which local experience has already "proved to be useful, thereby greatly increasing both "their economy and their efficiency. You are, I gather, "of opinion that this by itself is not sufficient, and you "suggest that a special session of Parliament is required "to meet the emergency. I would venture, however, to "make two remarks on this subject. In the first place, "I think we ought to wait and see how far the new "machinery fulfils the hope of its designers; and, in "the second place, I think we should abstain from basing "exaggerated hopes upon anything which may be immediately accomplished by Parliamentary debates. "These are invaluable for the purpose of criticising "legislative proposals or executive action. They may "educate the public mind. They may prepare the way "for a constructive policy. They can hardly, however, "frame one. And, so far as I can judge, an abstract "discussion upon the general situation would not only "be of little present value to those whom it is intended "to benefit, but it would do them a positive injury. "Organised effort would be paralysed till the decision "of Parliament was known; and between the beginning "of our debates and the moment when their result could "be embodied in a working shape, much preventable "suffering would inevitably have occurred."—There, you see, a man with the very best mind in the world and the best intentions left exactly the things which he feared would be created. "Distance lends enchantment to the view." It looks all right from a long way off. The very things he was fearing were happening.

Q. Did happen?—Yes.

Q. During the past fortnight in Parliament the very scheme you suggested in December, 1904, was suggested by the President of the Local Government Board as the next that should be tried?—Yes.

Q. £200,000 to be granted by the Government and spent specifically on re-afforestation and other schemes of employment which in that time you were putting forward?—I think we can go further: Mr. Lansbury and I can produce a scheme outlined as far back as 1893. It was no sudden thing with us. We saw what was happening year by year. Men got lower and parted with their fathers and mothers because they could not afford to keep them, and they swelled the people in the workhouse, with no earthly chance of getting out. Practical proposals were laid down which seem to bear a little fruit just now. I think it proves pretty conclusively that we were not throwing relief away, indiscriminately.

Q. First of all—I am coming to the question of out-relief. The guardians here—you were their mouth-piece—the guardians as a body were put to the whole expense of the evil they had to grapple with, and they felt the locality should not bear the burden, and they appealed to the President of the Local Government Board and to the Prime Minister to do something immediately for the interest of this and other poor districts, and they were answered with abstract discussions which would be no use to the unemployed. Well, let me go on with the correspondence. In reply to that letter of the 28th November, there is a letter from you which the guardians approved and sent as a reply:—"The guardians desire me to acknowledge "the receipt of your letter of the 28th inst., with reference to the distress arising through want of employment, and while desiring to express their thanks for "the courteous consideration which the representations "contained in my former letter have received, they "cannot help feeling greatly disappointed that their "efforts to bring about some practical step in the "direction of coping with the serious problem of the "unemployed should not meet with more success. From "a purely academic standpoint your argument is doubtless correct; but while Mr. Long's scheme does, in a "general way, show a departure in the direction of "making London a unit for dealing with the unemployed, "yet it has no power to enforce contributions from "any one. Thus all poor parts, where working people "are aggregated, have to bear abnormal burdens which

"should be shared, if not by the nation, then at least by the metropolis. The position in this district has reached a stage where something immediate has to be done, and the only course open to the guardians is to meet the numerous applications made to them by grants of out-door relief. The total amount of out-door relief now being granted by the guardians exceeds £690 per week, and is borne entirely by local rates, which already stand at 10s. in the £, and will considerably increase by the addition of this extra relief. If the public were assured that the problem would be seriously taken up by His Majesty's Government at an early date, funds might be forthcoming to bridge over the present period of anxiety." That is, you meant private funds?—If we could get a definite promise from His Majesty's Government that something would be done, I felt other people would. One may incidentally remark, we set our backs up against promiscuous charity.

Q. It does more harm than good ultimately?—It makes heavier the difficulties and burdens in a place like this. The only way to deal with the problem is by work, and we thought money might be forthcoming to start something to keep the muscles hard and the eyes of the men in.

Q. "The guardians desire to emphasise the fact that this question of dealing with the unemployed, has been several times before Parliament, and if the Government really desire to grapple with this great evil, they could in a short time, with the expert advice at the disposal of the Government, set in operation a great deal of work useful to the nation. The guardians therefore sincerely hope that their previous representations will be acted upon, and that you will give an assurance that the matter shall be laid before Parliament at the earliest possible moment. I am, Sir, your obedient servant, William Crooks." 14th December, 1904. During meeting a letter was read, asking the board to receive six members of a deputation of the unemployed. Resolved: That the deputation be received. The deputation appeared before the Board, and Messrs. Salmon, Stanley, Burford, and Wilson, having spoken, withdrew. 11th January, 1905. General purposes committee reported on a letter from Local Government Board, and recommended that the subject of the purchase of 150 acres of land be adjourned for the present. Letter from Social Democratic Federation, dated 24th March, 1905—this is a later minute, of course—stating that "it appears to be doubtful whether the promise made in the King's Speech that machinery of a permanent character for dealing with the unemployed will receive further attention this Session unless some considerable expression of public opinion be conveyed to the Government, and the Federation request that the guardians do urge the Government to deal with this pressing question as early as possible." Moved by Mr. G. Lansbury, seconded by Mr. C. E. Sumner, and resolved: That, "in view of the severe distress which has been prevalent in the Metropolis during the past winter, and which is now only partially alleviated in this union, the guardians regarded with much satisfaction the promise held out in the King's Speech on the opening of Parliament, of legislation to provide machinery for dealing with the problem of the unemployed, and have anxiously waited the introduction of a Bill by His Majesty's Government upon the subject; but, having regard to the period which has already elapsed without such a Bill being brought forward, the board desires to again draw the attention of His Majesty's Government to the urgent nature of the problem, and to point out the necessity for immediate steps being taken with a view to securing the provision of legal machinery for dealing effectively with the unemployed problem before the approach of another winter." Well, Mr. Crooks, I have taken you through all this correspondence and minutes to show that, while alive to the problem you had to deal with, you were making every possible effort to induce Parliament and the authorities at headquarters to deal with the question in a thorough and satisfactory way?—We never ceased from start to finish to endeavour to call the attention of the powers that be to the responsibility.

Q. Now I want to take up this question of the way in which you dealt with the able-bodied relief in that winter. First of all, Mr. Crooks, speaking from your general experience of the guardians, is it a fact that, more or less, in every winter for many years past, the applications of able-bodied men out of employment

have been dealt with under the Order as cases of sudden and urgent necessity?—Yes.

Q. Mr. Lough tells me ever since he has been here, and as assistant clerk for 30 years, there has been almost every year cases that have been relieved?—Yes.

Q. And these cases were reported every year to the auditor?—Always.

Q. The expenditure reported to the auditor?—Yes.

Q. And that expenditure has been?—Sanctioned.

Q. Sanctioned by him, or has not recorded any disapproval of it?—No.

Q. In the winter of 1904-5, did you proceed to deal with the able-bodied cases in the same way?—Invariably.

Q. There was no special resolution of the guardians giving special directions to the relieving officers as to the way in which they were to deal with these applications?—No. There was the resolution that we passed under Article 10, you remember, which has been alluded to in the Memorandum we are inquiring into.

Q. I am coming to that?—Generally speaking, it is understood that relieving officers were to relieve in cases of sudden and urgent necessity.

Q. Yes?—Even in the summer time, even this morning—I have not seen the relief book—but there would be cases in which there would be relief last Saturday of sudden and urgent necessity, and would be reported for the approval of the committee this morning.

Q. And these cases, to be reported to the committee and approved by them, would be the ordinary cases of relief?—Oh, it has been for generations.

Q. So these cases need not be reported to the Local Government Board under Article 10?—Oh, no. It is only when such relief would appear to be, as it really was, all but continuous. You see the argument used against us by one of the officials is, if a man was relieved from week to week, that it could not be sudden, to which our reply, of course, invariably has been, and it has been accepted, it may not be sudden, but it was urgent. A man does not suddenly starve. He may not get anything to eat, and may be worse to-morrow. It would not be sudden, but it would be urgent.

Q. That is not only the practice here, but I think it was the practice with other boards of guardians. Here is a letter we have received 12th March, 1906, "Chorlton Union Offices," addressed to Mr. Lough:—"Dear Sir,—Towards the end of 1904 we had a correspondence with the Local Government Board with reference to a report made by the district auditor on the subject of the administration of out-door relief to able-bodied men. We had previously been in the habit of giving relief to able-bodied men for perhaps a couple of weeks at a time, without requiring them to perform a labour test. We had been doing this for a great number of years without previous auditors taking exception, but our present auditor in most things takes a very technical view, and forgets that even an auditor is sometimes required to use a little discretion. The result of our correspondence was that the Local Government Board informed the guardians that they were not prepared to relax the requirements of Article 10 of the Out-door Relief Regulation Order, and that when departures from the regulations in the Order are made, the cases should be reported to them. About this time we found it necessary to open a labour test yard at the workhouse. When this yard is closed, the guardians, I have no doubt, will revert to their old custom, but, in order to satisfy the auditor, will report each case to London. Yours truly, (signed) David Bloomfield, Clerk." So the same question arising here has arisen at Manchester, and the guardians at Manchester have been following the course the guardians here followed?—You may reasonably say every industrial centre works on that line.

Q. When this question arose in 1904, I think, you had some correspondence with the Board. There was first of all a letter of 22nd November, 1904, which I have read, asking for permission to purchase 150 acres of land?—Yes.

Q. Now, on the 9th December, you wrote—Mr. Lough wrote—no, Mr. Wright, the assistant clerk, wrote:—"My Lords and Gentlemen,—I am directed by the Board of Guardians of this Union to inform you that, owing to the distress prevalent in the district

Mr. Crooks,
24 July.

"due to the lack of employment, they have found it necessary to relieve able-bodied men and their families under Article 10 of the Out-relief Regulation Order, 14th December, 1852." The amounts for the two weeks are given:—£69 0s. 11d. for the first week and £145 3s. 5d. for the second week. The sums in the different relief districts: £16 and £19; £12 and £20; £8 and £13; and £5 and £25; £3 and £21; £18 and £29; £3 and £6; 10s. and £8. I left out the shillings in each case, making a total of £214. "The guardians will be glad to receive the approval of your Board to their action." On 19th December, Mr. Wright writes again: "I am directed"—perhaps I better pass that letter for a moment. On 19th December, the Local Government Board wrote:—"Sir,—I am directed by the Local Government Board to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant, reporting for approval the expenditure by the guardians of the Poplar Union, for the two weeks ending the 19th and 26th ultimo, for relieving able-bodied men and families. I am directed to point out that Article 10 of the Out-door Relief Regulation Order requires that the particular cases of departure from the Order, with the grounds thereof, should be reported to the Board. Moreover, the Board are of opinion that the Article referred to should not be regarded as of general application but as applicable only to any particular cases in which, under special circumstances, departure from the Regulations in the Order is deemed expedient. I am, Sir, your obedient servant, (signed) W. E. Knollys. The Clerk to the Guardians of the Poplar Union." On the same day you wrote to the Board in the same terms, reporting the sum spent as £201 in the week ending December 3, and £203 for the week ending December 10, making a total of £404 11s. 8d. as against £214 in the previous fortnight. And then the board on the 8th February took into consideration the general purposes committee's report, and the board adopted it on February 8, 1905—"Relief of Able-bodied:—Pursuant to reference, your committee have had under consideration the letter of the Local Government Board, dated 19th December, 1904, with reference to the method of reporting cases of able-bodied men and their families relieved by the guardians; but having regard to the fact that the whole of the cases were dealt with by the relieving officers under circumstances of urgent necessity, we do not deem it necessary to take any further steps in the matter at present." Quite apart from that question, Mr. Crooks, would it have been absolutely impossible, with hundreds of cases, to report every individual case to the Board?—It was quite a new interpretation of the Order, and I never heard it before the Local Government Board—namely, that it was to report special cases, just one or two. One or two had been helped as long as there had been a board of guardians. There was no question of Article 10 ever arising.

Q. No suggestion they should be reported?—I am not belittling the difficulties of the Local Government Board, with its many and varied duties, applying particular Orders to particular things. "No person may be relieved except for destitution." Another Order says that no out-relief shall go in part payment of rent. Well, but, if the persons have money to pay rent, they cannot be destitute persons, and so the two orders contradict one another. The difficulty of—

Q. The point is, a man is five or six weeks in arrear with his rent. Say his rent is 5s. He has 5s. If he pays the 5s. to his landlord he becomes a destitute person, and can apply to the guardians?—In other words: Supposing we gave him 5s. for feeding him, and he pays that 5s. in rent, and that came to our knowledge, we should be charged with committing an illegal act and be surcharged. In the good old times I have known guardians who collected for two rows of poor houses. Nearly every one in those houses got out-relief. I do not say it was because he was a collector. It seems a curious coincidence. You see the difficulty is to interpret the Order. The individual case of Article 10 had never happened to my knowledge. I thought Article 10 would have met our case, because the Local Government Board pointed that out, but it did not. Of course, we fell back upon the Order of sudden and urgent necessity.

Q. As a matter of fact, Mr. Crooks, I think I am right in saying the matter dropped from that point?—Yes, and I think for some time—I do not know how long it was, perhaps every month—that we got the approval for the conditional employment of clerks and

investigators to deal with it. So really the matter was before the Local Government Board the whole time.

Q. And they approved—specifically, also, I think, as you told me—the employment of visitors to assist the relieving officers?—Yes, and when they thought—and I think there was a good deal of reason in it for that thinking—that the distress had ceased to become acute, they simply sanctioned the additional men for a given time. That is to say, we cannot sanction after a certain date, and the men were, of course—

(The Inspector.) It may be convenient to mention now, that the Local Government Board Auditor has never made a surcharge in reference to these cases until the last audit but one?—There is no surcharge now.

Q. One case, but not on the ground that it was sudden and urgent?—Is that the case of relieving officer Evins?

(The Inspector.) His investigation.

(Mr. Grant.) As a matter of fact, have you any surcharge on the whole of these cases?—No, they were admitted.

Q. I want to ask you, as far as the able-bodied men are concerned, has any money whatever been granted to them except in the case of the wives of the men sent to Laindon farm colony?—No. No money is ever given to able-bodied people as out-relief. It is always given in kind, and that disposes of another charge, namely, that we subsidised able-bodied men with cash to enable them to go elsewhere and work cheap. We have never given cash at all.

Q. And in the case of Laindon you had a special order of the Local Government Board?—Yes, suspending the workhouse test order.

Q. As to the increase in ordinary relief?—The increase in ordinary relief has gone up considerably, and I do believe with the approval of every person concerned. In the old times—yes, I think so—I heard that interruption. I do not think even the persons who are responsible largely for the many charges that have been levelled against us—I do not think they can produce a single member who would object to adequate out-door relief being given to the aged poor—respectable poor. The Order issued by Mr. Chaplin—

Q. Wait just a moment. Do not go too fast. You have—the guardians admitted and are proud of it—you have increased the relief given to the aged men and women in the union?—Yes. We have no half-crowns, we have got to the principle if out-relief was given to these old people it was to be adequate, and that they were not to eke out an existence by running errands, by taking bundles to pawn for their neighbours for a half-penny, or something like that, and so now we have not the numerous cases—all too numerous cases—of poor old people dropping down in the street, medical officers refusing to attend them unless they can produce their fee, and paupers were given two half-crowns a week for poor old widows.

Q. Paying 1s. 6d. for rent?—Sometimes 1s. 9d., and above all, encouraging poor old respectable people to tell lies to get that, namely, to go up and say their aunt or uncle or somebody else gave so much to pay their rent, and all the rest of it.

Q. According to the general purposes committee—I want to call your attention to that—adopted by the board, 31st October, 1900. That called attention to the circular letter of Mr. Chaplin, 4th August, 1900, referring to the cost of old and deserving poor?—Yes.

Q. The Local Government Board stated in regard to that, that the aged and deserving poor should not be urged to enter the workhouse at all, unless there is some cause which renders such a course necessary, and this has been the practice of the guardians?—Yes.

Q. In that circular, 4th August. I want to read this paragraph: "With regard to the treatment of the aged 'deserving poor, it has been felt that persons who have 'habitually led decent and deserving lives should, if 'they require relief in their old age, receive different 'treatment from those whose previous habits and 'character have been unsatisfactory and who have failed 'to exercise thrift in the bringing up of their families 'or otherwise. The Board consider that aged 'deserving persons should not be urged to enter the workhouse 'at all unless there is some cause which renders such

Mr. Crooks,
24 July.

"a course necessary, such as infirmity of mind or body, the absence of house accommodation or of a suitable person to take care of them, or some similar cause, but that they should be relieved by having adequate out-door relief granted to them. The Board are happy to think that it is commonly the practice of boards of guardians to grant out-door relief in such cases, but they are afraid that too frequently such relief is not adequate in amount. They are desirous of pressing upon the guardians that such relief should when granted be always adequate." Then they go on to deal with the way these persons should be treated if obliged to go into the workhouse?—On that point, the persons on out-relief in Poplar mean persons over 60 years of age. It means a 6d. rate to us here in Poplar alone.

Q. That is to say you spend £18,000 a year dealing with cases of persons over 60 who are on the rates?—That is so.

Q. After the receipt of Mr. Chaplin's Circular did the guardians again go very carefully through all the cases of persons having out-door relief who were affected by this Circular, and enquire into individual circumstances and deal with them?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) Have you a scale now—a regular scale for giving relief?—No, we use our discretion. We have regard to what the income of the total family is, and you remember the Friendly Societies Act which came into operation, namely, if a man had three or four or five or six shillings from a friendly society in granting relief under a scale, the scale should not be considered? But, I suppose, generally, it is. But the guardians are more inclined to be sympathetic to men who have been members of friendly societies, and who have a little income of their own, and trying to keep up their respectability. We should never think of offering the house to people who, by getting this, could look after themselves, and a man who has come from a friendly society, trade union, or temperance society is approved. But we have regard to sons and daughters in their capacity to help father or mother, and by how much. You will find our out-door relief varies from 4s. 6d. or 5s. 6d. for old people to as much as 10s. You see, you could not lay down a scale for every case, because you must know the circumstances.

(Mr. Grant.) Your opinion, Mr. Crooks, is that on the whole of this question of out-relief, when you have this deluge of poverty which recurs at intervals from a variety of causes—a heavy frost, or stagnation of trade, or a South African war, whatever it may be—is it your opinion the best way of dealing with it is by giving out-door relief to able-bodied men who at the time are out of work?—No. I am not inclined to think that is the best way. I think it is the only way we have left to us.

Q. The alternative would be to offer the workhouse to every family who came and refused work?—No. The alternative to the present condition? As we already pointed out, what we have tried to do is that something useful, organised work, should be arranged to which men could be turned on. Only in the last resort we are driven to the workhouse or out-door relief.

Q. You first of all have repeatedly called the attention of the Government authorities to the necessity for providing work?—Yes.

Q. You have asked for power to provide work?—Yes.

Q. You have been refused?—Yes.

Q. You asked for power to take land?—Yes.

Q. You then attempted to deal with it yourselves, and tried the experiment for the time being of Landon?—Yes.

Q. But if there is to be no useful work provided for the able-bodied men who for the time are out of employment, the only two alternatives are for the guardians either to take these men and their families into the workhouse, or to give out-door relief in the way you have done?—Exactly.

Q. On the question of cost, which appeals to some people. If you had hired a workhouse in the winter of 1904-5, so that you could have successfully housed all these able-bodied men, must the cost have been infinitely greater than the cost of dealing as you dealt with them?—Infinitely greater. And again, you could not recover—you could not recover all the injury you

have done. If you filled some workhouse hired somewhere, and weather like this came, the men would have been going round the streets seeking shelter for their wives and children, and the result would have been infinitely worse. When a man has a little home, he has not to go and beg and pray someone to give them shelter. It is difficult for people to understand. Who will take a man and wife and children who have just come out of the workhouse?

Q. To effectively deal with them the guardians must first of all take these men into the workhouse, and when work is found they must give the man something to start with—to start the home again?—You would have to go out and find lodgings for them. You could not help yourselves.

Q. I want to ask you on that question, can you give cases, if necessary, of many men who are now at work and keep up a decent home, taking care of their families, who in the winter of 1904-5 for the first time came upon the guardians for help?—I can. What is more, for which we get no gratitude. I have known more than one of these men go back and say: "Can we pay back what we have had now, so as to get our names reinstated on the borough voting list?" These are the people who are denounced as not being desirable men. I think it shows a character England ought to be proud of.

Q. One word further in regard to the workhouse, dealing first of all with the charges Dr. Lamont made?—I think I can remember that.

Q. Now as to the dietary. You, sir, said the discretion as to the question is with Dr. Lamont—"You are aware that the discretion is yours?" and he answers, "Yes, I know, but it has been disputed by the board of guardians." Did you ever dispute it. You see what Dr. Lamont relies upon there is that letter from the guardians stating that when they got over 60 the guardians desired to put them on old and infirm diet. Was there any dispute between you and Dr. Lamont?—Oh, no.

Q. He did not object?—No. Perhaps the story had better be told here. It would be very helpful. There is the discretion left in the hands of the doctor as to who shall be described as able-bodied even over 60. There, again, the Local Government Board Orders insist that persons under 60 shall be described as able-bodied. We have had that out. The trouble was as to whether a man over 60 could be an able-bodied man. All over 60 are allowed privileges of tobacco and of freedom; that is to say, they are allowed to go out like the old people without notice on the regular days. And then it appears that when he got a little upset with some persons about the dietary, he had taken some old men, 63 or 65, and decided to declare them able-bodied men. The guardians, in the exercise of the discretion I suppose they are entitled to, called attention to the fact that old men over 60 are admitted, by the ordinary Orders of the Local Government Board, to be infirm, and asked him to put them on an infirm diet. He lost his temper. Some people say he went further than losing his temper in the ordinary sense, and declared he should do what he liked. Then he was taken ill. While he was away the guardians sent the letter asking him to consider persons over 60 as on infirm diet, and he quite cheerfully acquiesced with it and said, "Oh, certainly, he would." There was no pressure so far as I was concerned. I always tried to make him understand in me he had a personal friend. There should be no infringement of any order whatever if he put it into operation. I suppose presently one would be obliged to say pretty strong things about that. That is briefly the history of the thing.

Q. If Dr. Lamont had wished, at the time when he was being interfered with by the guardians, his obvious course was to address a letter to the board pointing that out?—He could have gone further, and have absolutely refused to carry on duty, and have asked for the support of the Local Government Board. But when one remembers that Dr. Lamont is not a man without courage—he had had to fight once or twice, or three or four times before he came here, and had come quite heroically out of two very big fights—to attempt to imply he was coerced by the board in any way is rather a stretch of imagination.

Q. Now, he said he had had frequent complaints of the quality of the meat supplied, from the inmates of the house. Did you ever hear from Dr. Lamont

Mr. Crooks.

24 July.

of complaints of any kind?—No, and the other day, since the Inquiry has been on, a man complained about the meat. Naturally he would while the Inquiry was on, and so I suggested the doctor might see it and test it for himself; that the doctor himself might make an entry in the book as to the quality, quite apart from the influence the guardians might bear, and the entry in the book was that it was of the most excellent quality. There were no causes of complaint. When he said the facts about the mutton, he did not have the same moral courage to put it in the book.

Q. He was asked, "Did you bring the complaints under the notice of the guardians?"—No, I did not. (Q.) Why not?—Because I have had some experience of how my orders have been evaded since 1903. The recommendations and orders I have given have been overruled, and since 1903 I have made no order. (Q.) "Was that the reason for not bringing the complaints to the notice of the guardians?"—Yes. "What do you say as to that?"—I think it is absolutely an idle excuse. There is no reason; and I have always been on the—I had better not say too friendly terms, because it would lower the dignity of the guardians—I mean I have been on fairly talking terms with him, and have chatted over the house and its discipline.

Q. May I take it, as a general rule, that at least once a week all the year round Dr. Lamont had an opportunity of speaking to you personally and mentioning anything he wanted to?—He knows perfectly well that every morning up to 10.30 he could see me at my own home.

Q. And besides that you are constantly in and out of the workhouse?—Yes, not so much as last year, which amounted to about once a fortnight, rather more, perhaps, three times in a fortnight. Before that I was in five or six times a week.

Q. Have you ever had any statement from him that his orders have been evaded or that his recommendations have been overruled?—No. I remember one incident where he called me into his consulting room there, and there was some tiff between himself and the master as to the number of persons who should be put on beer. I said: "Well, come along, let us get through it. There is no need to quarrel about it. Let us see what it is." The interview did not last five minutes, and everybody went away satisfied.

Q. He was asked to produce some returns, and he says: "I should like you to look at the infirm wards—about the infirm people. The master's recommendations were accepted before mine on that occasion. (The Inspector) (reading.) 'The infirm wards in the workhouse are overcrowded.'" That was a matter of which the guardians were fully cognisant, Mr. Crooks, was it not?—Yes, and it was his duty to call attention to the overcrowded state of the infirm wards, and concurrently with his knowledge of that. Of course, we have so many beds in the sick asylum which he has first claim to.

Q. But that is not the recommendation or order which he says was overruled?—Oh, no.

Q. And then it goes on to say: "(Q.) Since 1903 you have not carried out the directions of the Order. Why?"—Because every report I made was not carried out. (Q.) Was the fact that the guardians did not accept your recommendations a matter of complaint with you?—About the food? (Q.) That your recommendations have not been carried out?—They accepted the word of the master before the word of the medical officer. (Q.) "Was that on the occasion of your complaint of the overcrowding of the wards?"—Yes, sir. (Q.) Do I misjudge you if I say that after that you did not report to the guardians?—No, sir; I saw it was no use. Is there any ground for that statement at all?—None whatever. As Mr. Davy pointed out to him, his report book was absolutely blank. If reports had been made it would have been standing evidence against us, and would have corroborated him. No one could have prevented him writing things in a book in his own room. Even if he had not brought it out, he could have produced it at this Inquiry.

Q. Even if no one had ever seen it?—Even if no one had ever seen it.

Q. Now about the beer question. "(Q.) On what grounds did you put men on beer?"—When I came there as assistant medical officer the men were having beer for ordinary work in the house, and when I was appointed medical officer I had to go on with the old régime there. When I had the opportunity I tried to

"knock them off beer, with the result that it caused a lot of friction with the guardians and the master. (Q.) When did you try to knock them off?—At the time of the first illness the master had. Mr. Walton, now acting master, was acting at the time. (Q.) How long was that ago?—I should say about 1900. He sent for Mr. Bacon on that occasion. (Q.) Why, because you knocked them off the beer?—Yes, because I knocked them off. (Q.) How many were on beer in those days?—I daresay a hundred at the least. (Q.) How many lately?—Very few now. I am very pleased to say that all of them will be off this week. At any rate, I do not think there are 19½ pints of ale each day now. (Q.) "What is the maximum you got to?—Over 200 it was." As to the beer you are a teetotaler are you not?—I am quite willing to ask the Inspector to look at this question of the beer quite from a broad standpoint. He had the whole sole authority for ordering beer.

Q. The medical officer?—The medical officer. He could have easily, at any time he has been in our employ, knocked it off as he has knocked it off now; no guardian has asked him to knock it off. No guardian has asked him to put it on. He has knocked the beer off as far as I understand—I asked him the other day what he would do if he had a patient who wanted a glass of beer. He said: "I should order a bottle." I said: "Very well." I went no further. But the mere fact of him doing now in the middle of the summer, when if there could have been the slightest excuse for giving beer to men who were unloading coal and cleansing drains, and that sort of thing, work of a most objectionable character, it would be the excuse of the hot weather; but he has found his moral courage. He refuses it now, surely there could be no earthly excuse for him to give it in the winter time.

Q. This puts it here as if the guardians reduced the beer from 200 pints per week to 19½ pints, whereas, as a matter of fact, the reduction had been made by him himself without any action of the guardians at all?—Absolutely on his own authority.

Q. As he always could have done?—As he always could have done.

Q. All through?—A little further down you see—

Q. I am coming to the next page?—No, but he talks about his sufferings.

Q. He said: "They made it hot for me all the time." The question is this: "It is not clear—I put it to you—that you did not carry out the requirements of the order?"—Yes, it is. He said: "I was simply pledged by the master of the workhouse and the guardians. I had really to put them on or else undergo a considerable amount of suffering." Do you know of any pledging by the guardians of the medical officer?—No, I do not. I challenged him to prove it or any other man.

Q. The word here is pledged, it is suggested to me it should read "I was simply plagued"?—Very likely that would be the word.

Q. And then he is asked as to whether the beer was drunk by the guardians, and he says yes, he has seen it. We have had the answer of individual guardians as to that?

Q. Now the next page, the point of the convalescent homes, top of the page?—Yes.

Q. "(Q.) You have a number of patients in different convalescent homes?—Yes. (Q.) Have some of them been there for years?—On the first visit I paid to some of the convalescent homes, some of the inmates had been there for years, five or six years. (Q.) Were there people there who ought to have been discharged some time before?—I thought that they remained far too long when I saw them. (Q.) They were there far too long?—Yes. (Q.) At the expense of the ratepayers?—Oh, yes, I suppose so. (Q.) You thought that many of them had been kept there subsequently to a period when they might, in fairness, have been discharged?—Yes. (Q.) Can you name any individual case at the moment?—No, I could not mention them at the moment. (Q.) Could you find out?—Quite easily. (Q.) Did you suggest to the guardians that some of them should be sent back?—I always make a report to the guardians on each visit. (Q.) Was that report acted upon?—No, invariably it was not acted upon. I should have thought that it was the business of Dr. Lamont to have reported to the guardians?—No. I think he had got a good case there, because what happened was, we were

considerably worried with the long time these people stopped there, and we sent Dr. Lamont down to look at them and advise us.

Q. Then it was not a casual visit of his paid to the convalescent homes?—No.

Q. He was sent by the guardians themselves to enquire into the cases of the patients whom the guardians thought had been there too long?—Yes, he was acting under our instructions.

Q. A different matter entirely?—Entirely.

Q. I believe there is a minute, I will put it in later on, instructing Mr. Lamont to go and report on these convalescent homes?—I think he admitted it when he was in the box. I do not seem to have got it down. It was in my cross-examination or Mr. Lansbury's.

Q. He was asked if he knew "anything about the use of the ambulance by Mr. Bacon that was spoken of by Mr. Jacobs this morning?—I did not hear what Mr. Jacobs said. I was not here. (Q) Mr. Jacobs said the ambulance belonging to the workhouse was used for some private cases in which Mr. Bacon was interested. It was suggested to Mr. Jacobs that, under some arrangement with the London County Council the ambulance had to be used in any case of emergency or accident. Has the matter come under your notice?—No. (Q) Have you ever had to complain of the absence of the ambulance?—Yes. The officer in charge of the ambulance often complained that he had to go to Mildmay Park—or some name like that, at Hackney—to do something else for the district. (Q) He often complained of it? (The Inspector) Has he done so to you?—Yes, often. (Mr. Robb) Did he say by whose directions he had done that?—Yes, by Mr. Bacon's. (Q) Did he say it was a case of emergency or accident?—No, sometimes he said it was an ordinary case that might have walked in without an ambulance at all. (Q) Did the officer actually tell you that?—Yes. Do you know anything about that?—No, I should not think Mr. Bacon would be likely to ask for the ambulance unless it was to remove a patient who could not walk. And I asked the question at the moment—I do not see it noted—as to whether when our ambulance was being used for some private person or other, our patients had ever suffered in consequence, and the answer we got was no, but were simply delayed. Now, of course, the guardians' case is that not once or twice but on 20 different occasions, have we by a little simple help like that of lending the ambulance to remove a person to the hospital prevented a person from becoming a pauper. It was a mere shilling after all. It was nothing. It was no cost to the ratepayers, except the man that lent the horses for so much a day thought his horses were worked too hard. But beyond that it cost the ratepayers nothing, and we were doing really good work. I wish all the guardians in London would do the same thing.

Q. You lent the ambulance to the persons who wanted to be conveyed to the hospital, who would otherwise have to come on the rates?—Let me put a case. Supposing our ambulance was standing at this door. An accident happens away up Gough Street. Has that poor person got to remain there until somebody gets a stretcher, or are we to lend our ambulance? Very well, while our ambulance has gone out it is a technical offence against the law. It should be waiting here for orders to come to remove a pauper to Stepney or Poplar. Surely, I mean, no person can object to that sort of thing. If they do, let them.

Q. Now then, the next is as to the dispensary. Mr. Robb says:—"Do you keep a dispensary in the workhouse?"—Yes. (Q) What do you keep there?—Oh, a lot of things. (Q) Have you anything particularly interesting in mind?—I see you smile—what is there of any particular interest that you keep?—Cough drops, probably. (Q) Have your stores ever been commandeered by anyone?—Well, the general rule was that the officers, from the master downwards, thought they had free access to my surgery. The master had a private key with which he could get in and help himself. (Q) And the matron has a duplicate?—Yes, and the assistant master has one as well. (Q) In case the master might be out, I suppose. Did they, in fact, help themselves?—The master nearly ended his life there. (Q) How did that unfortunate incident come about? (Some laughter.) (Mr. Crooks): Why do they laugh if it was unfortunate?—He was in the habit of having a tonic in the morning, and I had a bottle of very strong poison—prussic acid—and I put it alongside the bottle I had that he used to help himself to. (Q) A bottle of tonic?—

"Yes, a pick-me-up—just a tonic. (The Inspector): "What is there an ordinary person would wish to have out of a doctor's shop? (Mr. Robinson): Prussic acid? (Dr. Lamont): He thought he knew all about drugs, and helped himself to this one after having had it previously. He knew the bottle, and I had a bottle which was a fac-simile of the one he had been having his tonic from, and he got hold of it. I happened to notice it, or else the man would have been dead. (Mr. Robb) He helped himself to some prussic acid instead of tonic?—No. (Q) Prussic acid instead of pick-me-up? (Mr. Crooks) That was knock-me-down, then? (The Inspector) What is the bearing of this? (Mr. Robb) Have you supplied any of the guardians with drugs or medicine, doctor?—Oh, yes; the guardians thought they had a right to have anything out of my surgery. (Q) Claimed the right?—Claimed the right, of course; the surgery was an open door. (Q) Did any come in and help themselves?—Yes. (Q) What did they help themselves to?—Oh, cough drops. (Q) And that was claimed as an absolute right?—Yes. And then he is asked for the name and does not answer. The Inspector says: "I am waiting," and then he mentions Mr. Bacon and Mrs. Cordery. Have you ever heard anything before, of that taking place, Mr. Crooks?—The thing is too silly for words. What in the name of common sense is a guardian for if when the medical officer is in his dispensary he cannot go in and look at the drugs. I mean it is absolutely ridiculous. Do you want to go back to the old régime when the master was empowered to keep the guardians out of the workhouse?

(Mr. Robb.) You know very well that is not the charge?—Oh, I will do anything to oblige you.

(Mr. Robb.) The charge is the guardians helped themselves.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Crooks, I did not ask you that because I am going to call the guardians who are charged with helping themselves to answer. So far as you were aware did Mr. Bacon or Mrs. Cordery ever help themselves to drugs in the surgery?—Certainly not, they would be as foolish as the master if they did.

Q. Until Dr. Lamont made the charge in the witness-box, have you ever heard before of others helping themselves to drugs in his surgery?—I do not believe Lamont meant it when the words were put into his mouth, and if you have him back he will tell you so. His only complaint was about people going in and looking at it.

Q. Now, Dr. Lamont says "I found that most of the men engaged at the coal siding were practically loafing half the day; and, mind you, Mr. Davy, all the young men are getting an ounce of tobacco at the present time." Is that true or false?—I should think they got it if they were at work.

Q. If they were at work?—Sixty ounces, you know, were given out yesterday.

Q. The table showed the number of those under 60 who were getting it. It was not all of them by any means. Only those engaged, as you said before, in heavy work. Unloading coal or cleaning sewers, and so on. It was the men over 60 who were given tobacco?—Yes.

Q. Now just one or two questions about Mr. Madeley. A great point was made of the fact that his children came into the workhouse and he paid for them at the rate of 4s. 2d. At a fixed rate, and then they went on until they were practically grown up and yet remained in the workhouse. What do you say as to that?—Well, it is one of those things that will happen in the best regulated families. The difficulty is to turn a son and daughter out of a place, who have been there from childhood up.

Q. But what was the charge. On the shorthand notes it was stated 4s. 2d. a week. What was that 4s. 2d. based on?—For food. The whole thing was worked on a scale of the Local Government Board. They have to pay for the actual cost of things out of the stores. That is to say, the ratepayers were not at a loss.

Q. Is this the position, Mr. Crooks. When these children of Mr. Madeley's came into the workhouse, whatever their age was, they paid to the guardians the actual cost per head of all the food charged for all the inmates?—Yes—oh, no, not quite so, but the food they themselves consumed out of the stores. At the last meeting night the board carried a resolution that Mr. Walton's two or three little children, whatever it is, should pay so much a week. Well, they will go on, and the prices will be reconsidered later on.

Mr. Crooks,
24 July.

Mr. Crooks.
24 July.

(The Inspector.) The master is allowed to have his family until they are 14, but in this case they went over 14.

(Mr. Robb.) They not only have food but washing and everything else?—Very likely. If you had a son at home you would not put his washing out.

Q. I should make him pay for it, Mr. Crooks?—Well, we will see when we are dealing with you. I say quite plainly, Mr. Grant, it is one of those cases that will happen when you are dealing with a very large institution like ours. A detail of that character may creep into any man's household, to say nothing of a big institution, but I am not attempting to defend him.

(Mr. Grant.) If your attention had been called to the fact, or you had happened to come across it, it would have been put right?—As a matter of fact, the guardians are entitled to the credit. It was two guardians who did find it, and who requested him to leave the place, having regard to all the circumstances?

Q. Before any mention of it was made?—There was never a word about it outside at all.

Q. And that was long before this Inquiry was started?—Oh, yes.

Q. And so you dealt with it yourself, although you dealt with it late?—Yes. But in the good old times, when they used to do these things properly, you know, there were no such things as scandals arising. Their sons and daughters remained in. I assure you we had them there up to 30 odd years of age—not one or two, but a family of them, for which we never got any return at all. They stayed there until they got married or died of old age.

Q. Mr. Crooks, as a matter of fact, Mr. Madeley's son Frank was away at a school at Reading for some years, was he not?—Yes, away at boarding school, but not through all those long years spoken about.

Q. Now, Mr. Madeley was asked: "Just before your resignation were you voted £50 for extra services?—Yes. (Q.) What did those extra services consist of?—I do not want to answer this question. (The Inspector): I think you had better answer it?—It is for the supervision of the labourers—direct labour, and also the removal of cases to a convalescent institution." What would it consist of. Can you tell us the facts of that?—The £50 was voted to Mr. Madeley for exactly the thing he himself said. We had originally a superintendent of works down there—

Q. The workhouse?—Yes, and the repairs and painting and things of that sort were performed by men who were taken on, and Mr. Gillock, then superintendent of works, had originally been clerk of works for the construction of the new laundry, and knowing a good deal about the house he was naturally appointed, and then there came up some dispute. I do not want to drag him into it, but we were dissatisfied. It was something about paying the contractor's men—anyhow it raised a difference of opinion between himself and the guardians, and the result was, as you know, he resigned. Then we decided we would not have another superintendent of works at all—he was given over £200 a year—and that the master should have control, and so the master was given a gratuity, subject always to the approval of the Local Government Board, of £50, for doing the work for which originally we gave Mr. Gillock £200 and something over. That is how it was Mr. Madeley year after year since Mr. Gillock retired got a £50 gratuity allowed him.

Q. And year by year that was submitted to the auditor and approved by the Local Government Board?—Oh yes, and every year the sanction was asked for.

Q. May I just put in now the minutes of the board directing Dr. Lamont to go to the seaside?

(The Inspector.) I think it is quite clear what happened.

(Mr. Grant.) Minutes of the 16th September, 1903, and 14th October, 1903—Dr. Lamont was instructed by the board to examine their patients in the Sandgate convalescent homes and sanatorium, Wilderness Hill, Margate?—Amongst my papers, Mr. Grant, is a resolution of the board, of the 25th April, 1905, on the question of the central authority for dealing with contracts.

Q. I am leaving that to Mr. Lansbury, Mr. Crooks. Will you give that to Mr. Lansbury?—Yes.

Q. (Q) Just one other question. Over and above the £50 you told us of for additional remuneration, did you ever get anything further for compensation?—I have not

got the £50 yet. (Q) Over and above that did you get compensation?—Compensation in what way? (Q) For any purpose?—No, only salary. (Q) When the electric light was installed, for instance, did you get anything then?—I believe the guardians awarded me a gratuity. (Q) Did the guardians award you £50 for disturbance when the electric light was installed?—It is in the minutes. "I could not tell you from memory. (Q) For compensation for disturbance of your premises you got £50?" And there is no answer to that question?—Well, I think the £50 was given, and I think a case was made out for it too, and that also received the approval of the Local Government Board. What happened, of course, down at the house when the electric light was installed, was that trenches were dug along the corridor to put in the pipes, wires, and all the rest of it, and there was an everlasting din—morning, noon and night. This was immediately adjoining the master's house, and in consequence Mrs. Madeley had to go away, medical attendance had to be got to her, and generally they were put to an expense that they would not otherwise have been put to but for the work going on right against them. That £50 received—I repeat that—the approval of the Local Government Board, to whom we had to make out a case before they would sanction it.

Q. Quite so. Just one other question about Mr. Madeley. Dr. Lamont and Mr. Conoley both mentioned in their evidence Mr. Madeley's absences the other day. I believe you noticed this in the porter's book?—Yes. He is booked in and out just like any other person.

Q. Yes, there were certain periods, of course, when Mr. Madeley had a right to be away?—Oh, yes.

Q. Did you notice in the porter's book he was making long absences, and it was that I think that brought about partly the discussion about the nurse Beattie?—When the case first came under my notice, really the whole thing was broken off, and I had satisfactory evidence of that.

Q. And that woman had gone clean out of the country and then afterwards came back. It was not continuous?—Yes.

Q. But these absences of Mr. Madeley from the workhouse; have they been continuous for a series of years, or during the end of the period, when this infatuation for the nurse existed?—Towards the end.

Q. Mr. Robb says the discipline of the workhouse was bad and they could not get the work done. Mr. Haswell says insubordination was very frequent and the complaints to Mr. Madeley were not acted upon. Did you hear anything from Haswell of complaints of that kind?—No. In the early days there were some people who, like a good many other people, could not manage themselves, were continually making suggestions for the improvement of the house, but to say there was lack of discipline only proves that he knew nothing about it.

Q. In Dr. Lamont's evidence it is stated " (Q) What would you say as to the amount of attention given to their duties by the master and matron. Were they unremitting in their attention?—Unremitting, I should say, on a good many occasions. (Q) You do not mean unremitting, you mean they were absent on a good many occasions?—Yes. (Q) Was not it the matron's duty to visit the sick wards?—Yes. (Q) How often?—Every day. (Q) What is the longest period you can name during which you did not have the privilege of seeing her there?—As much as three months. (Q) She has been absent?—Yes." Now as a matter of fact the matron was absent during that serious illness you have spoken of, Mr. Crooks?—I should think on and off. You must keep in your mind now that the whole system of nursing in the sick wards has been entirely changed, and that we have a midwife and a trained nurse there, quite entirely different to what happened when the doctor first came. And then as for his knowledge of the master and matron being absent from their duties and all the rest of it, it would be very interesting to get out the headquarters book which shows how long every day the doctor was in the house and within call. How could he know in a two hours' visit or three hours' visit out of the twenty-four? How could he know whether the master and matron were about the house doing their duty or not? The porter's book would give you the exact time.

Q. That Dr. Lamont was in the house?—Yes.

Q. And the time during which he had an opportunity for observation?—Only, and not all that time, because he would be locked up in his surgery, and that dispensary

Mr. Crooks.
—
24 July.

when he locked the door he would not allow anybody to go in, and how would he be able to say what was going on?

Q. One other thing I want to ask you about the workhouse. On the 20th November it was found there were then in the house 1,561 persons. Out of these 1,319 were settled in the union?—Yes.

Q. That is to say, they must have been there three years at least?—Yes.

Q. Those with the status of irremovability, which means that they have been in the union three years, was 115; those whose settlement could not be ascertained, 41; under orders of removal, 22; under inquiry, 46; no record, but since discharged, 18. Now, out of 1,561 persons in the house, 1,319 were settled in the union. Does that show pretty conclusively that the workhouse does not attract people to the union?—I should think it did.

Q. They were old residents of the union in every case?—We have a record of their residence.

Q. Those who were settled in the union must either have lived here three years upwards without being in receipt of relief, or paid rates and taxes in the parish, or been apprenticed and served their time?—Yes.

(*Mr. Grant.*) That finishes my examination of Mr. Crooks.

(*The Inspector.*) Have you any questions, Mr. Robb?

(*Mr. Robb.*) Mr. Crooks, you commenced yesterday by giving us an account of the different public offices which you have held. They are rather numerous, are they not, at the present time?—Not so numerous as they have been.

Q. But you were at one and the same time a member of Parliament, a member of the London County Council, member of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, member of the Poplar Borough Council, and chairman of the Poplar Board of Guardians?—Yes.

Q. So that although as you have told us you gave your sole time to Poplar, you were only able to give a very small portion of it?—No, I gave a large portion, a very large portion, of my time to Poplar, because I slept there.

Q. Well, Mr. Crooks, you do not suggest that holding all these important public offices you are over at the workhouse very frequently, and have an intimate acquaintance with the details of its administration?—I do claim that notwithstanding the fact I hold a great many offices at the gift of the public, who know exactly what my calls are, I am able to give a very large amount of my time to the duties of the guardians far and away larger than did any ordinary chairman of the board of guardians who preceded me.

Q. No doubt. I am not complaining, but I am just pointing out the many positions you hold. Well now, for some time past you have not on an average been to the workhouse once a week, have you?—No. I think I said this morning three times in a fortnight.

Q. May I have that return?—I think it has not been once a week.

Q. I should like to be exact?—About 29, I think.

(*The Inspector.*) It is 39?—Then it is more than I thought.

(*Mr. Robb.*) It does not average once a week apparently?—No, it does not average once a week.

Q. Now, let us see. I see this return goes from the 5th December?—I am told it is for the 12 months.

Q. Yes, so that my original suggestion would be about right. I see your visits were chiefly like this—

(*Mr. Grant.*) What is the return?

(*Mr. Robb.*) It is one I borrowed from the Inspector. It is an in-and-out book. It goes from the 26th February, 1905, to the 18th March, 1906.

(*Mr. Grant.*) And during that period there were 39 visits.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Now, Mr. Crooks, I see that occasionally you were there for some time, but I don't think I am doing you an injustice when I suggest that your average visit was half an hour or less?—The periods might work out like this. They had occasionally been an hour and a half to two hours.

Q. Well, now, that kind of supervision, although I agree that it is quite as much as the ordinary chairman of a board of guardians gives, would not give you that intimate touch with the details that Mr. McCarthy would have

with his 386 visits?—I am not going to compare myself with other people. The plea I put in is that when we got the amended order in 1894, by Sir Henry Fowler, who was good enough to pass it, to enable us to go in at any time, it was not so much to find out complaints, but that the guardians were brought in contact more closely with the place, and mere walking through the place gives satisfaction to the officers, and the inmates a chance of appealing to you.

Q. My point is not so much that as this: You have given evidence regarding the doctor and other officers, and my suggestion to you is that the doctor and others received their instructions far more frequently from Mr. McCarthy, as chairman of the house committee, than from yourself?—Perfectly natural. It is for the chairman of the house committee.

Q. I quite agree, but then you can scarcely speak as to whether the doctor was subject to coercion or not can you?—Yes, I can, from the fact that when he was in any very serious difficulty he could always find me.

Q. So you with your 39 visits can speak as to what took place during Mr. McCarthy's 386 visits?—I do not pretend to; what I want to impress on you is that I could always be sent for in the week, Sundays included, whether I went into the house or not.

Q. Yes, well now, Mr. Crooks, and then you went on to deal with the deplorable condition of the workhouse when you became chairman?—Yes.

(*Mr. Grant.*) When he became member.

(*Mr. Robb.*) When he became chairman.

(*Mr. Grant.*) He was not chairman until 1897.

(*Mr. Robb.*) But before I go into that, when you first became a member of the board I think the only other public office you held was chairman of the council.—No, a trustee and chairman of the Libraries Committee.

Q. And as we know when you were elected to the guardians' board you approached your duties with a sincere and deep sympathy with the poor, largely as the result of your experiences which you have described?—And which I have never relaxed.

Q. Did you approach it with an equal sense of your duty to the ratepayers?—Yes, I qualify that, if I may.

Q. If you will?—Certainly, I consider it a local and a national loss for any man, woman or child to remain without the common necessities of life, and what they gain temporarily they lose in the long run.

Q. Yes. I do not think anyone disputes that. I think we only differ as to the method of dealing with that. Did you with the exception of the experience gained on the county council have any experience of dealing with large sums of money or of administering an institution comprising some hundreds of people?—No, not in the sense you are alluding to, but I have had to do with tremendous sums of money, not my own, as you may suppose, but in helping to organise and to govern large numbers of men. And when you talk of experience you know the natural answer to that, that no man, whoever he may be, whether he comes from the University or from the common day school, gets experience until he has been there.

Q. Experience is sometimes expensive?—But I shall show you as we go along that I have had considerable experience to start with.

Q. When you first undertook the duties?—When I first went there.

Q. For instance, did you ever control a turnover of from £150,000 to £200,000 a year?—No, or no other man.

Q. But you have done that as chairman of the Poplar Board of Guardians?—Yes, I should think so.

Q. To some extent. Did you ever control an institution comprising 100 officers and 1,500 or 1,600 inmates, or had any experience akin to that?—Yes, I think I have. I would not at this moment like to swear. I was chairman to the Claybury committee which had 2,000 inmates and a considerable number of officers, and which is a self-governing institution.

Q. Please understand, Mr. Crooks, I am not complaining, but am only suggesting that your sympathies were far larger than your experience?—We shall see.

Q. Yes, we shall see. When you first became a member of the board, I think you told us, was in 1893?—March, 1893.

Mr. Crooks,
24 July.

Q. And Mr. Lansbury became a member at the same time?—That is so.

Q. And then you found a deplorable state of things existing?—Yes.

Q. Did you ever make any report in writing to the board of guardians or to the Local Government Board as to that state of things?—We reported it at every board meeting, and it was continually in the press.

Q. Is there any documentary evidence in regard to it?—Not that I know of beyond the records of the board.

Q. For instance, there was a Local Government Board Inquiry?—Yes.

Q. Which dealt with the old board to some extent?—Yes, brought about entirely by the action of Mr. Lansbury.

Q. And yourself?—Yes.

Q. In consequence of your investigation as to the state of things existing?—Ah, no; not quite that. What happened was this: That we aroused to our limited experience of public affairs. We had aroused such indignation in the neighbourhood as to make it a moral impossibility for the condition of things to continue, and when we had insisted that an improved condition of things must come about, it led to the resignation of the then master and matron. When an application for a pension on a higher scale was made we strongly objected and demanded an inquiry into the administration of the house, in which we were eminently successful, although we were not then represented by counsel.

Q. Yes, I think that it is Mr. Deason whom you are referring to?—I am referring to the Inquiry you yourself speak about.

Q. What was the date of that Inquiry?—Somewhere in 1894.

(Mr. Grant.) I put it in yesterday.

(Mr. Robb.) Well, now, did you at that Inquiry give evidence of such things as rats running over the oatmeal?—Oh, yes.

Q. Was there any reference to it in the evidence?—I do not remember. You see that Inquiry was conducted so much different to this one. We had to put our statements in writing and witnesses were examined on that.

Q. Did your statement in writing refer to the details you have given?—I did not make any statement. Mr. Lansbury made the statement and I supported him.

Q. You know in the report which has been put in, or rather the summary of it contained in the letter of December, 1896, there is no reference to this matter?—Oh, no. They were quite bad enough as they were. We had no wish to enlarge upon it.

Q. Surely that was a matter to which the Inspector would have referred if evidence had been given on it?—I think he was pretty well satisfied.

(Mr. Grant.) I was told by Mr. Lansbury—

(Mr. Robb.) I did not interrupt you.

(Mr. Grant.) I was constantly interrupted. I am told that in the records of the Local Government Board are particulars which Mr. Lansbury supplied—all particulars of the things on which he wished to speak. I did not ask for it yesterday, because I only wanted the result of that Inquiry. But as these things are referred to I wish, Mr. Davy, you would send for them and put them in to show what was done by Mr. Lansbury.

(Mr. Robb.) The items were dealt with by the Inspector, in yesterday's proceedings. Was the excessive stocking of flannel one of the matters?—That is so.

Q. That was one of the abuses to which you drew attention at that time?—Yes.

Q. Are you aware that your position last year or early this year with regard to bed-ticking was almost parallel with that?—No comparison whatever.

Q. Have you gone into the figures?—Oh, yes; the difference between the bed-ticking and the flannel is that at that time there was no flannel, at this time there is no ticking. That is the difference.

Q. Mr. Crooks, just look at these letters. The facts appear to be as follows: For the year ending Lady Day, 1893, tenders were invited for those amongst other articles, and the estimated quantities that would probably

be required were given as under: Stout Welsh flannel, estimated quantity, 1,000 yards; grey flannel, estimated quantity, 5,000 yards; 3,718 yards of the first were supplied, instead of 1,000, and none of the second. Do you say, in view of that, there was no flannel. Just look at your own evidence yesterday?—The stores were absolutely empty.

Q. I am not on that point. Stout Welsh flannel, estimated quantity, 1,000 yards, tendered for at 9d. per yard. Grey flannel, estimated quantity 5,000 yards, tendered for at 1½d. per yard. 3,718 yards of the first were supplied, and none of the second?—Do you know what we are talking about? 3,000 odd yards had been ordered at the higher price of 9d., and none at the lower price—is that it?

Q. That is just the same as the bed-ticking?—Oh, no. You wait a minute. You are not having me yet. No, no, no.

Q. Mr. Crooks, I do not wish you to get cross with me. Yesterday you were humorous and pathetic?—I can assure you that if this room were full of Robbs you would not upset me.

Q. You were humorous and pathetic yesterday. I do not want you to be angry now?—I do not want you to take me off the point.

Q. But if you are angry you will take me off?—3,800 yards of flannel were ordered.

Q. And supplied?—Instead of 1,000 and none of the second. That amounts to none of the lower price. (Referring to interruptions in Court.) One at a time over there. I can manage one you know and it is much more convenient than interrupting. I can hear your voices. The point we made then, and make now, was that when the estimated quantities were high the prices were low, and on the other hand the contrary was the case, the higher priced articles to the extent of 3,718 yards were supplied instead of 1,000, and none of the cheap calico. The point there following was that we found the stores empty, although the flannel was supposed to have been supplied. It might have been there, we never saw it.

Q. But Mr. Crooks, I do not think you understand?—But the invoice was there and the delivery was never proved, and supposing it had been, there were still 1,200 or 1,300 inmates without changes.

Q. I am not on that point?—You want to compare that with bed-ticking.

Q. Yes. I have not done with this. If you go on you will see the master's explanation of the large increase in the consumption of the more expensive material in 1892, is the admission of a large number of aged and infirm people who had apparently been outside. Do not you see, Mr. Crooks, it is alleged in the Inspector's report that 3,718 yards of Welsh flannel was purchased and supplied, whereas the estimated quantity was 1,000 yards only?—Yes.

Q. You see that?—No, I do not. I see what you say.

Q. Is that not a fair construction to put on the matter?—It does not matter.

Q. It is the official report that you have put in. It is from the Assistant Secretary to the Local Government Board, dated the 11th December, 1894, and gives a summary of Mr. Lockwood's report of the official Inquiry?—And signed by Mr. Knollys.

Q. Now, I ask you if there is any substantial difference between the position with regard to the flannel in that year, 1894, and your position with regard to the bed-ticking last year?—The actual facts are that there was bed-ticking in stock. Let me finish with the bed-ticking my way.

Q. Just come to —?—We do not do anything till we have done with the bed-ticking.

Q. I will deal with bed-ticking.

(Mr. Grant.) Just give us the dates?—1st May, 1906.

(Mr. Robb.) I want you to begin with the month of October, 1902. Will you, I ask you?

(Mr. Grant.) Please give us the figures from that date?—I have not the figures from 1902.

(Mr. Robb.) I will give them to you. I am not going to allow you to give my figures. I am going to put certain evidence on the notes in the same way as Mr. Grant has done?—I say you are not going to put evidence in my mouth.

Q. I ask you to look at the notes?—

(*Mr. Grant.*) May we have this a little plainer. Mr. Crooks is asked to explain the difference between flannel and bed-ticking. He has given his answer on flannel, and now wants to give it on bed-ticking. Mr. Robb now wants to refer him to the notes. Let Mr. Crooks give his answer.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I am desiring to put evidence on the notes to Mr. Crooks in the same way that Mr. Grant put a great deal of evidence this morning. I want to call Mr. Crooks' attention to the evidence, and ask him whether it is correct or not.

(*The Inspector.*) Wait a moment, Mr. Crooks. I think you must have time to look this up. Whose evidence was it?

(*Mr. Robb.*) Mr. Genery's. Have you got it, Mr. Crooks. It reads:—"Mr. Robb.—Were articles ever purchased when there was already an adequate supply in stock?—Yes, sir. (Q) Can you give us any instance of that?—Yes, sir. The stock of bed-ticking on the last day in October, 1903, was 1,869½ yards. (Q) Over a mile?—Yes. This bed-ticking is made up half-yearly. The consumption for that half-year was nothing. That left us where we were with 1,869½ yards. (Q) At March, 1903?—Yes. The consumption in March, 1903, was 1090½ yards. To meet that consumption the purchase was 2,347½ yards. (Q) Was that purchased at the beginning of the half-year?—I could not say that, sir. (Q) Then the position is this. Just let me see if I have got it right. That having in stock 1,869 yards in March, 1903, and requiring 1,090 yards for consumption that quarter 2,349 yards more were purchased?—Yes, sir. (Q) So that the stock was four times more than was actually required?—That is so." Now, Mr. Crooks, was that so?—Only you see for the sake of your argument you are absolutely out of court. There was no two qualities in bed-ticking to begin with.

Q. I am not dealing with two qualities, as you know. I am dealing with allegations of excessive stock in 1904?—Excuse me. You began with flannels in 1892.

Q. Only Mr. Crooks?—Excuse me, we were discussing the memorandum sent to us by the Local Government Board after the Inquiry, and you want to compare the order of 3,000 odd yards of flannel with the order for bed-ticking, and therefore you are not discussing 1902.

Q. That letter is dated 1896, and refers to the Inquiry of the previous year?

(*The Inspector.*) 1894?

(*Mr. Robb.*) This is 1896.

(*The Inspector.*) Apparently a mistake in the notes.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I am quoting from your own notes.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Not our own notes, the Local Government Board's.

(*Mr. Robb.*) That does not matter. It is the guardians'.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Is it intended to put on to the guardians a slip on the part of the shorthand writer?

(*Mr. Robb.*) It is your memorandum, not my will to put it on anyone. But whether 1894 or 1896, I am putting it to you that the allegation of excessive stock of flannel in 1894 holds good with regard to the bed-ticking in 1904?—I assure you there was no stock, and therefore it does not hold good. You cannot talk of stock in 1904 when there was no stock. If you will start with bed-ticking in 1903, or 1902, or 1904, I will argue with you.

Q. Then the Inspector was wrong when he said that 3,718 yards were supplied?—No, I should not think he was wrong. I think I said just now I thought he was right, that so far as we knew they knew they were supplied, but we knew there was nothing in the store when we got there.

Q. I do not care twopence about that. I am dealing with the excess, four times the estimated quantity purchased?—Have you given up the flannel?

Q. I have given up nothing?—You would not—

Q. And I ask you to explain the purchase last year of four times the amount of bed-ticking you actually required?—Here is something for you. In 1903 the amount of bed-ticking bought was nil. There was in stock as you read out 1,869 yards. In 1904 when the price was 7½d. an additional 2,900 yards were bought,

making a balance in stock of 2,664 yards. Not flannel that was in stock but bed-ticking.

Q. A mile and a half?—Never mind whether it was two miles. It was there. The next year the price was the same, and 1,677 yards were purchased. Left in stock 2,241 yards. And I want you to note this, Mr. Davy, that the price went up from 7½d. to 8d., and the guardians did what you have asked us to do, and what the municipal alliance asked us to do, buy while it is cheap, and so we bought it while it was cheap, and when it went up to 8d. we bought none.

Q. Then why estimate for it?—We estimate for a lot of things on the off chance that we can get them cheap. That is what you told us to do.

Q. You did not buy Mr. Pyle's articles when they were cheap?—Do not you get excited now. In the next year there were still remaining, although we had bought none, in 1905-6 we had 1,300 yards. Now, I put this in as evidence: if the contractor had known that we had so much in stock he would never have quoted 11d. a yard, would he?

Q. You cannot tell, Mr. Crooks. The ways of contractors are too mysterious for me?—I can quite believe that. A man may be clever at telephones, but not clever at this sort of thing. But the fact remains, Mr. Davy, that in this year—

Q. But, Mr. Crooks, you know this?—That in this year the tender taken was for 11d. a yard, and we do not intend to buy any at that price any more than we bought last year. I am not sure that if it was put in at 5d. a yard whether we should not have increased our stock.

Q. But come. The late master, Mr. Madeley, told you he wanted 700 yards at 11d.? And it was not until after his dismissal, and Mr. Diamond had raised the question, you found nothing was wanted?—Is that so. It is a little unfortunate.

Q. One moment?—We are on bed-ticking.

(*The Inspector.*) I should be so much obliged if the people before me would refrain from making so much noise. Mr. Crooks is undergoing a considerable ordeal, and Mr. Robb is too, and you should be more considerate?—There has been no order issued this year. These contracts are accepted in March, and no orders given last year although the tender was accepted in March. I do not think it would have been unreasonable if the master had had 700 yards as estimated. The estimate was that he might want it supposing we had to renew all the beds.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Although Cartwright's quote you for that bed ticking at 11d., and at Bethnal Green he quotes 5d. a yard. Is that so?—I do not know.

Q. Did you look at Mr. Oxley's evidence?—I do not know.

Q. Then it is not a matter of importance to you that Cartwright's price for bed ticking is 11d. a yard to you and 5d. to Bethnal Green in the same year?—You wait.

Q. I would like an answer to that question?—I can give you an answer and I will give an answer, but in my own way.

Q. It is a matter that affects you as chairman of the Poplar Board of Guardians. Cartwright quotes you at 11d. a yard, when he thinks 700 yards will be required, and the same year quotes 5d. to Bethnal Green. What is your opinion?—I think he cut his own throat.

Q. Is that a model system?—I think it is a very bad one.

Q. So do I?—How did the master know when he estimated for 700 yards, that it was going to be 11d. or 5d.?

Q. I prefer not to go into that?—What is the explanation?

Q. If you ask me for an explanation, I will tell you, and that is that the master knew a good deal about the contractors?—You will have some difficulty in proving that. I am not defending him.

(*The Inspector.*) Nor are you defending the contractors?—So far as contractors are concerned, I have said many times if evidence of such a character is brought forward as would lead the Local Government Board to believe that these people have obtained information they have no right to, I will appeal to the Local Government Board to cancel their contracts. I am not defending anyone, but I do want to point out to you that where an

Mr. Crooks.

24 July.

Mr. Crooks,
24 July.

estimated quantity of 700 yards is put down and the price is abnormal, and it was abnormal I think, the guardians showed their business capacity in not ordering any.

Q. Is that the current tender?—The current tender. Fortunately for us we have enough in stock to do without being flooded.

Q. Even supposing you have to open Hutton Schools?—Even so.

(Mr. Robb.) Of course, you know perfectly well, that it was not until Mr. Diamond interposed after Mr. Madeley's resignation that the order was cancelled?—There never was an order. How difficult it is to make you understand.

Q. And you did not actually require it?—May I bring another little thing to your notice. These shoe irons, each above 4,800 per cent., and we never ordered any.

Q. Mr. Crooks, I am going through all these in detail later on. For the moment I am dealing with the difference between the late workhouse régime and the present. You have not told us of all the enormities committed under the old régime?—No, they would fill a volume.

Q. You know you made a speech the other day?—

(Mr. Grant.) Where was the speech made and what was the date? Let us have a little accuracy.

(The Inspector.) Did you deliver a speech?—I have delivered a good many.

(Mr. Robb.) On the 6th July, speaking at Eltham, to the ward members of the Labour Representation Association, to a respectable body of men, you said you were mainly responsible for clearing out of the poor law boards the people who were fighting you to-day. And you knew the time when something more expensive was put to the service of the guardians than beer. You know, too, of officers being called before the board and rebuked for their drunkenness, and at one o'clock in the morning they might be seen carrying the man who had previously rebuked them dead drunk to his brougham. And I think in those days they had whiskey and champagne, you said?—And billiard tables.

Q. Can you justify beer?—We are coming to that in a moment.

Q. Now who are the people who are fighting you to-day who you cleared out of the poor law?—I am not bound to say. They are well known.

Q. I want to know?—I am not going to tell you unless you are going to put them in the box.

Q. I want to know who you are fighting, and who you had to clear out of the poor law?—You know, and your aide-de-camp knows.

Q. I do not. I am asking for information?—If you go to the Local Government Board you will find in the archives there a very long written statement signed by me over and over again calling attention to the condition of things that existed under the poor law in this neighbourhood. If you go over the old Bromley station I will show you a wall where, in the old days, they used to come out in the early morning, and the door of which has now been built up. You will also find a record of a statement that on a given night there was a ball and a concert going on there contrary to the Local Government Board Orders. You will also find a record of the answer sent by the then President of the Local Government Board, Sir Henry Fowler, in which my letter was sent down for the observations of the managers, and you know what happened, and the language the managers used I am told was anything but polite.

Q. Now this drunkenness you allude to. Did you ever bring that under the notice of the Local Government Board?—I wrote it and signed it.

Q. Did you offer any evidence about it before Mr. Lockwood held this Inquiry?—It did not come up then. It was later on.

Q. Did you take any steps to deal with the drunken official who carried the man out?—He was not under my control.

Q. Who was he?—He retired on a pension like all these people do.

Q. What was the name of the gentleman who was carried out drunk?—I am not going to tell you.

Q. Then though you made this general statement regarding the policy and administration of the old board you decline to support it by not telling?—The alliance don't know. I remember them all very well?

Q. Mr. Crooks, may I take it that up to 1895 when you and Mr. Lansbury got on the board there was no alteration?—I do not know. It was an uphill fight. The policy of two men is not much out of 24.

Q. We will go into that by and by. Now, in 1895 the mean number of in-door paupers was 2,809. Is that so?—I will take your word for that.

Q. And in 1906 it was 3,833?—Yes.

Q. That was an increase of 36 per cent.?—Yes.

Q. How do you account for that increase?—Oh, by a variety of reasons.

Q. What do you think is the principal reason?—Poverty.

Q. Do you know that 1895, you have told us so, was the worst year ever experienced in Poplar?—It was the worst six weeks ever experienced.

Q. Mr. Martley told us it was the worst year?—I have a great respect for Mr. Martley, but he is like a good many more people, he does not know everything.

Q. You think he was wrong in describing 1895 as the worst year?—No.

(Mr. Grant.) I do not think he suggested it. It was Mr. Berry?—They reckoned it was. As I pointed out, it was acute from the method of dealing with it.

(Mr. Grant.) I wish to enter an observation on that. It is unfair to put these questions to Mr. Crooks. These figures are taken from your memorandum, and your memorandum gives the mean numbers.

(Mr. Robb.) Are we to have more speeches?

(Mr. Grant.) Your table on page 3 gives the mean number of in-door paupers. I do not think Mr. Robb knows what that means. It means the number of paupers on January 1st, 1905, and the 1st July, 1905, added together and divided by two, and therefore you get the mean number of paupers in January and July. It does not show what number of paupers there were during the winter of which we complain.

(The Inspector.) You had better take the January figures.

(Mr. Grant.) You are not appreciating my point. If you look at the shorthand notes it was said that the winter was very open and then in February a severe frost set in, and many people came for assistance. Therefore the figures of January and July, 1905, do not show the distress that existed in February.

(Mr. Robb.) Surely a comparison, of the mean of two, must be fair. Now, Mr. Crooks, that is an increase in these two years I have referred to of 36 per cent. in numbers?—Wait a minute. Let us get this quite clear. In October, the week ending the 6th October, 1894, the out-door figures were 1,609, and they were going steadily up then.

Q. I am on the in-door figures?—I have not these at this moment.

Q. That was an increase in in-door paupers between 1895 and 1906 of 36 per cent.?—Yes.

Q. The comparison being admittedly with the period of acute distress of 1895?—No.

Q. Has the population of Poplar increased by 36 per cent.?—Do you want the percentage. It is very little. We have not increased beyond 3,000 or 4,000 during the same period. It may be a little more, though.

Q. Now deal with out-door paupers?—Please finish with the in-door ones. You wanted to know how I accounted for the large increase in the in-door poor, which I told you was mainly through poverty. I did not mean by that to make a cheap joke. You may take it that whenever you have a wave of depression, it may be nearly every ten years or about that, whenever you get a cycle of depression, distress becomes acute. It becomes acute, running sometimes for two years, or three or four, 1866 was very acute, then 1870, it was very acute in 1880, 1890, and 1894 happened to be a most acute period. Whenever that happens you will get a very large number, I think you yourself called them the residuum. Whenever that happens again the ordinary workman doing his best to maintain his father or mother has to move into a lesser and cheaper house; it becomes overcrowded, and if the bad times continue the father and mother have to come into the poor house. The 36 per cent. are largely old people and not young people at all. That will happen whenever you get a period of depression. That is what we are fighting.

Mr. Crooks.

24 July.

Q. Your view is born of experience?—Yes.

Q. And you think that the 36 per cent. is largely composed of the residuum?—That would be so.

Q. Then I see that the increase in the cost was 86 per cent., which was somewhat disproportionate to the increase in numbers?—Do you want me to go into that?

Q. I would like your reasons?—The reasons are apparent. That instead of treating these people as such and keeping a mere animal existence in them we began to treat them as human beings, and from that time the increase in the cost has gone up. That is what we have contended for all the time. You have no right to punish the old people.

(Mr. Robb.) I will take that answer.

(Mr. Grant.) One moment, may I call attention to the inaccuracy of that table?

(Mr. Robb.) I strongly object to that. I did not interrupt Mr. Grant and I will not be interrupted.

(Mr. Grant.) Then sit down.

(The Inspector.) I think we should get on better—

(Mr. Grant.) Those figures have not been quoted and, therefore, as they are wrong, they should not be put to Mr. Crooks. My point is that the figures in the Local Government Board Memorandum are wrong, and I want to call your attention to this. This is the mistake I refer to. Take first the number of in-door paupers, showing an increase of 36 per cent., take the cost and it shows an increase of 86 per cent. But what you have overlooked is that this 86 is not comparable with the 36. Suppose you have the increase in the number of in-door paupers, I have had the figures worked out, the increase in the cost is only 34 per cent. What you have done is to compare the cost with the paupers as though the figure of the paupers is constant. It is not. You have to allow for the increase in paupers before you compare the increase in the cost. Therefore it is not fair to put to Mr. Crooks what is a mistake of the Local Government Board.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Crooks is showing why there is an increase.

(Witness.) I should have come to that in a second, because you have an increase from 3s. 5½d. to 4s. 0½d. That cannot be 86 per cent. If anyone outside the municipal alliance can understand that, I cannot.

(Mr. Robb.) May I go on without any further interruptions. I am bound to point out that in half an hour I have had half a dozen interruptions and speeches from Mr. Grant, and therefore I must not be complained of if I take an abnormal amount of time in my cross-examination of Mr. Crooks?—I assure you I will not complain.

Q. Then we come to the out-door figures. In 1895 we take 2,078 as the mean number?—I should point out that the mean number happens on one particular day, whatever happens.

Q. Do you suggest that it is unfair for the purposes of comparison?—No, I think it is the best you can do.

Q. You think it is the best I can do. It is rather what the Local Government Board can do?—Then I will say the best the Local Government Board can do.

(Mr. Grant.) Not the best that can be done.

(The Inspector.) Will you take this then, the 1st of January figures?

(Mr. Robb.) We will compare the 1st of January in each year. Will you kindly give me the out-door paupers for the 1st of January, 1895. You have the figures?—The 1st of January, 1895?

Q. Will you give them to me?—I have inaccurate figures up to the 5th of January.

Q. We are asked to take the 1st of January?

(The Inspector.) You are taking the returns from what we call Form A which is slightly different. Take Form B.

(Mr. Robb.) Take them from Mr. Davy's form?—Here I want to show you a striking thing. 2,080 on the 5th of the same month.

Q. Wait a minute. 1st of January, 1895, 2,080. Now 1st of January, 1906?—1906, 7,330.

Q. Well, now, Mr. Crooks, the figures are substantially the same as the figures given in the Local Government Board table here—the mean?—Our own figures tell an

entirely different story. Five days afterwards, in 1895 instead of having 2,080 we had 1,663. And then when the frost set in in February of that year, they jumped up suddenly from 1904, in the week ending the 16th February, to 5,111.

Q. But, Mr. Crooks, do not you see that if they were 1,660 in 1895 instead of 2,080, my point as to the increase would be all the stronger?—Not quite.

Q. I will take either figure for comparison, and I will ask you if you see anything unfair in the comparison taken of the mean figures in the second table of the Memorandum. Give any two figures you like on any date you like in 1895 and 1906 for the purpose of comparison?—I am not disputing the figures of the Local Government Board.

Q. But Mr. Grant has. He told us that they were not fair; I know you want to be fair, even to me. I will not attempt to put these figures to you, as Mr. Grant says they are all wrong?

(Mr. Grant.) I said the percentage was wrong, and not a fair comparison.

(Mr. Robb.) We have got it that if you take other tables the increase will be even more marked?—No, less.

(The Inspector.) You see, Mr. Crooks' point is this, that the 1st of January would be about the highest, but that in a given year, owing to the frost, pauperism rose from 2,000 to 5,000. The comparison should be with regard to the 5,000 and not the smaller number.

(Mr. Grant.) That is my point.

(Mr. Robb.) And that would upset the comparison of cost?

(Mr. Grant.) Oh, no.

(Mr. Robb.) Now, Mr. Crooks, compare the mean in this statement, and the increase in numbers between 1895 and 1906 is 249 per cent. This is at the bottom of the first page. How do you account for the fact that out-door pauperism in Poplar has risen 249 per cent. in ten years, when you say that the population has only increased to a trivial extent?—Is it possible? Is it possible you want me to argue on that point? Here on one day you may be down to 1,600, and in less than a week after you run up to 6,000, and want me to take that as an average all the year round. I know perfectly well, if you do not know you ought to know, that at the particular time this was got out you were dealing with an abnormal condition of things, and if you take that period as the lowest and another as the highest, and have no regard to intermediate times, you are drawing on your imagination.

Q. Mr. Crooks, you know perfectly well that the figures were fairly constant up to 1900, and after that we had this marked increase?—No. They rise and fall continuously. Even this year they have done exactly the same thing.

Q. I am dealing now with the years on the table, and I suggest to you that the total figures, taking the mean for each year, of out-door paupers from 1895 to 1900 were fairly constant?—They fluctuated.

Q. They were small fluctuations?—Fluctuations of 3,000?

Q. Taking the mean for each year, did they fluctuate to the extent of 3,000. Can you show me any year in which there were these fluctuations?—I think I have it in front of me.

Q. Show me any year, from 1895 to 1906, taking the mean there was a fluctuation of 3,000?—

(Mr. Grant.) Take these figures of January?—They do fluctuate. Here was an acute period. We have an acute period levelled against us which makes a jump of 240 per cent.

Q. You are asked to give a particular figure?—

(The Inspector.) Wait a moment.

(Mr. Grant.) He does not know where the figures are. If you look on Table A, on the return 1902-3-4-5-6 you will find that the mean in 1902 was 2,780, in 1903, 3,232, in 1904, 3,677, in 1905, 6,011, and in 1906, 7,247?—Which shows a fluctuation of 3,000 in one year.

(Mr. Grant.) And then in 1906 you get a mean of 7,200.

(Mr. Robb.) Now, Mr. Crooks, will you look on Table B, page 12. Now in 1895 the ratio of pauperism per 1,000 of the population in Poplar was 30 per cent.?—I have got it.

Mr. Crooks.

24 July.

Q. That is the table. For the whole of London in the same year it was 30. No, 23·2?—There, you see that is an example.

Q. It will save time if you will let me put the whole of the figures, and then you can comment on them. Now, in 1905 Poplar pauperism was 65·8 per thousand, and the whole of London had risen slightly to 25·8. So that in ten years the ratio per 1,000 in Poplar had risen from 30 to 65, and in the whole of London from 23 to 25. In other words, 35 per thousand in Poplar and only 2 per thousand for the whole of London. And you know, do you not, that the 2 per thousand increase for the whole of London is almost entirely attributable to the local increase in Poplar?—Are you ready for your answer?

Q. Yes?—Now, I want you to look down the column yourself, and follow it down from 1895, when it was 30. What you have tried to prove was that the rise was continuous.

Q. From 1900?—Then it was not 1895.

Q. I put it to you just now that from 1895 to 1900 the figures were fairly constant, and I suggest a sharp rise from 1900?—Follow the figures again. You began with 30 per cent. It dropped to 23, then rose to 29·3, and then dropped to 23.

Q. What did? You are comparing Poplar with the whole of London. You must take the first figures in each case?—

(Mr. Grant.) You are right, there is a varying figure, from 30·1 in 1895, 29·3 in 1896, 27·8 in 1897, 28·6 in 1898.

(The Inspector.) I am afraid these figures will confuse the shorthand notes, Mr. Grant?—Begin with 30.

(Mr. Robb.) It varies between 27 and 30. That is so?—Yes.

Q. Then when we get to 1900 it goes from 30 to 32 in 1901, in 1902 to 35, in 1903 to 39, in 1904 to 45, and in 1905 to 65 per 1,000?—Yes, but does not 1904 prove that there was an abnormal amount of distress, and do not the figures for 1905 prove exactly the same thing?

Q. But, Mr. Crooks, the difference between 1894 and 1895 was only 2 per cent., if you look at the table?—Yes.

Q. But the difference between 1904 and 1905 is 20 per cent.?—

(Mr. Grant.) Calculated on the 1st July?—The answer is simple. I have told you about the 1904 figures.

(Mr. Robb.) Let us take them on the 1st of January of each year and we will see. Let us take the 1st of January, Mr. Crooks. Well, now, on the first of January, 1895, the ratio was apparently 29, speaking for Poplar. Then it increased slightly up to 1900. In 1901 it was 34, in 1902, 36, in 1903, 41, in 1904, 46, and in 1905, 70. I cannot see much in Mr. Grant's suggestion that the 1st of January displays a different state of things?—It only proves the jump all the same.

Q. Yes, but I take it that between 1894 and 1895 on the 1st of January it jumped down from 31 to 29?—Yes.

Q. Well, the jump between 1904 and 1905 is a jump up of from 46 to 70 per 1,000?—I have just had some figures handed to me showing that this has been going on before. Thus in 1866 pauperism jumped up on March 27th, 1866, from 3,177 to 9,569 on the 2nd of April, which was only a week later.

Q. That was during the shipbuilders' strike, was it not?—Oh, no, but during the Overend and Gurney's bank collapse. We had not much money even in this district.

Q. Now, Mr. Crooks, in 1905 your pauperism was 10 per 1,000 less than Bermondsey. Is that so?—I have read it.

Q. Is it correct?—Yes.

Q. Which is the next most pauperised union. Bermondsey, I think, is the next most pauperised union?—The next most needy, I think it would be better to say. It is a better word than "pauperising" all the time. It is the sweaters who make paupers; we do not make them.

Q. Believe me, I had not the slightest intention of using it offensively. I read it from the Memorandum. Is it a fact that Bermondsey is the next poorest union?—I understand it is.

Q. In 1895 you were 10 per cent. less than Bermondsey?—Yes.

Q. And you are now 20 per cent. greater?—Are we at this moment?

Q. Yes, according to the Memorandum?—According to the Memorandum, it is made out at the beginning of the year.

Q. In 1895 you were only slightly greater than that of the whole of London, or of the eastern district?—Yes.

Q. And at the present time it is something like?—Is that quite so?

Q. I am quoting from page 8 of the Memorandum?—It does not bear it out on page 12.

Q. Will you deal with this first?—I am on page 8.

Q. I see in 1895 you were only slightly greater than the whole of London or the eastern district. Now you are twice as great?—Yes.

Q. As the eastern districts are. And more than twice as great as the whole of London?—Yes, but what do you claim in the eastern district.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Crooks, just ask for the reference before you answer.

(Mr. Robb.) That is paragraph 8 on page 5, and I think we get the eastern district set out elsewhere. The word eastern comprises Shoreditch, Bethnal Green, Whitechapel, St. George's East, Stepney, Mile End Old Town, and Poplar?—Yes.

Q. So that you are included in the total, and you are compared with the aggregate of which you are a part?—But of which no evidence is given showing the class of population we deal with here compared with the others. Take Bethnal Green, if you like.

Q. I will take them all, if you like. Let us take them in order. How do you say Poplar differs in its industrial and financial conditions from Shoreditch?—Why, employment in and about Shoreditch is exceedingly steady. It may be poor, but it is steady. A man may be poor on £1 a week, but if he gets it regular, he knows exactly what he is doing, but if you get a man in casual work, if he earns £2 this week, and nothing for three weeks, he would still be in a worse position than the man at Shoreditch.

(The Inspector.) There is much less casual labour?—Much less.

(Mr. Robb.) As to Bethnal Green?—Bethnal Green works out very largely like this: From the early part of the nineties nearly all the poor part of Bethnal Green was swept away, and a tremendous amount of compensation was paid. Poor houses were removed, people were driven to the four quarters of the globe, and large blocks put in their places, and took up a tremendous poor law area. These blocks are now very largely inhabited by the better-to-do class, and an alien population: so that they swept that class away almost entirely. Take the place that is nearest Shoreditch, adjoining there. It used to be called the Jago—all swept away; it would originally have been a burden upon Bethnal Green.

Q. But where do you say you have got to-day in the poor law area of Poplar, an area comparable to that which was swept away in Bethnal Green?—I do not think we have; I do not think we ever had an area as bad, but we certainly have not had one to sweep away.

(The Inspector.) There is great overcrowding there?—Tremendous overcrowding.

(Mr. Robb.) You know, of course, that Bethnal Green, like Poplar, is very poor?—Yes, I apply to Bethnal Green almost exactly the same kind of argument as I apply to Shoreditch, with this difference, that the poor population of Bethnal Green are largely Jews, who deal with their own poor, and, therefore, do not become chargeable to the poor law. The Jews entirely deal with their own poor people, and Bethnal Green does not suffer. Its poor are normal, and casual employment does not prevail in Bethnal Green to the extent it does in our borough.

Q. But you know, Mr. Crooks, Bethnal Green has not increased its out-door pauperism to anything like the same extent as Poplar?—How could it? It had not the same class of people to deal with. I thought I made that clear. I am sorry you were not listening.

Q. I was listening?—The point we were dealing with was that it was a different population. The slums were cleared away; and thousands and thousands of people

Mr. Crooks.
24 July.

who were always on the verge of out-door relief or in-door medical assistance have been cleared out of Bethnal Green. Employment there is entirely different to employment here.

Q. Then do you know they had, on January 1st, 1905, only 531 out-door paupers against your 7,869?—Doesn't that prove my case?

Q. I suggest not?—

(The Inspector.) It is a different policy?—Policy may account for something, but not for everything.

(Mr. Robb.) You say it is not the policy of the guardians?—It may account for something but not for everything. I say that the population is entirely different.

Q. How about Whitechapel?—Well, Whitechapel is one of those cases mentioned by Mr. Chamberlain in that little book I read from yesterday. There, you see, there have been huge warehouses put up where formerly were people, and there are huge blocks which are entirely inhabited by Jews, and if you add the rigid administration of no out-relief you have got the answer.

Q. On the other hand, you have in this area the docks—labour there as against the warehouses in Whitechapel?—I do not quite see the point.

Q. You say there are warehouses in Whitechapel; as against that there are docks here?—I say warehouses have taken the place of dwelling houses, and the population went down, and then when the people were cleared out, and blocks put up there came the Jewish inhabitants, and if you add to that the difference in the administration—

Q. We know that the Jewish inhabitants (it has come out in the course of the Inquiry) do not resort to the poor law?—Not to the Christian poor law, but they do to their own.

Q. They resort to some private charity of their own race?—There is a regular Jewish Board of Guardians.

Q. So I understood; but, of course, it is only one in name. It is a private charity?—Oh, yes, that is so. It works exactly as the board of guardians—giving to some, refusing to others.

Q. Do not you think that Jewish Board of Guardians must have done its work exceedingly well in the East End?—Do I think so? Certainly, I do.

Q. Seeing that practically none of the Jews have applied to the official poor law institutions?—That is so; what is the moral?

Q. The moral is this: That you get economical and efficient administration sometimes in private charitable institutions?—Oh, I have never denied that.

Q. But, Mr. Crooks, you have told us your object was to drive organised charitable action and promiscuous charity out of the field?—Promiscuous charity—yes, which only comes down when the weather is cold, and leaves you when it is a little warmer—which demoralises and degrades a nation. I agree. The Jews do not do that. What the Jews do is what I call a proper system—they take their poor man and put him on his feet. They will buy him tools and fit him up. If we attempt to buy a man a house full of furniture and fit him up the municipal alliance would lose their head.

Q. Do you suggest that the Jewish Board of Guardians (you seem to know something about them) ever do more than give a man a pound or two, or supply tools?—I should think I do. I suggest, too, that they have got a workhouse of their own, and that they look after their old people in a proper manner, too.

Q. Do you suggest that they go on for weeks and months together giving out-relief to able-bodied men?—No, I do not. I do not suggest they have any able-bodied men, either, to deal with. You know that.

Q. Have you any information on that, Mr. Crooks?—Only my own eyes.

Q. Do they supply tools to able-bodied men?—Supposing they find—

Q. But you told us they supplied tools. Now you say there are no able-bodied?—Supposing a man asked for a kit of tools, we should have a difficult thing to get the Local Government Board to pass it. We might get it by way of loan, but we should have some trouble about it.

Q. They lend money by way of out-relief?—They do, and they get it back.

Q. Surely you know they have dealt with some hundreds of able-bodied men?—Why do not you believe me when I say I do not know.

Q. I do, at once, if you tell me you do not know; I am content?—I said I did not know.

Q. I beg pardon, I am sorry. But, at all events, when you tell us there is a question of supplying tools, there must be able-bodied men to be dealt with?—You said that, and followed it up by asking if they gave relief from week to week, and I said I did not think they did.

Q. In that way their policy, of course, differs from yours altogether?—The policy always of a board like that is as different as a charitably supported institution, and a hospital is different to a sick asylum. You might have 20 persons in a ward of an institution supported by voluntary contributions, but the Local Government Board would not allow you to put 15 in your own.

Q. Can any public body, subject to a State Department, ever do work with the same elasticity as a private, charitable organisation?—Of course it cannot.

Q. And therefore is not the Jewish Board of Guardians a remarkable instance of the success, and the efficiency, and the economy of a private charitable organisation?—It is. Give us a like one, and we shut this place up to-morrow.

Q. But, Mr. Crooks, you know you told us yourself that you have done everything you can, I think you said, to discourage that sort of thing. Mr. Martley told us the same thing. You said your policy was to shut out these private organisations?—Yes. Let us qualify that by saying that we never had enough to be worth keeping.

Q. Did you ever encourage it?—Do you mean did we go round the country with our hats off, begging?

Q. Certainly, I should not attribute anything of the kind to you. I suggest that you did not work in harmony with institutions like the Charity Organisation Society?—On the contrary, this very day we have sent a case there of a dear old woman in business here, asking them to deal with her, as we thought it was much better to keep her off the Poor Law. We continually do that in Poplar.

Q. But Mr. Martley put in some correspondence, and told us of cases where the society had offered to supplement the contributions of relatives?—Yes.

Q. And the board preferred to give out-relief. What do you say as to that?—I should have liked to have known the particulars at the moment.

Q. But, Mr. Crooks, some correspondence was put in with regard to it?—I know it was.

Q. Have you inquired into that case?—No, I remember all the circumstances. At the time we were not satisfied that we could compel certain people to contribute. The Charity Organisation Society would insist, or invariably suggest (I am not speaking of Mr. Martley in particular) that all the sons and daughters could contribute something, no matter how scanty their earnings. That was disagreed with, and I, for one, totally disagreed with it. Supposing a man had £1 5s. a week and three children. If you take 1s. 6d. from that man you are impoverishing his children, and I will be no party to that. I may be wrong. We must be found guilty or otherwise, by our actions, but I would be no party to it.

Q. Your view is that the relations of the poor people should not be taught lessons of responsibility—should not be encouraged to contribute to their support?—I go further and say if we were living in the days of Moses, it would be excellent. That maxim, "Honour thy father and thy mother," is an excellent one for all of us.

Q. But the Jews are still living in the days of Moses?—Excuse me, but it is not the poor Jew who contributes, but the Rothschilds and men of that character. You cannot make a comparison like that.

Q. I suggest to you that Jews of all classes contribute to the funds of the Jewish Board of Guardians?—And so does every man and woman and child in Poplar who has an income of anything. Let us get back to the point. It is a very important one, and I do not want to shirk my responsibility. I want to point out (and perhaps you may take this case as typical), a man in regular employ is getting his 27s. or 28s. a week. I could give you his name, and it would not be difficult to find the address. His mother and father both became chargeable to the union. We make an order

Mr. Crooks,
24 July,

upon this man to pay 1s. 6d. a week. He brings to us four invalid children, and he says, "Am I, then, to become a pauper?"

Q. That would be an exceptional case. Four invalid children is hardly a normal case?—With one it was a case of rickets; one had some trouble with the ankle, and two were short-sighted, and he put it to us—

Q. That is a deplorable state of things?—Would you talk to him about parental responsibility—the duty of the son to the father?

Q. I am afraid that in a case like that my sympathies would be excited just as much as yours?—Yes, or anybody else.

Q. But I do not want you, however deep your sympathy, to deal with a general question of this kind from the point of view of sentiment. I want to bring the same?—Please follow that up, because every case you have used up to this moment—and they have been very remote indeed—you have used as typical. I have not done anything of the kind.

Q. Is that a typical case, where there are four invalid children?—No, but it is typical of the poverty that a man may have.

Q. Truly, there are degrees of poverty?—Let us take a man with four strong, hearty children; there is nothing the matter with them at all. They can sit down and eat as much as the father and mother at one meal. What are you going to do with them? Starve them?

Q. I never suggested so?—I would like the public, and you in particular, to know that wherever a man can pay, we make him pay, I assure you. We have summoned the sons to this board. If we did not get satisfaction out of them we then took them before a magistrate, and here, you notice (I do not know whether Mr. Broodbank has got it in his financial return) here we have "contributions from 'relatives &c., on account of maintenance, £1,677 12s. 1d.'" in one year; so that we can claim that we do make them pay.

Q. Undoubtedly, you recover by legal proceedings certain sums from relations?—But, you see we rarely go to law.

Q. That was not quite the point Mr. Martley made. I put it to you, is not the moral effect better if you get voluntary contributions from relations?—I should think it is, and I want to say publicly that, where we get one blackguardly son who refuses to contribute anything to his parents' maintenance, you get ninety-nine who will sacrifice almost anything, to his little children's boots, to keep mother and father at home. You get a blackguard now and then.

Q. Do not you think it is well to encourage that sense of responsibility—that sense of family duty?—We always do, that is why we give out-relief to old people.

Q. Come, Mr. Crooks; you see Mr. Martley's complaint is, that you prefer giving out-relief to some arrangement whereby the relations could supplement the contribution by the Charity Organisation Society. That is his complaint, as far as I understand it?—I think it is wrong.

Q. You think it is wrong?—I think he is wrong in that supposition.

Q. But he quotes a case, and puts in correspondence?—Well, what is the use of guardians if they cannot use their discretion. They are elected to represent the people. The Charity Organisation Society represents itself.

Q. Is not there rather too much of that spirit with the Poplar Board of Guardians?—I should think—

Q. Is not that an instance of the arrogant spirit of which Mr. Martley complains?—After all, it is a question of mannerism. Who would think you were a genial chap? Nobody, but you are. The more we know of you the better we like you. But, after all, it is a matter of opinion. We are never arrogant, we never put on any side.

Q. But you said you were elected by the people, while the Charity Organisation Society only represent themselves?—Yes, and of course (do not let us flinch it) the Charity Organisation Society does exist very largely for the detection of impostors. Is not that so? They do; they spend 85 per cent. of their income in enquiries, and like that; one comfort they have got—and I am not quite sure they are entitled to it—they are never done. But I think they are sometimes. I was going to remark about your saying we were too lax altogether in giving out-relief without insisting upon sons and daughters contributing. I should think you would have had an excellent

case if you could prove that our total expenditure was of such a character—that is to say, that the whole of the £2s. in the £ rates, for instance, was going in out-relief. But we have already demonstrated, I think two or three times, that the marvel is that, with all our out-relief, all the keeping of body and soul in the able-bodied, and the keeping of the homes of old people together, how cheap we have been able to do it; 4s. 7d. in Poplar, only amounting to a 2d. rate in Westminster. Why you ought to be proud of us!

Q. Oh, I think you have achieved something, Mr. Crooks. I am not quite in agreement with you as to what it is, but I suggest that you have gone out of your way to discourage private charity, and the organisation of private charity?—Oh, never the organisation of private charity, I assure you. If you will organise charity on a proper basis, I am with you, but it is the promiscuous charity, the dropping down when the snow is on the ground to give somebody something, that I object to.

(The Inspector.) What about Canning Town?—Here you get thrown into a town £12,000 or £14,000 in a week. It would demoralise anybody. If the thing was properly organised, well and good.

(Mr. Robb.) Is this your view of assisting an organisation of this kind. Listen. This is a report over your own signature: "Your committee fail to see that a body such 'as the local committee of a society whose methods of 'carrying on their own work do not meet with universal 'approbation, have any claim to dictate what the policy of 'a publicly elected body should be.'" Is that your own statement?—I should think so; after all, we did have to go through the fire of an election, and the majority of the people knew exactly where we were going. You would not claim that the Charity Organisation Society (I have nothing but respect for them—their methods I do not care for very much, if at all, because I thought it was a good deal too much organisation and too little charity, although, generally, I want more)—but suppose you were elected a guardian of this ward and came in here to hear cases, you would think it rather hard if a person came there from 18, Buckingham Street, and said you were doing wrong.

Q. Have they done more than make suggestions to you in certain cases and asked for your co-operation?—I don't think the question of co-operation came in. Let me tell you what points—

Q. Have you ever worked in co-operation with them?—Yes, in some cases. If you come over the road I will show you a few letters.

Q. Mr. Martley complains that you have not?—We have been glad to get rid of men rather than make paupers of them, and I have found private funds to pay them through the Charity Organisation Society—to pay the men rather than they should come here. I have got the receipts to show that. They cannot say it is a question of arrogance.

Q. Do you agree that private charity is preferable to Poor Law relief if it is possible to get it?—If it is properly organised, yes. But you cannot claim private charity as a right *per se*, can you?

Q. Do I understand that you attribute most of your trouble in Poplar to the casual labourer?—Very largely.

Q. Have you any figures showing the proportion of casual labourers to the other workers in Poplar?—No, but we have the returns we get from time to time from the applications.

Q. Have you, in that connection, ever gone into the question of how largely the casual labourers living in Poplar are employed out of Poplar?—I think I said yesterday that a great many were. A great many men go out of Poplar to get a living, and when they come back, and times are pretty acute, in addition to our own chronic poverty, it is more difficult still.

Q. That would make you rather like Shoreditch?—No because the men who live there are very largely employed there, while 50 per cent. of ours, perhaps, are migratory; there is not enough work here at any time for all our workers.

Q. Is that not a fact that a large number of men come from Canning Town over the bridge every morning to work in Poplar?—Yes, and a large number of our men go over there.

Q. To the docks?—Yes.

Q. I mean the conditions of a riverside population are not limited to Poplar?—No, but they would not include Bethnal Green and Shoreditch, you know.

Q. They would include Canning Town?—Oh, yes.

(*The Inspector.*) Do any of the dockers live in Bethnal Green and Shoreditch?—A few; I could not say no dock labourer lived at Bethnal Green. This little illustration might be useful to you. I have had to do dock labouring in my time. I have met a man from Bethnal Green and asked him: "How are you getting on?" "Oh, all right," would be the reply; "I picked up a couple of bob last night." "How did you manage that," I would ask. "Oh," he would reply, "I sang 'my way home.' That is the sort of thing you would not get a Poplar man to do.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Surely the conditions are very similar in Shadwell?—I should think they were; very largely.

(*The Inspector.*) That is St. George's East?—Yes.

(*Mr. Robb.*) And in Bermondsey?—Bermondsey we have dealt with—or, rather, Rotherhithe.

Q. We have been dealing with it from the point of finances, but I am now on the casual labour?—I should think there are a great many more people. There are nice parts about Bermondsey that we have not got, you know—better neighbourhoods, large shops and that sort of thing.

Q. But, still, the casual labourer would be a trouble in Bermondsey as well as here?—Oh, yes; I should say all the riparian parishes suffer the same thing.

Q. All along the river?—Yes, the same kind of thing from the Tower on this side to Canning Town, and on the other side down, perhaps to Deptford Broadway.

Q. And they have all been affected by that which has affected Poplar?—No, not quite so much on that side as this. There are the Surrey Commercial and the wharves there. If Mr. Broodbank will pay attention, he will know what I mean. You see, coming from London Bridge right down to Lower Watergate, very near, on the other side, there is a tremendous amount of work we have not got on this side for dock labourers. And then the Surrey Commercial Dock is very much more engaged than we are on this side.

Q. Is the Albert Dock on this side?—Yes. Of course, you tap the population of Canning Town.

Q. Some of the men get as far as Tilbury?—Oh, well; if you lived where I do you would know something about Tilbury. You would have somebody at the door every morning for the fare down.

Q. Do you think the casual labourer gets more work now than he did 10 or 11 years ago?—Well, it is an arguable point. Personally, I do not think he does, and I think we have added rather to another class of casual worker, and that is we have got casual women workers now, a thing that did not exist 10 years ago, and which has added considerably to our disadvantages.

Q. Do not you think that class of casual woman worker has been largely created by your policy of out-door relief?—Do I think so? No, I do not.

Q. Do you think it possible that to any extent that is true?—No, I do not; I will tell you why. I think there has grown up in our midst a system of trade and working which did not exist 10 or 15 years ago. Say, Macnochie's came down here, and that goes on to Morton's where the work was pretty steady and regular all the year round. Packing, and that sort of thing, is quite a new industry which has sprung up. And then there is the everlasting—what shall I call him?—the captain of industry, who is a kind of foreman or manager in a works, who is cutting down labour; the introduction of machinery; the alteration of the public taste, say, from jam to marmalade, or a thousand things which necessitates the women being kept regularly. But they suddenly discover a number of poor people in the district—a reservoir for casual labour, Mr. Davy called it—the fact is, there are thousands of these women on the look-out for a day's work. The employer sees the advantage, and takes them on for an hour or two.

Q. Your attitude, I understand, is that casual labour for women is subsidized by the Poor Law for the benefit of the employer?—We did not begin that. You said, "Do we create it?" We are victims of circumstances. We do not create it. The employer of labour, if he can take a woman on for three days, will not run the risk of paying her a full week's money; and there you have the introduction of piecework. I will give you a simple illustration. Bryant & May's found it convenient to have women about who could take their work home. God help the home! But they take it to the place which

shelters them, at 2½d. a gross, and are only paid for what they do. The baby is cross, or somebody is ill in the house—and then you know how little they can do. Does it never occur to you that they would not try to offer somebody in Mayfair 2d. a gross for making match-boxes?

Q. Is that a fair or reasonable comparison?—It is a convenience to the employer of labour.

Q. We are dealing with a serious topic?—I am all too serious about it. I know that the poverty on the one hand creates the idleness on the other.

Q. If a woman can, by honest work, earn a little money at home in her spare time, do you see any objection to it?—Well, I have my own opinion about the woman earning is what is called her spare time. I know of no woman who has two or three little children to look after, who has spare time. They cannot have spare time, but I point this out, that, owing to the casual labour of the husband, or the sickness of the husband, or the very bad pay of the husband, she is compelled to accept work of this character to eke out an existence. Hence I am reminded of Bryant & May's match-boxes. Therefore, for convenience, work is given out to a contractor, who in turn sublets it to these poor women, and so the casual labour.

Q. You said just now they gave it out?—I did.

Q. Now you say they give it to a contractor?—I understand it goes through a contractor, but the same thing applies.

Q. Then you amend that statement?—I do not amend it to relieve them, or any other person who employs contract labour, from their responsibility. I do not; I cannot do that. But if I employ somebody to do something for me, and he sweats somebody else, I am still the guilty party.

Q. We heard something of that sort with regard to Cartwright's, the clothing contractors?—And if you could prove it the contract would be cancelled, and I think my board will be with me.

Q. We will see you about that in confidence after the Inquiry?—Give it to Mr. Davy, I do not want it.

Q. No, I will give it to you. I will just put it to you—is it not curious that the growth of that class of casual women labour should have coincided with the new policy of your board?—No, I do not think so. I will tell you why. We were a large manufacturing district, ship-building and that sort of thing went on all round here, and Mr. Broodbank will probably prompt you on the point. We used to have a great many ships coming to the docks; but the whole thing was changed by larger ships being built. I have seen along this quay which faces you now 20 or 30 barques or brigs from the West Indies with from 250 to 600 tons of sugar in hogsheads there, employing a large number of men to unload them. You used to get them half-a-crown a day and the plus—Mr. Broodbank will inform you of the technicality of plus—not slush, please.

Q. Mr. Broodbank knows a good deal about sugar?—The result of the larger ships, and the increased speed between the West Indies and ourselves was this, that 10 barques were done away with, the 5,000 ton steamer being substituted. There go all the men at once. That has been going on—a gradual process.

(*The Inspector.*) Where does the 5,000 ton steamer go to?—Into the West India Dock. It began, say, with a 2,000 ton one, and then a 5,000 ton one, and now we have comparatively no small craft come in. The tonnage may be as great, but the method of carrying it is entirely different. The industrial condition has entirely changed. If you doubt my word I have a picture here.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I have not the slightest doubt that is so. But you said that the condition of the casual labourer is really better with regard to employment than it was 10 years ago?—I did not say so.

Q. You said it was an arguable question?—I did, because Mr. Martley had said so. I do not want to go counter to him.

(*The Inspector.*) I understood they are fewer.

(*Mr. Robb.*) If you carry your mind back. In 1889 there was absolutely nothing but casual labour, and after 1889 the dock company takes up a number of permanent hands. Supposing there is nothing in the London Docks to-morrow, they will be sent to the Albert, or even Tilbury Docks; so that men are transferred from place

Mr. Crooks.

24 July.

Mr. Crooks,
24 July.

to place, where originally the men were kept on cleaning warehouses, and doing a variety of things.

(The Inspector.) There is better organisation?—Better organisation now than then, which means a bigger advantage to the employer, but a very great disadvantage to the worker; and where there are 20 men to do 10 men's work, then the cheapest man gets the job, or the strongest.

(Mr. Robb.) According to the evidence we had from Seedsman, who came from the Millwall Docks, the pay is by no means bad?—No; will you be good enough to let me answer that question now?

Q. We have heard that the pay is as much as £2 15s. 3d. per week—by no means bad pay?—Just wait. A man has to do twice as much work now as he had to do 10 years or 12 years ago, so that only the strongest man can stand up to it. Even at this moment it is almost impossible for a man to work two weeks consecutively among the corn. I want to say this here for the information of the public and yourself in particular. The rate is, say, about £2 15s. a week, or £1 15s., or whatever it was that was read out here. I will not quarrel. It averaged £1 17s. for the whole year. £2 15s. 3d. for one particular week was for a gang—note that, and Carey was supposed to be in No. 4 gang, and No. 4 gang averaged £1 17s. a week, I think it was.

Q. We have the books?—I know, but not the men's names. Supposing there are six here, including myself and yourself, and we were in No. 4 gang?

Q. I am afraid I should not get my share?—You look as if you would be sharp enough; I am not quite sure you would do your share of the work, but you would be there when the swag was shared out. The point is, say there are six men in No. 4 gang to do a day's work to-day. Any expert will tell you that the dust produces an effect on a man very like consumption. A man finds it impossible, perhaps, to turn out to-morrow; he cannot do it. Suppose I was knocked down to-day, and somebody takes my place. The next day Mr. Oxley is down; somebody takes his place, next day Mr. Davy, Mr. Turner, Mr. Broadbank, and then yourself, and perhaps during that week we only get one day in. But No. 4 gang still exists, because some poor fellow is outside and jumped into our place, but when the money is shared out at the end of the week it was impossible for that man (you read out they get £1 17s. 6d. on an average) to know that Carey, or Oxley, or anybody did get that £1 17s. The words you read out were not Mrs. Carey's words to Mr. Balfour. On that very day Carey was not at home; Carey was hungry; Carey was working out that three-pennyworth of bacon bones, and, as a matter of positive fact, I have so far convinced myself that that was the case that I have not hesitated to help him to feed his children this week—in a poor manner, I know, but I believe in the bona fides of the man.

Q. But what became of the £1 17s. a week?—He only worked one day in that gang.

Q. That was at his own option, was it not?—How could it be option to a man if he breaks down in health?

Q. Do you seriously suggest that in these days, when trade unions are all looking after the interests of these men, they are allowed to work so hard, and under such conditions, that it is injurious to health?—I suggest that no man could go and work among corn, no matter what the union is, without getting the dust on his chest, and you have not invented anything to-day to do away with that.

Q. Surely they have pneumatic elevators, and all kinds of things?—Lots of things, but they never get rid of the dust, no more than motor cars. The dust is there. I am serious about it. This work is all piece work. They unload it at so much a quarter, and the average is struck. There might be 24 men in No. 4 gang in a week. And please do understand the difference between what are called "too-rags" and others. Those who are so called deal with corn. They are a different class of men to the ordinary casual docker. The stevedores have a union, and some of the corn porters have. The large majority of casual labourers in London have no union to protect them.

Q. There is a dockers' union?—There is the dockers' union. It is tremendously strong in Cardiff and outlying ports, but not quite so strong in London.

Q. A man might stay away from causes other than dust?—Oh, he might; I do not want to defend the men.

A man might get a drop too much, and be away; but do not let us say every man who is poor is a drunkard.

Q. Have you seen Carey's medical man. Have you any medical evidence that he was unable to work at that time?—No, but he did not apply to us for any help until nearly two months after the incident.

Q. Did you know we were given his average wage for a period covering that?—You might take it for a year. He might be called one of the fourth gang, and never go near the docks for three weeks.

Q. Did Carey tell you what he earned on an average?—He said that week he earned 4s. 6d.

Q. On an average?—No. I do not suppose that he could, any more than you could, strike an average.

Q. Have you any evidence, other than his own statement, about these matters?—One or two of his workmates.

Q. Have you seen any official of the dock companies?—I wish I could make you understand. The dock companies pay so much. I understand they have 20 gangs. The gangers get the money, but they cannot prove that every man gets his share of the money.

Q. Have you seen the ganger of the gang?—I have not, but I am told he can be produced.

Q. He would be the best person to see?—The point there is comparatively unimportant. We were dealing with casual labour. I want to show you that it might be possible, even in the case of Carey, for a man to be called one of No. 4 gang, and for the poor fellow to be doing nothing. He may be an impostor; I do not think he is.

(The Inspector.) I would like to ask Mr. Crooks one question. When Mrs. Carey made that statement before Mr. Arthur Balfour, you had no reason to doubt that the statement she made was true?—No, and from information received since, I believe it was true. I would like to point out that the work has fallen off, too, in regard to sailmakers, shipwrights, mast and blockmakers, &c. They have all lost their work.

(Mr. Robb.) There is an important return which I think ought to be put in as to the usual occupations of applicants for out-door relief. I think it came before the board in November—October or November—of last year. Mr. Crooks, have you a copy of that?—I have not one here; I daresay it could be found. I have a report of the district committee in my hand.

Q. That is not what I want. It is a return of the usual occupations of the applicants relieved?—

(Mr. Lansbury.) Let us have the date.

(Mr. Robb.) The date I have got is October 21st, 1905.

(Mr. Lansbury.) I suggest before it is read we have the minutes. We had a report which, for obvious reasons, we could not publish.

(The Inspector.) Is not there a return of the same kind with regard to the distress committee?—We have trades and classifications.

(Mr. Grant.) There is some mistake about this.

(The Inspector.) Have we got it?

(Mr. Grant.) We have not the minutes of that date.

(Mr. Robb.) I have here a summary of a return furnished to the guardians, prepared for the Local Government Board, of the number of cases in which relief, exclusive of relief to casual poor, was applied for and granted during 12 months to the quarter ended at Lady-Day last. At the bottom there is an important table. The table shows the number of persons relieved, their usual occupations, &c. I will put it to Mr. Crooks, and if it is incorrect—

(Mr. Grant.) Is it a document or a newspaper report?

(Mr. Robb.) This is a report in the *East London Advertiser*?—Almost like the *Daily Mirror*.

Q. Or the *Pioneer*?—Oh, that is absolutely all right.

(Mr. Lansbury.) What is the date of your report?

(Mr. Robb.) October 21, 1905. There were apparently 3,351 applications for relief, and 2,290 were on account of want of work. I will put the figures to Mr. Crooks?—I suppose we may take it generally that they were largely casual labourers; or labourers—the distinction is dock labourers and general labourers. There are hawkers, fishmongers, coopers—I do not see why they put coopers in.

Q. Were there 250 in the building trade out of work?—Yes, mine is rather less.

Q. Tailoring, shoemaking and clothing trades, 103?—I have nothing like that. I have carmen.

Q. Printing, bookbinding and other paper trades 22?—It is very difficult when you get these trades. A fellow who wants to do something describes himself as a gentleman.

Q. One can whittle down anything in that way. We must take the returns generally for what they are worth?—I should have taken the returns from the distress committee as giving an idea of what the majority were.

Q. I will put my figures to you, and you can tell me whether they are correct according to yours?

(The Inspector.) It will be interesting to see whether they correspond.

(Mr. Robb.) Furnishing trades 87?—No, I have 90 skilled and 23 unskilled.

Q. Engineering, shipbuilding and metal trades, 212.—It doesn't work out like that; I daresay it does though. Mine is more than that—290 shipbuilding.

Q. This is for the March quarter—food, drink and tobacco trades, 52?—I have not got that here; I expect they have all gone to Chicago.

Q. Carmen, 108?—I have 127.

Q. Seamen, watermen, lightermen and stevedores, 48?—I have not got that under that heading.

Q. Match factory hands, 30?—I should call them unskilled.

Q. There were only 30 match factory hands, apparently?—Yes.

Q. Commercial occupations, 12; professional occupations, 4; domestic servants, 84; general or casual labourers, 1,278. Would that be right?—Yes.

Q. Persons without any occupations, 108?—Yes.

Q. Now, Mr. Crooks, before we leave that, where do we get the large number of people in the confectionery trade, spoken of by Mr. McCullum?—This large number of people in the confectionery trade spoken of by Mr. McCullum were in pretty regular employment. They were not applying for relief.

Q. He told us that 1,500 were out of work?—Very likely; these figures by no means denote the number of people who were out. I think it would be a bad job for us if every person who was out of work applied.

Q. Let us look at Mr. McCullum's evidence.

(The Inspector.) The explanation is that they might have some other job?—Take an ordinary man in regular work. Perhaps, after a year or two, he would be a few months out. He would not be so low down then as to come to us. He has not begun to pawn.

(Mr. Robb.) I understood Mr. McCullum to say there was a large number of people out of work in Bow and Bromley engaged in the confectionery trades. I suggested to him that certain figures he gave applied to the whole of London, and he said they applied locally?—Very likely; put it another way; it may help you. Say there are 2,000 out of work in the confectionery trade. We suppose they join the ranks, very largely, of the women who seek casual employment. They would be asked "where have you been working?" "At 'So-and-so's'" they would reply—and if they had been out of work only a little time they would stand a good chance of getting other work. They would not have sunk so low as to be obliged to apply for relief. Most of them would be young people, young women who certainly would not come to us, but look out for other work, such as domestic service.

Q. Listen to Mr. McCullum's evidence. "(Q) What would you say roughly is the total employed first directly by the confectionery trade down here?—At the very least about 10,000. (Q) And then indirectly how many?—There are so many—such as boxmakers—(Q) Printers, and so on?—I could not tell you entirely. I should say we employ indirectly more different trades than any other business you can mention. (Q) But, at any rate, taking those directly employed at 10,000—?—10,000 at the very least. (Q) Of those a quarter, that is 2,500, would be out of employment in the winter?—They have been since the last two or three years. (Q) That is partly due to bad trade and partly to economic conditions as the Sugar Convention?" Do

you think it is possible there could have been 2,500 people in the confectionery trade out of employment down here without some of them getting into that return?—Oh, yes. Most of these would have mothers and fathers.

Q. I hope we have all had at some time or other?—I mean they had homes they could go to.

Q. Surely not all, Mr. Crooks?—I should think so, very largely.

Q. Do you suggest that these 2,500 unemployed were all young people with homes to go to?—So far as I know; I have not heard anything to the contrary. If you went to some of these works and see the thousands of women pouring out, you would see most young people.

Q. I suggested to Mr. McCullum that these people lived at Hackney, and only about 20 per cent. in this neighbourhood at all, and he would not accept that. Do you think, in view of this return, his evidence could be regarded as very reliable?—I should say reliable indeed.

Q. What became of the 2,500 people down here?—What do you mean, down here?

Q. I take it "down here" means down here in this district?—You mean they might live about Mile End, or Old Ford, or Bow.

Q. I understood that Mr. McCullum was called to speak about Poplar?—Very largely about Bow and Old Ford. 2,500 would not be very many spread over the district.

(The Inspector.) Is it not a remarkable thing that none came here for relief?—I do not think anything of that. I could find you one or two secretaries in this room at present who would say that 200 or 300 men could be put out of employment who would never come to us.

(Mr. Grant.) Have you got the return in front of you that Mr. Robb has quoted. Just look at it, Mr. Crooks, and you will see there are some other points to be made besides those Mr. Robb is making.

(Mr. Robb.) But there is a proper time to make them. Apparently the return has been found. Now, perhaps, I might have a copy?—It is just about what you said.

Q. And what I put to you from the newspapers was correct?—Yes, the figures were—you did not read them all—not while I had these in front of me.

(Mr. Grant.) Will you turn to Mr. McCullum's evidence, and you will see that he says distinctly what he meant by "down here." "I may say our business is a combination in the East End: we employ thousands altogether directly or indirectly. (Q) Your own firm?—Two firms alone. (Q) You were speaking then, not of your own firm, but of the confectionery trade in the East End?—Yes. (Q) Several other firms?—Yes. "Two firms only employ 5,000 hands directly with those outside who are employed indirectly?"—I remember what he said very well.

Q. You had better have the evidence in front of you?—There is a confectionery works immediately over the border somewhere at the top of Devon's Road here; not Devon's Road, Bow Common Lane.

(Mr. Robb.) Look at —?

(Mr. Grant.) Look at the page I gave you, and read that down. "(Q) The distress is increasing here every year?—We get poorer. The best of the inhabitants are going out leaving only the poor to struggle on by themselves. (Q) I want to ask you about the year 1903, and the winter of 1903-4. Was the distress then acute?—Yes, it was. (Q) Did it get worse or better next year?—It seemed to me to get worse in 1904-5."

(Mr. Robb.) Just look at this: "(Q) Do not you know that 90 per cent.—from 80 to 90 per cent. of the confectionery employees live out of Poplar. So those figures have not any bearing?—I should not believe it. (Q) You are basing your evidence on the assumption that they live in Poplar?—That must be. Hundreds live in Poplar—in the borough of Poplar—that is Poplar, Bromley, and Bow." So that Mr. McCullum's evidence was that a very large proportion of the confectionery trade employees live in Poplar?—I do not think we care; we say there must be 2,500 people out of employment who never come near us.

Q. You think that is probable?—I think it is very likely.

Q. Not one in the particular trade?—Wait a minute. You see you have missed "food, drink, and tobacco trades" in which you have 93 persons. There may be some of them included in that.

Mr. Crooks.

24 July.

Q. 52 I make it?—52, and 41 persons relieved. You have carmen. Are not they just as likely to be employed in the work. Seamen, watermen and lightermen—lightermen might be engaged in confectionery work.

Q. In making sweets?—Were not we talking of kindred trades?

Q. No, the 10,000 were directly employed?—No, we are talking about carrying, box making, and all the other things.

Q. That was additional: Mr. McCullum said 10,000 were directly employed?—A carman running round with confectionery—even he is directly employed in confectionery work.

Q. I should like to ask you a question or two about the famous resolution of the board of October, 1904—the resolution to relieve the able-bodied men under Article 10. Mr. Crooks, in your judgment was that resolution the cause or the effect of the marked pauperism of the time towards the end of 1904?—Oh, the effect, certainly.

Q. Do you class it as the effect of the pauperism that existed?—No, the need for relief, not the pauperism—the need for help, that is administered in a quarter that even you and I cannot argue about.

Q. Immediately you passed that resolution the out-door relief went up by leaps and bounds?—I should think very likely, but there have been hundreds of applicants before, and it was in consequence of that large meeting held in these premises that we adjourned the board, and that Mr. Martley told you about. What we were anxious to do under Article 10 was that these men might be relieved without being degraded.

Q. I suggest that the passing of that resolution brought about the very trouble, the very evil you wished to avoid?—Did it? I do not think it did. What evil were we trying to avoid, except the evil of hunger?

Q. I take it your policy all along has been so far as possible to extinguish pauperism?—Oh, no. Our policy was to extinguish pauperism, but we realised our responsibility. Above everything else we had in our minds at that moment was to keep the men fit to work, and not to reduce them by starvation and so make them unemployable; and if they have little children that they too might have an opportunity to grow up.

Q. When it became known you had passed this resolution to relieve able-bodied men, the relief offices were crowded with applicants?—Yes, they were, but you must not forget there was no infringement of the Poor Law Order, and every person, whoever they were, was relieved in accordance with the law laid down, and relieved after investigation, except in a solitary case or two, which I think we could prove more than you could about, but the fact was, we relieved them in accordance with the law of the land, and then it was only after investigation and proof of sudden or urgent necessity that they were relieved in any case. Now, at the conclusion of the day, to give you a chance to work it up for to-morrow, I state that in no case has relief been given illegally so far as this board knows.

Q. Have you read or heard the evidence of the relieving officers?—I was here all the time.

Q. Did not you gather that the investigations were largely confined to the applicants' own statements?—No,

I did not. You see I was living on the spot, and I was in here every day. I saw what was going on, and the Local Government Board were good enough to allow us to appoint investigators, and relief was only given once without a report from the committee of investigation.

Q. Did you hear two of the relieving officers say that when a member of the committee sought to put searching questions, the other members of the committee objected?—I did. Now you are really to put that question of Mr. Diamond's in the same juxtaposition—

Q. I am dealing with the cases that came before the committee?—You do not deny then, do you, there was an investigation, even though it did not suit Mr. Diamond?

Q. I am following your own point. You say every case was reported on by the committee. I ask you whether you think the committee behaved properly in restraining one member from putting proper and searching questions?—Whenever I was present I never allowed any member to be extinguished, although I sometimes felt he was exceedingly foolish, but I would not believe without far more evidence that questions put to a man which were laughed at were relevant questions. I might have gone further, and the information was brought to me and conveyed in some round-about manner to Mr. Davy, that the stereotyped question put to every woman who come into the room by that gentleman was—Have you a Singer's machine? That is not a fair question to put to people, and it is not right, and you could not wonder if somebody else laughed at it and remarks were made. Has it ever occurred to you what a committee was for?

Q. Mr. Crooks, I really do not think I am to be examined by you at present. That may come later on?—I am afraid you are being, perhaps unconsciously.

Q. Did you hear the evidence of two of the relieving officers, that when Mr. Diamond put proper questions such as—where were you last employed. Why did you leave your employment and so forth he was told to shut up?—And suppose he was told. Did he shut up?

Q. That is not the point?—I am sure he did not.

Q. Is it a fact that when a man said he would not go to work because he had to get up early in the morning and go to Southwark, the committee said "Hear, hear"?—The committee done what?

(*The Inspector.*) Was Mr. Crooks present. I think he was not?—No. I only attended one Bow committee.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Does that kind of thing commend itself to you as proper investigation?—You are asking me to pass judgment on my brother guardians. I am not inclined to do it. Committees were created by law for the express purpose of making private investigations which should not be made public, and I hope you are proud of your witness.

Q. Do you agree that it is the privilege and province of any member of the committee to put searching questions to applicants?—Certainly I do. A committee is for that purpose.

Q. And that he should not be interrupted by any other member?—The fact of there being interruption points to the fact that they were a committee.

(*The Inspector.*) You are very interesting, Mr. Crooks, but we must adjourn now until to-morrow.

NINETEENTH DAY.

Wednesday, July 25th, 1906.

(*Mr. Bird.*) Before you commence your proceedings to-day, I have been requested by a large number of rate-payers to say that this Inquiry would not be so prolonged if the expenses were not being paid out of the local rates.

(*The Inspector.*) Oh, do not say that.

(*Mr. Bird.*) And they feel strongly, sir, and very

strongly, that it has been prolonged the past two days by nearly every question that has been answered by the witness being followed by a five minutes' speech; and they feel very strongly on this matter.

(*Mr. Crooks.*) Sixteen days to be fired at and you must not hit back.

Mr. W. CROOKS, M.P.; recalled, and further examined.

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Crooks, I understood you yesterday to justify the board's policy in regard to out-door relief?—Oh, yes.

Q. I want to read something you said at a meeting of the board on June 4th, I think it was, 1905. I am reading from the *News and Chronicle*. You said: "So long as they continue giving out-door relief, and so long as they paid for it out of the rates, so long would they be allowed to do it. The question was, if they were going on indefinitely without making an effort, where was it to stop? The system they thought was going to be a success had not worked out a success." Did you say that?—I should think very likely I did.

Q. And yet you continued the same system after that the following winter?—Yes, wait a minute. What we hoped and believed was that labour would have been organized—that the Local Government Board would have stepped in and would have helped us.

Q. Having realised that it was not a success in June, 1905, why did you carry out practically the same policy in the following winter?—What is your definition of a success?

Q. It is your word?—What interpretation do you put upon it?

Q. I put none, I am simply quoting your own words?—That is all right; I will put an interpretation upon it. The interpretation I want to put upon it as not being a success was that we had not moved the authorities as we ought to have done—moved them long ago—having regard to the fact that Poplar was left alone to feed its people—that the whole of the metropolis should be held responsible.

Q. You forget you put a strong interpretation upon it at the same meeting. You said, "They had tried to do it as far as they humanly could, and their action had brought dire disaster and ruin." Did you say that?—I do not remember using the words; I should like to know the context of the whole thing.

Q. "He blamed no one for it. They had better try, and fail, than not try at all." You thought you had failed, then?—I do not even think we failed now.

Q. Why do you say "we failed"?—I want to see that paper; I am not answerable for it.

Q. "They had better try, and fail, than not try at all"?—Yes, of course we had, at all times; I like a try.

Q. And you realised you had failed?—I do not realise anything—

Q. But Mr. Crooks, you realise some things very keenly, I am sure. "The question they must ask themselves was whether they had done all they could and ought to do in the matter"?—And do not you think it was a very good question for a chairman to ask a board?

Q. An excellent question, but it is a pity you did not act upon it in the following winter. "The day was coming when they would have to say they absolutely declined to administer another half-penny of relief." Is that what you said in June, 1905?—I think very likely it was; I think it is an abominable thing for the whole of London to leave us to bear the burden which you people are endeavouring to still foist upon us without putting it on the whole of London.

Q. We are not going on that. I am dealing with what you said?—You can deal with what I said, not an interpretation.

Q. I am putting no interpretation upon it. I leave that to you?—You are by inference.

Q. "They would send their resignation to the Local Government Board and say 'You come down and manage it better than we have done' "?—That is so.

Q. "They had tried to do so as far as they humanly could, and their action had brought dire disaster and ruin"?—Yes.

Q. On whom had your action brought dire disaster and ruin?—I am not going to answer that until I see that paper.

Q. Did you say that?—I want to see it.

Q. Did you say that your action had brought dire disaster and ruin?—I should not think I did. I may have done.

Q. But you read the papers?—I do not read the *East End News*.

Q. Oh, but you know all about it?—I know a great deal more than you give me credit for.

Q. I am sure of that. Did you say that your action had brought dire disaster and ruin?—Do not you hear what I say? I do not remember the words, but if you give me the paper I will tell you.

Q. I will, when I have done with it?—Oh, I see.

Q. "At this moment they had many men and women on their relief books whom they would never get rid of at all"?—I should say that was true.

Q. "They had sunk so low down, and would stop there"?—Yes, that is true.

Q. Was that the dire disaster and ruin you referred to?—I should think it was dire disaster and ruin when men and women have sunk so low as to be practically unemployable and irrecoverable.

Q. You have brought them to that condition by an indiscriminate policy of out-door relief?—Is that the point? We say that the utter neglect of the community in looking after its sons and daughters brought them there and not the relief of Poplar.

Q. What were you referring to when you spoke of dire disaster and ruin—of that class or the ratepayers?—I was referring to the absolute neglect of the powers that be to deal with the poor.

Q. Then the people who complained ought to be in that board-room and join with them in a very straight demand for London to be made one parish instead of 30?—Exactly, now you have got it all.

Q. Wait a moment. Mr. Webster said?—Was he really present?

Q. He seems to have been?—Oh!

Q. Mr. Webster said: "The Poplar Guardians had, by their generosity courted the poor of other parishes to apply to them for relief." Did Mr. Webster say that?—You see, a man coming in about once a year would probably blurt out like that.

Q. Did you point out that he was mistaken?—I think I can demonstrate that pretty clearly. There is no need to ask that very long.

Q. Now, how was it that, having realised in June last year that your policy was a mistaken one, that it had failed, and that it had brought dire disaster and ruin, you did not alter it?—Gracious me, I never admitted anything of the kind.

(Mr. Grant.) He will see the speech before he answers. I have never seen it, and have only just listened to it here. What Mr. Crooks meant by dire disaster and ruin was the consequences brought on the people in the workhouse.

(Mr. Robb.) Surely Mr. Crooks is the best person to answer that.

(Mr. Grant.) But this reading of selected sentences from a report in a newspaper is not fair to the witness.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Crooks is asking for the speech.

(Mr. Robb.) I have read the whole of the speech, and I will hand it to Mr. Crooks.

(Mr. Grant.) That is what you ought to have done at first?—Not until you had put your own interpretation upon it. I will look at it now.

(The Inspector.) Let Mr. Crooks have time.

(Witness.) "The chairman said so long as they continued giving outdoor relief, and so long as they paid for it out of their own rates, so long would they be allowed to do it." Let us stop there for a second. That is perfectly true. Neither the Local Government Board or any other authority would come in and look after the poor so long as we wrung the money out of our local ratepayers. Perfectly clear and true. I have urged over and over again that the poor belong to the nation, but certainly to the metropolis as a whole. Now then: "The question was, if they were going on indefinitely without making an effort, where was it to stop?" I repeat that to-day. Where is it going to stop? "The system they thought was going to be a success." Perfectly true. It did not work out a success? Why? Will you pay attention, Mr. Robb? I will wait as long as you like.

Mr. Crooks.
25 July.

Mr. Crooks.

25 July.

(Mr. Robb.) I am following you, Mr. Crooks?—Your clients are rather anxious to get the job over.

Q. I followed your last word—"success"?—The point there was, and that I brought out in my evidence in chief, that we did relieve these people under Article 10, so that the Local Government Board should have cognisance of it regularly, which, as you noted yesterday, if you were paying any attention at all—

Q. I always pay the greatest attention?—You did to me, but not to the case generally. The Local Government Board then sent us a reply, if you remember, saying that we were to report the circumstances of the individual cases. That was a new reading to me entirely of Article 10. I said so yesterday. I understood they took it collectively, and that our entries in the books and that sort of thing, would be sufficient, and not individual reports. Afterwards the general purposes committee, in considering the letter from the Local Government Board, decided not to class this relief under Article 10, but under one of sudden or urgent necessity, and that is why the original proposal did not turn out a success.

Q. The words are "sudden and" not "sudden or." "Sudden or" are the words of the Act "Sudden and" has been used—

(The Inspector.) In the Consolidated Order of 1847 it is "sudden or urgent," but in the Relief Regulation Order under which you worked it is "sudden and urgent," and it is a point whether the latter overruled the former?—We have always thought it was "sudden or urgent," and, as I said yesterday, whether it is right or wrong we have begun on the line that a man may not be suddenly in want, but he may be very urgently in want.

(Mr. Robb.) That is to say the relief to the able-bodied—?

(Mr. Grant.) Let the witness finish; he is taken away from the subject.

(Mr. Robb.) One moment. The relief to the able-bodied men did not turn out a success?—Of course that will necessitate another five minutes' speech. It did not turn out a success, because we had not impressed the Local Government Board with the importance of the situation, nor had we moved the central authority to take up any work of a large character, in spite of the fact that we had demonstrated the urgent necessity of relieving these men.

Q. If that was so, why did you refer in that speech to men and women?—Could men be out of work without carrying dire distress—

Q. You say there are men and women on the books. Do you anywhere in that speech limit your observations?—Ah, go on; I will read it down. It is 13 months ago, and although I have a tolerably good memory—

Q. I know you have?—"The system they thought was going to be a success had not worked out a success. He blamed no one for it. They had better try and fail, than not try at all." That I repeat again, because we gained experience. Nay, the Government has gained experience; both the last and the present Government have gained experience from Poplar. "The question they must ask themselves was whether they had done all they could and ought to do in the matter." Is not that a proper thing that a board of guardians should ask itself every day in the week, and not once a year?

Q. My complaint is that you only asked it then, and never acted on it?—Did you ever go through our books?

Q. No, nor your consciences?—What?

Q. Neither through your books or consciences. My complaint is that, having put that proper query to yourselves, you did not act upon the information, you then had, and the conviction you then arrived at?—Believe me, we do not arrive at sudden conclusions on points like that. We had thought it out. The encouragement I was trying to give my co-guardians was also to apply their minds to the problem.

Q. Was it encouragement to tell them that dire distress and ruin resulted?—Dire distress and ruin for what?

Q. That is what you said?—You put your own interpretation upon it.

Q. Is that what you call encouragement, to address them in those terms?—Certainly; always.

Q. You believe in chastising them?—A little encouragement does them good; otherwise we should be

like you, bearing the burden by ourselves. You are pretty hardly placed.

Q. I think you should withdraw that?—Withdraw it? You have my profound sympathy. You won't refuse that?

Q. As to the "dire disaster"?—"They would send their resignation to the Local Government Board, and say 'You come down and manage it better than we have done.'" And that applies. If we have done wrong; if our administration has been all you have tried to make it out to be during the past 16 or 17 days, I say pretty plainly, we are unfit to sit as a board of guardians or administer relief under any circumstances. If your case is proved, we ought to be driven out of public life. I say now, as I said then, if the Local Government Board think they can find a body of experts with more or less experience of poor law, gathered up under municipal trading and things of that character, they might be able to give them a job here. You are keen on experts, and we are quite willing to resign and give you a chance.

Q. That is kind of you?—I should like to see you manage it. If you do it with the same literary ability as your colleague got the report out, I fancy you would be lower than us.

Q. Let us come to something else?—Let them come down and manage it themselves. "They had tried to do it as far as they humanly could, and their action had brought dire distress and ruin." Let me repeat that.

Q. It is pretty strong?—It is strong, is it not?

Q. Your action had brought?—My action?

Q. Yes, your policy; dire distress and ruin?—To whom?

Q. That is what I want to know?—I daresay you do.

Q. I suppose you had in view the ratepayers?—Whom you say we neglected and thought nothing of. I had in my mind the poor people, for whom I had sympathy.

Q. That is why you sympathise with me, Mr. Crooks, I suppose; I am the representative of the ratepayers?—I do; I think you have a hard job.

Q. The rates are 12s. in the £, you know?—Now, if we are going in for a chipping match I shall be able to take care of myself.

(The Inspector.) Oh, go on.

(Mr. Bird.) A waste of time, and we have to pay for it.

(The Inspector.) Do not interrupt; we must have order if we are going on?—The gentleman interrupting is responsible, perhaps, for the employment of legal aid. You remember, sir, I could not get order the first day, and it is impossible to get order now. The disaster and ruin is that we ought not to have been left—the poor ought not to have been left for the poor to keep. I say that when the poor are called upon to keep the aggregation of poor such as we have in this district, it must lead to ruin and disaster, and it is a shame it should be allowed. The burden should be borne by the whole of London.

(Mr. Robb.) Before we go to that—you know a great deal of your burden is borne at the present time by other parts of London, and I suggest—?—I will tick off that part while we are going into other parts of London, so that I shall know where we stopped.

Q. You get about £40,000 a year at the present time from the Common Poor Fund—£41,000, I think?—Yes.

Q. The last contribution?—Yes.

Q. And you get some from the Equalisation Fund?—Yes.

Q. In round figures £50,000 a year?—Yes.

Q. In contributions from the rest of London?—Yes.

Q. That is a quarter of your entire expenditure?—Yes.

Q. And that if you limited your poor law local extravagances, such as out-door relief, temporary officers, and so forth, towards which you get no contribution, your position might be a very different one?—Would it? Follow that up.

Q. Now, for instance, what is Poplar's contribution to the Common Poor Fund?—I do not know the total amount, but it is 6d. in the £ all round.

Q. It is based on the assessment. You know Poplar's assessment. The contribution is £32,000?—I am not quite sure about that.

Mr. Crooks,

25 July.

Q. It is in round figures?—The Inspector says we are not contributors, so we may take his word against yours.

Q. That is on the balance. The balance is struck. You are credited with £74,000 and you are debited with £32,000?—That is, we are paid on £74,000 and not £34,000.

Q. On the balance?—All right.

Q. As against that, some parishes receive nothing at all; they simply pay it?—Perfectly true.

Q. For instance, St. George's, Hanover Square, pays on that £69,000 a year?—What an imposition on a poverty-stricken district.

Q. Never mind about that; reserve your comments for the moment?—I like to extend my sympathy when it is needed, at the moment.

Q. I know, but when you are contending that the burden should be thrown on the whole of London, I ask you whether it is not to a very large extent so borne at the present time?—I say no.

Q. I suggest to you that you get a quarter of your whole expenditure from the Common Poor Fund and the Equalisation Fund?—We get a quarter, yes.

Q. And it is only for such things as your local extravaganzas, your out-door relief, your temporary officers, and so on, that you do not get a contribution?—Yes, wait a minute. You contend that we get a 25 per cent. contribution towards our temporary officers, and so on.

Q. I will take your own figures?—Figures are easy to be juggled with; I will put two or three questions to Mr. Robb.

(The Inspector.) Do not put questions, state your case?—I will put them to you, sir. The first question is, we pay the old people in this district—

(Mr. Robb.) Cannot you answer a question shortly. Do you understand answering me "yes," or "no"?—No, I do not. You have been 16 days firing at me at your own sweet will, in your own way, as long as you liked, and—life may be short or it may be long—

Q. Cut it as short as you can?—I won't worry at all about it. You say that our out-door relief comes out of the local rates. Well, that 6d.—which is rather over than under, Mr. Davy—goes in out-relief to persons above the age of 60 years, who, not one or two, but very many authorities are of opinion—whatever other things we may be guilty of—certainly should be a burden on the whole community.

Q. One moment before you leave that. I am not quarrelling with that proposition, but was it ever intended by the law that the aged poor should be thrust on the local communities in the way that you throw them. Would you agree with Mr. Lansbury, and I think Miss Grant, one of your witnesses, that you inaugurated what is, in fact, a system of old age pensions?—No, I do not; but, pending old age pensions, we have to keep these people alive, and I will ask you a question.

(Mr. Robb.) I will not answer any questions.

(The Inspector.) I should be obliged, Mr. Crooks, if you would finish what you have to say?—The old people over 60 cost us in this borough about a 6d. rate. Now, my argument is, and will be at the proper place and moment, that these aged people have built up, have worked, have toiled to make this country what she is to-day. They have fought for the industrial supremacy of the country—not of Poplar, but of the country. People are enjoying wealth and luxury to-day that these people have earned for them, and yet these industrial veterans are thrown upon us in Poplar to maintain those old people, who ought to be a burden—as I have said hundreds of times, and repeat—for the whole metropolis, or for the nation, rather than for the locality. But for the moment, are we to say, with a full sense of our responsibility, because you are old—because you are poor, we are not going to bear the burden, you will just have to do as best you can?

(Mr. Robb.) Is not that rather a dangerous doctrine. If local authorities generally allowed their sympathies to carry them into acts not contemplated by their constitution and their powers, what do you think the general result would be?—Oh, but it is contemplated by our constitution. We are here to relieve distress, and created for that purpose.

Q. Do you say there is any machinery or power in the Poor Law which authorises you to give allowances which are, in fact, old age pensions to these people?—It allows us to give outdoor relief. You can call it what you like. The right honourable gentleman, the member for West Birmingham, Mr. Chamberlain, has, of course, enlarged upon that, and I read it to you yesterday. You cannot refuse to give people assistance and help in old age.

Q. I am not quarrelling for a moment with the proposition in the abstract; I am quarrelling with your method of carrying it out in your local machinery?—Tell me what you would do—leave them to starve on the streets?

Q. I suggest, is it not a dangerous doctrine for local authorities to exceed their statutory powers?—I assure you we have never done anything of the kind, and I challenge you to prove it.

Q. I ask you to show me any authority for a grant continuously of, say, 10s. a week to these old people?—The Local Government Board issued an Order dealing with the matter.

(The Inspector.) You rely upon Mr. Chaplin's Circular?—Yes, with regard to the treatment of the aged and deserving poor. "It has been felt that persons 'who have habitually led decent and deserving lives, 'should, if they require relief in their old age, receive 'different treatment from those whose previous habits 'and character have been unsatisfactory and who have 'failed to exercise thrift in the bringing up of their 'families, or otherwise. The Board [i.e. the Local 'Government Board] consider that aged deserving persons 'should not be urged to enter the workhouse at all unless 'there is some cause which renders such a course 'necessary, such as infirmity of mind or body, the absence 'of house accommodation, or of a suitable person to care 'for them, or some similar cause, but that they should be 'relieved by having adequate out-door relief granted to 'them. The Board are happy to think that it is commonly 'the practice of boards of guardians to grant out-door 'relief in such cases, but they are afraid that too 'frequently such relief is not adequate in amount. They 'are desirous of pressing upon the guardians that such 'relief should when granted be always adequate.' That is our authority for what we are doing.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you say that it contemplates continuous payments from year to year in the shape of an annuity?—Is it possible? But, there, really, the temptation to "score" is tremendous. We never give relief without continuous review; that is to say, that every case must be reviewed every three months.

Q. Is it reviewed every three months?—Every aged person who is on out-door relief ought to have their case reviewed once in three months. What is the use of your talking about annuities?

Q. Your evidence on the point does not agree with that of the relieving officers?—Mr. Davy, let us clear that up at once. The review of aged persons on relief goes on under your own Order, and one cannot get relief continuously.

Q. I suggest that you do, in fact, give it from year to year?—I assure you we do not; take my word for it.

Q. I take your word implicitly?—We cannot do it. It is illegal to do it. Let us get back to the rates again.

Q. I want to take you to a resolution which was moved by Mr. McCarthy at a board meeting in December, 1905?—Let us finish the other subject, shall we?

Q. I thought we had finished. Go on with the subject?—"They had many men and women on their relief 'works whom they would never get rid of at all.' That was, in consequence, of course, of the depression in trade, as I pointed out to the Inspector yesterday. Works close up for want of work, and father and mother are pushed out, or other circumstances arise, and once you get them on the books over 60 they become chronic.

Q. That follows the statement about your policy. The ordinary reader would gather that they had been placed permanently on the books as a result of this policy?—For once in a way one can say this Inquiry at least will be an enlightening one.

Q. I hope it will, Mr. Crooks?—I am sure it will.

Q. To other places than Poplar?—I hope, indeed. Poplar will be a shining light in the days to come.

(The Inspector.) Do let us get on with the cross-examination?—"They had sunk so low down and would

Mr. Crooks,
25 July.

"stop there. They were the dregs that were always left behind after a period of depression such as they had passed through. The people who complained ought to be in that board-room and join with them in a very straight demand for London to be made one parish instead of 30." Surely you do not object to that?

(Mr. Robb.) Have you finished with the subject?—I will make one or two more speeches, I expect, to-day as I go along.

Q. Be as merciful as you can?—I will, indeed; I sympathise with you.

Q. Again, you are thinking of the rates, I suppose?—Not for the moment; I am thinking of the people.

Q. I want you to look at Mr. McCarthy's resolution at a meeting of the guardians, I think on December 3rd—one day before December 5th, 1905 (Reading): "Mr. McCarthy moved that the following resolution passed at the meeting of the board of guardians held on 15th November, 1905, be rescinded:—'That the relieving officers of the union be instructed to pay to the several persons in receipt of out-door relief for the week ending 23rd December next a sum of 3s. for each adult and 1s. for each child, in addition to the ordinary relief allowed by the relief committees, and that such additional relief be charged by the relieving officers in their relief lists for the said week. That the guardians of unions and parishes to which the non-settled poor are chargeable be requested to allow additional Christmas relief on the above scale to their poor residing in this union.' Mr. McCarthy said if the resolution was not rescinded it would mean additional expenditure of £500 in one week. They all knew, he said, that these were distressing times for the worker who had to find the money for that expenditure." What do you say as to that, having regard to the conviction you had arrived at in the previous June that your policy had led to disaster and ruin?—That resolution with regard to Christmas allowances applied to old people and children who were what we call "permanent"—that is, those whose cases were reviewed once in three months; and that is the generally accepted policy all over the country. Everywhere they make extra allowances for Christmas. So that was nothing common to Poplar: we do not claim that as an innovation of our own. Let me point out why we ought to have some credit on that. There was a demand by the able-bodied men on out-relief—who were getting relief from week to week—they thought, rightly or wrongly, they were entitled to this extra allowance. The guardians were pretty keen that they were not, they being only on temporary relief, and, therefore, it not applying to them. For two years, that is to say 1904 and 1905, I had to meet deputations of those people and explain to them. And here, may I incidentally say, that although my visits to the workhouse were only what you yourself read out, I did pay five visits every seven days all the year round, except on holidays, to these buildings, so I am really in touch here every day of the week, and on a visit such as I make nearly every day a week, I found these men here in 1904, and after severely criticising one or two men who ought to have known better, some said they would go without if they did not get it. I said, "Very well, if yours is a case of urgent necessity we will open the relief offices on Christmas day, and you shall not go without bread." That is to prove that we were alive to our responsibility, and that we were using our discretion, and were not giving that class of man—the extra allowance that you point out was carried by 13 votes to 5. It was an annual thing, and that only applied to the little children who might be on out-relief (there would be very few), and the very old people. We have never had any complaint about it. The Local Government Board have recognised that, at the festive Christmas season, even the poor people on out-door relief and the children ought to be thought of.

Q. Mr. McCarthy evidently recognised it was rather hard on the ordinary worker, who had to pay for it?—Yes.

(The Inspector.) This kind of allowance is given in half the unions of the country in Christmas week?—That is so. Surely Mr. McCarthy, or any member of our 24, is entitled to get up at a board and protest. But majorities must rule, you know.

(Mr. Robb.) It is true, is it not, that there is a large working population in Poplar who has to pay, more or less, for all this?—The astonishing thing about it is, Mr. Robb, that the large working population of Poplar

has voted us back again for doing these things from time to time.

Q. Do you think they will do it again?—You never know. You cannot tell. There was a change of Government; you did not expect that.

Q. Do you know Mr. R. G. Style, who is M.R.C.S., England, and a member of the Bethnal Green board of guardians?—No, I do not.

Q. You have heard of him?—No.

Q. He is a well-known man in Bethnal Green?—I daresay, but I do not live in Bethnal Green.

Q. But, Mr. Crooks, Dr. Style is a well-known man?—I do not know him; bring him down and let us have a look at him.

Q. I want to put in on the notes a letter he wrote on October 24th, 1905, to the *Daily Mail*, sir?—What right has he to express an opinion about Crooks?

Q. He deals with the particular case of a man who came from Bethnal Green. Have you any objection to the letter going in?—This particular man has cropped up half a dozen times in cross-examination. He is some poor fellow who was refused relief in Bethnal Green and came in the borough over at Old Ford.

Q. One moment; he was not refused relief. He was refused out-door relief. He was offered admission to the house—Bethnal Green infirmary?—The story is, he applied for medical relief and was taken into the sick asylum. We have no power to refuse medical relief to anybody. People can break the law if they like. We like to be law-abiding in Poplar.

Q. I will read you what Dr. Style says. It seems a man named Baker—

(The Inspector.) Is it worth while?

(Mr. Robb.) Well, Mr. Crooks has been allowed to make a long rambling statement. (Reading): "A man named Baker, in an utter state of destitution was admitted to the infirmary with his wife and several children"—Is that correct?—I am just informed that the whole of the correspondence in reference to this particular case will be placed in your hands. You know we cannot refuse medical relief.

Q. I want to ask you a few questions about the system of tendering?—Have you finished up with rates?

Q. I will take my cross-examination in my own way, with your kind permission?—Well, if it is a case of dodging, you know.

Q. You have no right to make an observation of that character?—Have not I? Oh, thanks.

Q. And if you will kindly reserve your comments till later, you know, when addressing your constituents, we can get along faster?—Mr. Robb has enlarged upon our temporary officers, our "indiscriminate" way of running rates up to so-and-so; and the moment I commence to deal with rates he dodges to something else. Surely, I am entitled—

(Mr. Robb.) You can say as much as you like, Mr. Crooks; I will ask you all I wish at the proper moment.

(The Inspector.) I will ask you?—Thank you.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you regard the system of tendering that has been disclosed as satisfactory?—No, I do not.

Q. Do you regard it as honest?—No, I think the system of tendering is an exceedingly bad one; but we did not wait for the Inquiry to decide that point. I think I submitted to you, or handed over to Mr. Grant, yesterday, the resolution of our board asking that a better system might be adopted. We have done this from time to time. I regret we have not a record of years, but we have the record of last year.

Q. You had it in mind as far back as May, 1905, had not you?—We passed a resolution and sent it to the Local Government Board in April—before May. We were so dissatisfied.

Q. You spoke at a meeting of the Borough of Poplar Trades and Labour Representation Committee on May 14th, 1905. I am reading from the *News and Chronicle*. You said that you felt that many of the small shopkeepers were as badly off as the average labourer?—Yes, they are, too.

Q. "They would remember a scandal a few years ago about contracts. It was asked how they could expect honesty if they accepted any kind of tender for their goods"?—That was true.

Mr. Crooks.
25 July.

Q. "They had got their cloth and fine linen at 1½d. a yard. Did they expect to get all the yards they paid for?"—Yes.

Q. Now, have you ever got cloth and fine linen for 1½d.?—It was in the tender, but we did not get it.

Q. Have you looked at Cartwright's tender?—I could not give you the details.

Q. Do you know you are paying 2s. 11d. a yard for linen sheeting, and that the same article is being supplied to Bethnal Green for 1s. 6d.?—I did not know.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Do not you accept the statement, Mr. Crooks?—I do not know whether the articles are comparable at all.

(*Mr. Grant.*) We have the contract here, Mr. Davy, and can show that Mr. Robb is not stating the facts.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Take the copy of Mr. Oxley's evidence.

(*Mr. Grant.*) Mr. Oxley only compared them?—Mr. Oxley said, and properly said: "I have analysed these tenders, as they appear to me. I have not been able to compare sample with sample, like with like." I think it is a little strange that the tender should be so-and-so, and in another place so-and-so; but to ask me to submit straight away what the learned gentleman declined to commit himself to—I am not being 'had.'

(*Mr. Robb.*) Even admitting for a moment that the samples varied, would there be any justification for your paying 2s. 11d. a yard for linen sheeting in Poplar when Bethnal Green was paying 1s. 6d.?—Well, what is the value of it? I do not buy sheets myself; I pay for them. I will ask my wife.

Q. I am quite willing to accept Mrs. Crooks' opinion, but I do not think we will trouble her. I ask you if you are justified in accepting a tender at 2s. 11d. for Poplar when you know, or ought to know, that the same sheeting can be supplied for 1s. 6d.?—As a matter of fact, it was not the same sheeting. It was an entirely different sheeting.

(*The Inspector.*) Perhaps it means that the Poplar board of guardians gets a better sheeting.

(*Mr. Grant.*) A different thing altogether.

(*The Inspector.*) One has to consider the durability of the stuff.

(*Mr. Robb.*) You say that people had a wonderful tape measure when they sold cheaply?—That is true.

Q. The amount tendered for included knickerbocker suits at 1½d. a suit, and they "thought there must be something groggy about it."—There was, too.

Q. And yet you went on after that to accept Cartwright's tender for blouses at 4s. a dozen—4d. each?—Yes, is that so; it is a jolly shame.

Q. That is rather suggestive of sweated labour?—I did think it was; only we do not buy blouses, I am told.

Q. But you accepted the tender. You would have bought them if they had been wanted?—Yes.

Q. 4s. per dozen accepted, and 10s. rejected. I suppose Cartwright put them in at 4s. because he knew you were not going to buy any?—He is a sharp man. I knew nothing about it. I agree that 4s. is an abominable price: it has no sympathy of mine.

Q. Did not you think it was the duty of one of your officers to draw your attention to the discrepancies of the tenders years ago?—Oh, in tenders there are all sorts and conditions.

(*The Inspector.*) Looking at the evidence we have got as to finesse in tendering, it does not follow that because a man tenders to supply blouses at 4d. each that he is going to pay that sum or anything like it?—Just an illustration, Mr. Davy. The contractor who probably did put knickerbocker suits down at 1½d. a suit sent me a long telegram. I wired back (I usually do with these people), "if you have business with me, come and see me; if not, do not trouble to come." He turned up, and I said, "what do you want?" "I want," he said, "to point out to you that I have been robbed." I said "Oh, rather a good thing to rob a contractor, is not it?" He says—"Look here, I have put in gold braid at 1s. a yard. That gold braid cost me 3s. a yard. The estimated quantity is 12 yards, and they have gone and ordered 36." So nobody was sweated for gold braid.

Q. That was one small example of a contractor being caught?—

(*Mr. Grant.*) Here is an example of the blouses Mr. Robb is making so much of. It is two dozen, and we never ordered any. Estimated, two dozen at 4s.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Cartwright knew you would not order any.

(*Mr. Grant.*) We are not responsible for Cartwright.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Whose duty is it to examine and go through the tender forms in detail?—Oh, it is not done.

Q. Not by anyone?—After the tenders are accepted the details are gone through to see that the totals are correct, and tenders are accepted subject to the totals being correct.

Q. Who goes through the tenders in detail after they are accepted?—I suppose the finance clerk.

Q. Who is he?—Mr. Dennis.

Q. Has he ever drawn your attention, or anyone's attention, to these discrepancies year by year?—No.

Q. Has no officer ever made any report to the board of any kind upon it. Do not you think some-one should have told the board what was going on?—Some-one ought to have told the board what was going on.

Q. Mr. Oxley had no difficulty in finding it out?—Mr. Oxley had plenty of time.

Q. And you have plenty of clerks with plenty of time?—Are you sure? I should not talk about a thing I did not know, if I were you.

Q. I ask you, how comes it, with these tenders in your possession from year to year, no official ever draws your attention to the system?

(*Mr. Grant.*) What system?

(*Mr. Robb.*) The business system of tendering?—All right. The point is that this is the board of guardians who had tried to reform the system of tendering, and had succeeded very largely by shutting out a good many sweaters. It has been well pointed out that we, like the rest, may be caught. This system is in existence in every union in the Kingdom.

Q. Does that make it any better?—No, worse; because they all ought to have combined together and got it altered long ago.

Q. And one of your officials ought to have said long ago, Mr. Crooks, these tenders jump up 450 or 500 per cent. in a single year. Do not you think so?—There are lots of tenders. I have heard this same sort of story from a distance.

Q. Do you think it is a model thing?—Our workhouse is a model workhouse for attending to and properly feeding and clothing the poor.

Q. And tendering?—I said nothing about tendering.

Q. I ask why some official of the board, who must have known of this, did not draw attention to it years ago?—My goodness me, up to now we have proved a difference of 33s. A hundred a day to prove that we are 33s. out in a year!

Q. But, you know, Mr. Oxley's evidence was that hundreds of pounds had been spent in excessive prices?

(*Mr. Grant.*) It does not say anything of the kind.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Will you restrain yourself?

(*Mr. Grant.*) Mr. Robb cannot have read Mr. Oxley's evidence when he says a thing like that. We have heard Mr. Oxley's evidence, everyone has had it, and Mr. Oxley's evidence did not disclose anything of the sort.

(*Mr. Robb.*) I am not going to submit to a charge like this. I am going to deal with it. Mr. Oxley's evidence on Pyle's contract showed that when prices were abnormally high and discount abnormally low there were high deliveries. On the other hand, it showed that when prices were low and discount high there were scarcely any deliveries at all. If that does not justify—

(*Mr. Grant.*) The evidence does not show that. What Mr. Oxley did was to take solitary examples.

(*Mr. Robb.*) He took the whole question. Now, Mr. Crooks, I am going to deal with this. Mr. Oxley took the whole of Pyle's tender, and I say I am perfectly justified, and I call on Mr. Grant to withdraw.

(*Mr. Grant.*) I never withdraw anything when I believe it.

(*The Inspector.*) Still you went a little further than you should have done.

Mr. Crooks.

25 July.

(Mr. Grant.) If you say so, I submit. It is a little difficult.

(The Inspector.) I know.

(Witness.) Will you come back to your original statement? You asked about a model system.

(Mr. Robb.) I ask you to take Mr. Oxley's evidence?—I am subject to the Inspector's ruling. The point, Mr. Davy, was whether I called the workhouse a model workhouse after Mr. Oxley's evidence, to which you will remember I replied that for humane treatment, and kindly consideration of the people—

(Mr. Grant.) And quality of food—

(Mr. Robb.) We do not want this continual airing of your views. We want the questions that are put answered?—You air yours. The point he raised was as to the administration of the workhouse, food, and the clothing of the people and then he suddenly plunged off to the engineering department, which had very little to do with it.

(The Inspector.) It is a question of general administration.

(Mr. Robb.) Then you do not call tendering anything?—If you are convinced with the evidence you have before you, that there has been any collusion or maladministration in connection with the tenders, do for heaven's sake cancel them.

Q. Did you hear the evidence of Jacobs that he and Clark used to meet in the master's office and arrange their prices. And you know that Mr. Madeley could not deny it?—You do not charge me with that, surely?

Q. Did you hear that Mr. Madeley could not explain it?—I heard it and I accepted it. I have nothing to do with it. I do not defend people of that character.

Q. Is that a model master who has contractors in his office to arrange prices?—I am speaking about the administration. Now as far as he came under my supervision he was an excellent master. If your remarks can be proved they would show that he was as bad as could be.

Q. But you have not called Mr. Clark to deny it?

(The Inspector.) You are not going to take any responsibility?—Certainly not.

(Mr. Robb.) I put it to you that no contractor would have dared to tender in this way unless he had a friend in court?—I say yes, very likely.

Q. Do you think any contractor would have put in a tender of this kind unless he had a friend in court controlling orders and delivery?—I do. Take the case of braid and knickerbocker suits.

Q. Take Pyle's, brass work on the list of J. Warner & Sons. He offers 5 per cent. off the estimated quantity of 50 lbs.; 250 lbs. were ordered. The other people's discount was 25 per cent. His discount was only 5 per cent.?—What do you want me to say. You had Mr. Pyle to give evidence.

Q. His discount this year for the same articles is 77½ per cent. and no deliveries. What do you say on that?—I do not say anything at all. I am not here to defend him. You had him in the box and took his answers.

Q. If you say you know nothing about this system I will accept it?—I have said it twenty times already.

Q. But, when you say that Mr. Madeley is a model master and try to justify him, I am bound to put these questions?—I say nothing about hearsay. I say that up to the date which has been alluded to he was a model master.

Q. Now with regard to the food which has been supplied to the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. I suppose you will agree that it has been exceedingly good?—We thought so.

Q. Yes. In fact I think you said in a recent speech that you hoped to be remembered "as the man who fed the poor too well"?—That is a nice way of putting it.

Q. That is what you said?—I did, and I hope I shall.

Q. Remembered as the man who fed the poor too well?—Too well in the opinion of some people who you represent, but not too well in the opinion of the people who really care.

Q. Mr. Crooks, do you feed them infinitely better than the labouring man outside can feed himself and his family?—

No. The labouring man who has a family outside lives under entirely different conditions. I know, and I have been asked, and you will remember, Mr. Davy, I asked Mr. Long—I am not quite sure whether I asked Mr. Chaplin. I asked Mr. Long and Mr. Brodrick whether men outside could have wages which would enable them to give a better diet to their wives and children. That I repeated to you when you came down. We could not give out-door relief to them that would enable a labouring man to keep up to concert pitch. Supposing we went round Bow Common, and round the poor district there, and got to know exactly how the poor really lived, how they had fried fish and potatoes one day and nothing the next, and immediately proceeded to lay that down for people in the workhouse, what do you think the nation would say?

Q. That is not an answer to my question?—It is an answer.

Q. Did you feed the inmates infinitely better than those who work outside who have to feed themselves and their families?—On what?

Q. I am asking you if you feed them better?—No, no. A working man may be getting £2 5s. per week. He may come down to £2, and may again come down to 36s. or 30s., or may be 25s. or even 20s. or 18s., or he may be a council man doing an odd day or two. What is the kind of working man you allude to: which do you want to start with?

Q. Mr. Crooks, you know the condition of the working men in Poplar?—I do.

Q. And I ask you whether the average working man in Poplar has anything like approaching the luxury that the inmates of the workhouse do?—I can only say that a man with 30s. a week, with a wife and two children, can only just keep himself in decency. When he gets below that he gets below the Local Government Board diet.

Q. The borough council only pays 30s.?—And if he has a wife I say he can only just creep along.

Q. And it is your own view that a man and his wife employed under the borough council cannot live in the same style as an inmate in the workhouse?—We do not pay for style; we pay for grub.

Q. He does not have the electric light?—He does in the street. The place must be lighted up.

Q. He would not have linen sheets at 2s. 11d. a yard?—Of course he does not: he has calico.

Q. He would not have meat every day?—He would have meat every day.

Q. Mr. Crooks, seriously, do you suggest a man who is working for the borough council, say on 30s. a week, with a wife and two children, and is indirectly paying rates as a compound householder—do you suggest he can live in anything like the luxury your people do?—I do not admit the luxury. I admit the men in the workhouse only get a bare subsistence, and no man outside ought to be paid wages less than would enable him to get that kind of living. What you have to prove is that we are giving the people in the workhouse such luxury as a man in ordinary work at from 30s. to 40s. a week could not get at home. But what you do not say is that we are dealing with the very aged in the workhouse—able-bodied, as you know, are exceedingly limited in number, but you do not appreciate for a moment that after all a man's liberty is worth something. Liberty has not fallen in value. It is a priceless something. A man will die for it, and our people will die—a good many of them—than go into the workhouse to get all these Hotel Cecil luxuries.

Q. Now that is all very well, as far as it goes; but here is the fact that these men working at 30s. a week for the borough council are average type of the working men in Poplar?—No; be a good average of the people's saving power in Poplar. No. It is much lower.

Q. Much lower?—Yes.

Q. Very well, then, that emphasises my point all the more, that these people cannot live in the way the workhouse inmates do?—Cannot they?

Q. For instance, could they go and buy good English wether mutton?

(The Inspector.) Let me see the prices.

(Mr. Robb.) The working man cannot buy it?—He cannot?

Q. Mr. Crooks, that is not worthy of you?—Rubbish. I think the working man can buy it at its price.

Q. How much is it per pound?—About 5½d.

Q. For what?—What for. Beef and English ox beef.

Q. Mutton is used principally, it is more expensive?—Do we? Quite the contrary.

Q. So you do not use more mutton?—I do say that.

(Mr. Grant.) Is this not wasting time? All this is specified in the Local Government Board's dietary tables drawn up by the Local Government Board.

(The Inspector.) The quality of food is not settled by the Local Government Board. Mr. Crooks says this food is better than working men with 30s. a week wages can get, but against that the inmates lose their liberty.

(Witness.) The deliveries of mutton appear to have been more. The doctor told us so.

(The Inspector.) It is mixed up with out-door relief?—About 3,000 lbs. less.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you argue that the working man would have a diet of frozen meat, and your inmates have better. I am content to leave it at that?—I do not say that, because I might say that if people were squeezed four or five in one room their rent would be cheaper.

Q. I am putting to you the quality of provisions?—The quality of the provisions is just as they ought to be there—good.

Q. Up to 1897 you supplied the inmates with Le Dansk margarine?—Yes.

Q. Some three or four years since you substituted butter?—Yes.

Q. How much extra a year did that butter cost you?—Something like £2,000.

Q. £2,000 a year more?—Yes.

Q. And then you came back again to margarine?—Yes.

Q. Why did you, if it was a proper thing to supply butter?—I did not say it was the proper thing. You turn the minutes up.

Q. I will take anything you say. Do you say in your view that butter should have been supplied?—I would have kept to the margarine if I had my way, but the majority must rule.

Q. And you thought it an extravagance in substituting butter?—If a majority vote for butter it is my duty to see that the decision is carried out.

Q. It is a serious item, one item alone; £2,000 a year; and you think it extravagant?—It was serious. I think they might have gone the other way?

Q. Is it right to say you pay 57s. a cwt. for Le Dansk margarine?—I cannot remember.

Q. When you gave up butter why did you specify one brand of margarine only—Van den Berg's?—I cannot tell you.

Q. Whose recommendation was it?—That I cannot tell you, but I am told there is a pretty good ring of margarine dealers in England, and I am told that one name is just like another. May be a little difference, perhaps, but all one.

Q. Do you know some unions are paying 57s. per cwt. against your 72s.?—And you know also that some have been down lower even than that. 50s., 51s., and 50s. 6d. Then the large central authorities who are buying large quantities compared with us, buying thousands to our hundreds, and they are paying 10s. 6d. more than us.

Q. But, Mr. Crooks, I suggest to you—if you like I will put in a quotation—that you can buy Le Dansk for 57s.?

(The Inspector.) But there is this. One of the requirements was that it should be done up in small packets?—Yes, that would account for a couple of shillings.

(Mr. Robb.) That was quite unwarrantable extravagance?—I do not know. If you have a tub you get waste; you get waste if you have a packet. You get waste all round the edges. You waste butter round the edge of the tub or get a wooden taste. We grumble at the wife about it sometimes, you know.

Q. Come, when you are serving the butter in ounce pats, what justification can there be for paying an

additional 10s. per cwt. for having it in 2lb. rolls?—Perhaps no justification, but you must take account of the percentage of waste.

Q. Now look at the milk. I think you lay down that it must be not less than 10 per cent. of cream. That is higher than the Somerset House standard, is it not?—It shows you we go in for quality.

Q. I quite agree. Do you suggest it was really necessary to give the inmates milk with a higher percentage of cream than the Somerset House standard?—I do not think you can have milk of too good a quality when dealing with invalids and children, whatever may be the general opinion.

Q. You know the invalids go to the sick asylum?—I beg your pardon.

Q. The invalids go to the sick asylum?—Yes, but some stop here.

Q. I am glad you reminded me of that, because you drew a parallel with Hampstead hospital?—But on the question of invalids, we have sick wards here full. I do not know what the number would be; probably something like 25 or 30, and the lying-in wards, and a lot of little children, in addition to our inmates, and 750 children at Forest Gate schools.

Q. I am speaking now of the general inmates. It would be quite a different matter if you had a different specification for the few invalids you have?—Two qualities of milk. We can make two qualities, by filling one up with water.

Q. What is the justification for specifying that all these provisions for the inmates must be of the best. It is a word which crops up frequently in the tender forms?—And it is absolutely necessary. We can remember meat going in that was supposed to be the best, when it was all clods and stickings.

Q. It was Mr. Gibbs who called attention to that. I suggest you have been getting clods and stickings in lieu of this ox beef, or wether mutton?—I can assure you nothing of the kind happened. A full explanation was given to Mr. Davy of that particular bit of meat. The whole of the correspondence which Mr. Gibbs hinted at had never taken place, until we confronted him with this resolution: The evidence showed this was settled within four or five days of the clods and stickings being said to have been found.

Q. Why did you not put all that to Mr. Gibbs when he was in the box?—But Mr. Corrie Grant did. You were not listening.

Q. Mr. Gibbs is a practical man. Is it on the notes?—It all depends on the point of view whether he is or not. Some people get their son out of a hole, and then they fall foul with the stuff in the place.

Q. That is your view of Mr. Gibbs. Mr. Gibbs, one of your brother guardians, is a man of this type, that because his son or someone else lost the job, out of spite he makes an unwarrantable complaint about the meat, because some relation has lost his job. Is that your suggestion?—It is a most astounding thing that after he leaves he walks in and finds what might be described as a mare's nest. The meat was found there and a full and proper explanation was given. His charge was that the guardians took not the slightest notice of it, that Mr. Crooks smiled and said he did not understand meat. In the evidence it came out that we took it up immediately and dealt with it, and told Mr. Blott he had no right to do it. He sent a full explanation and the whole thing is settled. What more do you want?

Q. I wanted to know whether this was not due to Mr. Gibbs. Now, what justification was there for purchasing for the officers, as I understand, Mazawattee tea at 2s. 4d. per pound?—The tea for the workhouse is 1s. 3d. per pound.

Q. I am on the officers' tea, 2s. 4d. per pound?

(The Inspector.) Finish your answer?—The tea we contract for at 1s. 3d. per pound. I understand there were six officers who got tea at 2s. 4d. per pound. I was going to work it out for you—

(Mr. Robb.) And for the guardians?—This Mazawattee tea was for four people.

(The Inspector.) Let Mr. Crooks finish?—This tea was for a few officers, I think. The guardians had tea once a fortnight, made from this Mazawattee tea.

(Mr. Robb.) Which, as we know is 10d. a lb. more than the House of Commons pay?—I go a little further, and

Mr. Crooks.

25 July.

say when I found out about this 2s. 4d. tea I was surprised.

(The Inspector.) You do not justify it?—

(Mr. Robb.) But who is responsible for it. If you do not justify we do not. You condemn all this?—So I did as soon as I found it out. I found it out before you did.

(The Inspector.) I find that the consumption of beef and mutton is as follows:—For able-bodied men, 6·3 ounces of mutton and 21·7 ounces of beef; for the old and infirm, 26·6 ounces of mutton and 4·5 ounces of beef. I do not know that the point raised just now is of much importance?—Except so far that the working man can have this 5½d. stuff?

(Mr. Robb.) Now, on this question of provisions and in-maintenance, did not you give us some statistics relating to asylum patients yesterday. But you gave us no comparison with any other workhouses?—Yes, I think I did; but not a great many. We could not get it. But I have one or two here. I think I will read them out.

Q. I want to put one or two to you. Poplar's total is 6s. 5d. per head per week?—Yes.

Q. Made up as follows: 4s. 0½d. provisions, per head per week of seven days, including, I suppose, invalids, and children and in fact everyone?—Until just lately we had no children there. We have them in the house this moment owing to an outbreak of fever?

Q. Then your clothing is 9d. per head per week?—Yes.

Q. And necessities bring it up to a total of 6s. 5d. per week. How do you account for the fact that Bethnal Green can do the whole thing for 4s. 4d., against your 6s. 5d.?—I do not account for it at all. I would like to know how they feed their people. I cannot make any comparison with a place where I am not, or know anything about.

Q. Then, you know, you spoke about the increases. You gave us the increase in the cost per head of patients in the Metropolitan Asylums Board institutions?—Yes.

Q. You showed 2s. increase there?—In every case except that of Yorkshire, I think, I showed an increase varying from 2s. to 3s. 6d.

Q. But that was upon an expenditure already much higher than the average workhouse expenditure?—No, I do not think so. Was it so? What evidence have you of that?

Q. The percentage of increase is nothing like so large as it is in Poplar?—Oh, yes; oh, yes.

Q. Will you show me any case where the percentage of increase is as high as it is in Poplar?—What do you mean by the percentage of increase?

Q. Why, the relation the increase you spoke of bears to the former total?—Food?

Q. No, the total maintenance, the total in-maintenance?—Total in-maintenance. Perhaps it does not.

Q. No?—You mean the percentage as compared with our percentage? Very likely it does not, but anyhow, there is an increase of 11d. per week in Yorkshire, and of 3s. 6d. in Kent.

Q. I would rather you take workhouses than asylums?

(The Inspector.) Mr. Crooks' point is that the cost of maintenance in all institutions has shown a great rise lately. That is so in the case of hospitals.

(Mr. Robb.) How do you account for St. John's Workhouse, Islington. That shows a remarkable decrease?—Show a decrease, do they? They are lucky.

Q. Do you know, Mr. Crooks, that at St. John's they went up through bad management to 6s. 3d. in 1903, and they came down in 1905 to 4s. 7½d.?—For provisions?

Q. For everything?—We have never got up to 6d. 3d.

Q. You are paying 6s. 5d. now?—I am not quite sure. Let us go back to my answer just now. Why the percentage was increased in the way you have heard, why our percentage has run on more rapidly than other people's, is because as a matter of fact our charge for provisions in 1894 was 3s. 10d., and has gone up to 4s. 10½d.

(The Inspector.) After Mr. Chaplin's Circular?

(Mr. Robb.) Will you look at chart F. I do not mean provisions alone, but the total for in-maintenance. If you look at chart F, you go from 4s. 5d. in 1896 to 6s. 5d. in 1906. In 10 years you show roughly an

increase of 45 per cent. I understood your figures dealt with the same period. My point is, will you show me in the same period a rise of 45 per cent. in any other asylum?—No, perhaps not. But then you are leaving provisions severely alone in our case, and ignoring unfairly the fact that charges for necessities and clothing, certainly went up and continue to go up, from 4½d. in some cases—Fulham and Hampstead 6d., Kensington 1s. 4d., paid for clothing, while ours works out at 9d. Kensington in 1905 again went up a trifle.

Q. Do not you think it would be better to compare with adjacent parishes where the conditions of the people are more alike and the contractors are the same?—I do not see the point; for after all, where does the analogy come in. A man is poor whether in Poplar or Kensington.

Q. But the conditions are alike in East End parishes?—I can assure you that in some other parishes not far from here, when the poor people went out for a holiday they were not dressed as I should like to see them, and therefore there is no comparison.

Q. For instance, it costs you 9d. per week per head, what Bethnal Green does for 3d. a head?—I say, how do I know how they are dressed?

(Mr. Grant.) Have you the table in front of you? Look at Whitechapel in 1895; they were spending 9½d. and the next year they dropped to 2½d.?

(Mr. Robb.) And stand at 4d. now?—So they have gone up?

Q. But look at Poplar, Mr. Crooks, that has risen since 1897 continuously?—Is that so? Clothes will wear out and prices will go up.

Q. But with high prices the fact remains that Stepney, Bethnal Green, and Whitechapel are able to keep down the total for in-maintenance to an average of 4s. 5d. per week, and yours costs you 6s. 5d.?—Yes, they keep it down, but as I said I want to see how they feed their people and what they get for their money. You do not suggest that we get less value for our money than they do, do you?

Q. I am afraid I do suggest it?—Really I wish I was in a position to make you prove it. I would like to take these dietary scales and see what their dietary is.

Q. I suggest you would get better value if you specified frozen meat?—Let me say that in no case in modern days has anyone taken up frozen meat. They have given it up entirely as a wrong policy. This is so with the London County Council, and that is very much the same with the Asylums' Board. They have given up frozen meat entirely, because the loss is so great in the cooking.

(The Inspector.) The waste?—Yes, that is so great that everyone has given or is giving it up. It is, of course, cheaper per lb., but you lose in cooking.

(Mr. Robb.) I do not think you follow my point. I suggest that although you specify an expensive kind of meat you really get frozen meat?—That is one of your own suggestions.

Q. But, Mr. Gibbs?—Mr. Gibbs never said that.

Q. I will find it?—He never said it.

Q. One of the witnesses has said so, that you get frozen meat?—

(Mr. Grant.) Let us have it.

(Mr. Robb.) You will have it at my convenience, Mr. Grant.

(Mr. Grant.) You have had every opportunity of looking up these allegations and are not prepared to prove them.

(Mr. Robb.) What is the justification of buying this bacon at 11½d. per lb.?—Let me say this. I notice the increased number in the workhouse was 34·8 and the increased cost for maintenance 47·2 per cent.

Q. We are dealing with the unit and not the aggregate?—In West Ham 69·1 and the increased cost 108·4; in Bermondsey the increase in numbers 26·9 per cent. and the increased cost 35·9. We are not very far out if you go into it.

Q. What is the justification for buying best Denny's bacon at 11½d. per lb.—Denny's best?—This bacon, of course, might be put in the same rank as the tea. It was given to the officers. There are 110 officers, and they are allowed one pound of this bacon per week, or 1½d. worth of bacon a day.

Mr. Crooks,
25 July.

Q. I am afraid that is not quite the point. What is the justification of supplying such an expensive quality of bacon?—I am not justifying it. What would you do for men in your employ allowed their bacon?

Q. I should be sorry to buy 11½d. per lb. bacon even for myself?—Are you sure you do not do so now?

Q. Quite sure; 8d. is my price?—Do you buy bone with it? These men get 1½d. worth of bacon a day.

Q. But all these little matters—?—I have been waiting for some big ones.

Q. I will give you one. You send eight representatives to act on the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum?—I think we do.

Q. We are not going into that asylum at this Inquiry, but I am entitled to ask you about your contribution?—Certainly.

Q. Now when you found that the cost of maintenance for an additional 35 patients at that asylum—?—I do not mind.

Q. Will you allow me one moment. In 1896 the number chargeable to Poplar in the sick asylum was 566, in 1905 it was 601. That is a difference of 35, is it not?—Yes.

Q. The 566 cost £23,203?—Yes.

Q. And the 601 cost £42,390?—Yes.

Q. Did you make any inquiry when asked for your contribution as to why it cost an additional £19,000 to support an additional 35 patients?—We frequently asked. We asked the Metropolitan Asylums Board.

(The Inspector.) What is your answer?—The answer is that we have to pay willy-nilly what they ask for.

(Mr. Robb.) That will not do?—It will do for me.

Q. I do not think it will for any sensible person. Here you are sending eight of your guardians to the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum out of a total of 12 managers. Do you mean to say that when you were asked for another £19,000 to support 35 more, you made no inquiry into the reason. That you did not see how such a thing came to pass?—We have frequently done that.

Q. I am giving you a big case. I want your answer. I do not want you to go off at a tangent?—I am not likely to.

(The Inspector.) What did you do the last time you had to nominate members?—We sent several out with whom we were dissatisfied.

(Mr. Robb.) Did you ever investigate the figures in any way?—We always have an investigation of figures by the finance committee.

Q. It is not what you always do. When you found them asking for an additional £19,000 to maintain 35 more people, what special investigation did you make?—No special investigation. But you must remember that they are a statutory body and we have absolutely no control over them from the moment they are elected.

Q. I do not accept that at all. It may be technically true, but not actually so?—It is actually true. How dare you say it is not. Let us get off this question of suggestions at once. Do not you suggest anything to me. You have been suggesting immorality, drunkenness, and dishonesty from the start to the finish and proved nothing. Do not suggest again.

Q. Then I want you to explain why it costs an additional £19,000 to maintain an additional 35 people in the sick asylum?—Then I shall refer you to the General Inspector, who has decided to hold an Inquiry.

Q. Mr. Crooks, pardon me a moment. I shall be very sorry to make any suggestion which you feel offensive, and I did not make the remark I did just now in the sense you imagined, or to convey anything untrue. My suggestion was that in effect the eight members nominated by the Poplar guardians actually control the sick asylum. If I was betrayed into saying anything of an offensive nature personal to you, I ask to withdraw it?—Very well.

Q. I ask you to treat this item seriously, and I wish to ask whether your board took any steps in reference to it?—I assure you that at many meetings of the board this came up, whether it was on the question of the treatment of the patients, or the wages of the charwoman, which were so small that she had to come to us for out-relief, or the question of getting a patient in, or any difficulty in getting someone to do something, the question of expense came up. We had no control. We

ought to have, I am quite sure. The same thing applies to nearly every other institution. I suggest that the question of the increase of maintenance, officers' cost, and the cost of uniforms going up, also with regard to furniture, buildings going up, all these charges are greater than they ever were.

Q. But, Mr. Crooks, the figures are startling?—They are, and we should have fair play, because there are so many things we are charged with over which we have no control whatever. The Metropolitan Asylums Board is exactly on the same lines as the sick asylum.

Q. But two-thirds of the managers are on the board of guardians?—And that will be gone into at the proper time.

Q. Is there any resolution on the minutes drawing attention to this large increase?—No.

Q. Is there any documentary evidence showing that you have dealt in any way with the large increase?—I do not know whether the finance committee has. I have no memory on that point.

Q. You see the increase has been continuous. In 1896 the cost was £23,203, in 1900 it had jumped to £31,740 for 533 patients, in 1904 to £34,396 for 596 patients, in 1905 to £42,390 for 601?—It is absolutely alarming. You may go to other institutions and find exactly the same thing.

Q. Have you ever seen a parallel. An additional £19,000 for an additional 35 patients?—No, I know nothing about it.

Q. I take it—?—These facts were always discussed at the finance committee when we were making the new rate for the half year.

Q. Is there any communication addressed by your clerk to the clerk of the sick asylum asking for information?—I am not sure about communications, because the chairman of the managers is here on our board and would take part in the discussions.

Q. Now, to come to another large item. How do you explain the continuous increase in travelling expenses, &c. They have gone up from £540 in 1900 to £1,540 last year?—It is very alarming to look at. There has been a large increase in the number of institutions which we have to visit. There has been a tremendous increase, and on the face it looks alarming.

(Mr. Grant.) We have a return that will be presented presently. I shall let Mr. Crooks put it in or a witness who can prove it?—Perhaps it will be as well if I put in the figures. The explanation is very full. (The return was put in.)

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Crooks, you do agree that the figures I complain of are alarming?—Yes, of course they are.

Q. Can you tell me approximately how many officers you had on full board in 1896?—How many officers in this establishment?

Q. Officers in all institutions on full board?—Considerably over 100.

Q. How many in 1896?—We had less then.

Q. Did you have 50 in 1896?—I should think so.

Q. 60?—

(Mr. Grant.) The return will give the exact figure.

(Mr. Robb.) Where is the return. I have not seen any of these returns?

(Mr. Grant.) We have been asked for these returns and are getting them ready.

(The Inspector.) I think I had an office return.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you think your officers have increased by more than 50 per cent.?—I am sure they have not. I am thinking of the workhouse.

Q. I said all institutions?—Look at the institutions we have as compared with ten years ago.

Q. Do you know that the officers' rations have gone up from £1,600 in 1896 to £5,477 in 1905. That is about three and a-half times as much?—

(Mr. Grant.) Why worry about it. The return is coming, and you will see how it is all made up. It is analysed fully?—But you have to compare it with the different conditions. First, how many more officers, and the general increase in the cost of provisions, the scale of provisions or the scale of diet for the officers which is laid down, and which works out at something like 11s. per week, or 11s. 1½d., I think.

Mr. Crooks.

25 July.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Now, in conclusion I want to ask you just a few questions about the general discipline of the house. Your view is that it has been good?—As far as I know it has been good enough.

Q. Do you know anything personally of anything of this beer-drinking by the guardians?—No. When I saw no, that is qualified. I might think that someone went there to have a glass of beer, and did not agree with him. That there has been a continual swilling of beer I do not know. I am sure if I had thought that, I should have wanted to have taken a policeman in, if it had been anything like what has been described.

Q. You have heard the evidence of the doctor, of Haswell, and of the chaplain, and they surely are reliable people?—I am rather inclined to think that their imagination was a little stretched when they talk about continuous beer-drinking. If you begin with the chaplain, he ought to have been a reliable person indeed; yet although he has got over 1,500 souls to look after, he rarely has been there more than two hours or two and a half hours at a time. Two hours and forty minutes with over 1,500 souls to look after.

Q. That does not affect his credibility, does it?—No, but I want to point out the limited time at his disposal to see men swilling.

Q. But one might see a good deal in two and a half hours?—But what about his services?

Q. One might see a good deal going to and fro—going to the house and out of it, and that is when I understand he suggested he did see it?—The difficulty for me is to reconcile the time of his going there and the time the guardians would go there in a district like ours.

Q. Was it not well known—a topic of general conversation?—Oh, dear, no—not in the sense you put it.

Q. Mr. Walton admits that at different times 14 guardians have been to this cellar?—Altogether?

Q. Yes?—It would not hold them.

Q. At different times?—If you count the people who come here every day they will amount to thousands. Let us be generous, even to people we disagree with.

Q. Whose beer did you suppose they were drinking?—I did not know they were drinking it at all, and therefore the question whether they were drinking someone else's beer never came into my head.

Q. Did you approve of it?—I should not think it was a good thing.

Q. Do you think it was setting a good example to officers and inmates?—It would not appeal to me as such.

Q. Do not you think the inmates would have clamoured for beer knowing what was going on?—No; because, if you want a really good school for scandal, it is the workhouse among the inmates.

Q. Mr. Crooks, what do you suggest became of this 10 per cent. waste on the beer which was consumed?—I have nothing to suggest about it. I do not know. As I said yesterday, I think the awful blunder about the whole thing was that the doctor did not have the courage to stop it, as he has now.

Q. Is it not a fact that the doctor has told us he was coerced into giving beer?—Do not you say, Mr. Robb, he did say so. He had his medical report book, in which he could have put it down.

Q. We will have a look at the alcohol book?—All right then.

Q. You are supposed to initial it. The chairman of the board is supposed to initial it?—The chairman of the house committee does.

Q. Let us see if anyone has done it. Was that book brought under your notice?—Once or twice.

Q. I will finish in ten minutes?—I hope you will not be done in ten minutes, Mr. Robb. I cannot enlighten you much about the matter.

Q. The doctor tells us that when he tried to take off the beer Madeley complained, or I think he said Mr. McCarthy complained. And then on one occasion you were called in?

(*Mr. Grant.*) Will you refer to the shorthand notes?

(*Mr. Robb.*) Do you remember one Sunday about three years ago. There is a space in the book for the chairman to initial. Let us get right about this book. The instructions read: "The guardians shall not allow to any inmate of the workhouse any fermented or spirituous

liquors, unless in pursuance of a written recommendation of the medical officer for the workhouse. Such recommendation shall be entered by the medical officer in a book termed the alcohol book, to be provided for the purpose, and to be kept in the form marked F in the schedule B to this Order, and shall be accompanied by a statement of the reasons which is the opinion of the medical officer render such allowance requisite for the health of the inmate. The master of the workhouse shall enter in the column provided for the purpose the articles and the quantities supplied to each inmate in pursuance of the medical officer's recommendation, and the book shall be submitted to the guardians at their next ordinary meeting and their directions recorded in the column provided therein, but no allowance shall be continued for more than 28 days, unless before the expiration of that period it be renewed for a further period not exceeding 28 days, upon the recommendation of the medical officer and directions of the guardians in like manner?"

(*The Inspector.*) Did you ever see that book?—Only when the doctor and I have been chatting over a patient.

(*Mr. Robb.*) Now, is there a space where the chairman ought to initial?—As far as the initialing of the books are concerned—

Q. Is there such a space?—There ought to be somewhere.

(*The Inspector.*) Certainly there is.

(*Mr. Robb.*) There is a space where the chairman of the board ought to sign?—I am going to explain what always happens.

Q. I do not want to know what always happens. The initial of the chairman is not put in anywhere. You say that that book was not brought before the board and initialled before the board?—I do not know whether it has been brought before the board.

Q. Do you know the medical officer has been coerced?—Rubbish.

Q. Listen to his evidence (*reading*): "(Q) It is not quite clear—I put it to you that you did not carry out the requirements of the order?—Yes, it is. (Q) Why did not you do it?—I was simply pledged by the master of the workhouse and the guardians. I had really to put them on, or else undergo a considerable amount of suffering. (Q) What suffering do you suggest?—They made it hot for me all the time. (Q) They made it hot for you for not putting on the beer?—Yes, every time I took some person off the beer, there was a considerable amount of friction raised by the master, who saw the guardians individually and informed them that I took so and so off the beer, or her off beer, and by that means it caused considerable friction. (Q) Do you think all the beer ordered was drunk by the patients you ordered it for?—Had you anything to do with the administration?—No, I simply ordered the beer." Now, Mr. Crooks, is it a fact. Take one instance. You were called in on a particular Sunday when there was a row about the beer, some three years ago?—I can remember three instances.

Q. On this particular occasion, did the master desire to take the inmates off the beer?—Did the master desire?

Q. Did the doctor?—I think I remember. The story Dr. Lamont told me was that he wanted to take so many off.

Q. Then was there a row. Did Mr. Madeley, the master endeavour to persuade him to put them on. And not being successful, Mr. Madeley sent for you at 11 o'clock?—No, I should not think he sent for me. It would be an extraordinary thing.

Q. Do you remember?—I should say he did not, because he would know perfectly well my sympathies would be with the doctor.

Q. Did you go to the workhouse between 11 and 12 on that particular Sunday, we will say on the Sunday, to talk about the beer?—Yes.

Q. And on that Sunday did you see the doctor. And did you, by your personal influence, persuade him to put them on the beer again?—Indeed, quite the contrary. I always backed the doctor on that point.

Q. I do not suggest that you used any undue influence, but did you use your personal influence with him?—Whatever the doctor suggested about the beer I agreed with him and he said so in his evidence.

Mr. Crooks.

25 July.

Q. Well, now, did you know that Mr. McCarthy and some others were having meals with the master up at his house?—I knew they were having meals.

Q. In the master's house?—I knew they were having meals at his house, but how could I say they were out of his rations?

Q. Is that a proper thing for an officer who cannot consume the whole of his rations, to give them to the guardians, or should he have returned them to store?—I can only say that if a man cannot consume the whole of his rations he should return them, but I do not know of any instance where rations are returned if not consumed. Usually you would find that there has been a change of rations—something for something else. That frequently happens.

(The Inspector.) A very common practice.

(Mr. Robb.) Do you seriously call a workhouse a model one where the guardians have meals and are on terms of great familiarity with the master, and where the master's friends, and the contractors and others, including the guardians, assemble in the beer cellar and drink beer?—I think it is a very bad thing indeed if contractors and guardians met in the house and had meals. Very bad indeed.

Q. I am not speaking of meals. There is evidence that Mr. Pyle, Mr. Whitlock and others went to the beer cellar?—I want to know how I can control the guardians on that.

Q. Surely you had control in dealing with a particular contractor?—Did you know it?

Q. This is your model workhouse and under your model master. Now, I am bound to put this to you: that this lack of discipline, this drinking, has been well known?—I assure you that there has been no lack of discipline in the house, I emphasise again and again.

Q. But look at Haswell's evidence, look at Madeley's conduct. Do you know this was not the first complaint of immorality you had against Madeley?—No.

Q. You had a complaint three or four years previously by one of the lunatic attendants?—What!

Q. Did you not have a complaint against Madeley by Miss Voluame?—Emphatically no. There never was a charge made by that lady against the master of the Poplar workhouse.

Q. Are you sure?—The charge against Miss Voluame was that she had taken away another woman's husband. The wife appealed to me, and the woman left the institution. The master had nothing to do with it.

Q. I put it to you that a charge was made against Madeley, and at his intervention she was discharged?—On my oath, no. It came from the poor woman outside.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Robb ought to have put this to Mr. Madeley.

(Mr. Robb.) Now, Mr. Crooks, after the evidence of the chaplain the other day did you make it your business to see him?—Yes.

Q. Did he give you a great deal of information about Mr. and Mrs. Madeley and their general conduct?—What do you call a good deal of information?

Q. Did he give you information as to how they had been behaving for years?—

(Mr. Grant.) Did he tell you anything you did not know?—He made a statement to me.

(Mr. Robb.) In conclusion I have to put in a letter I received from the chaplain of the Poplar workhouse. It is dated the 25th July: "Dear Sir,—Being 'anxious for the purity of this institution, I feel it my duty to write you stating my surprise at Mr. Crooks' evidence after the things I mentioned to him in a conversation I recently had re the discipline of the workhouse, the conduct of the master and matron, and 'guardians. I beg to be, yours truly, D. Conoley, B.A., 'Chaplain'?"—Am I to understand that I am to believe this. Here is a man who tells me, and I absolutely decline to believe it, that Mrs. Madeley had fallen on his shoulder the worse for drink. I have never seen the woman in such a state, and I do not think anyone else has. Am I to believe it because a parson says it?

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Crooks, I only want to ask just one or two questions in re-examination. First of all about the Mazawattee tea, of which we have heard so often. Was the estimate for the year, of Mazawattee tea at 2s. 4d. a pound, 234 lbs.?—Yes, that was the estimated quantity.

Q. Was the quantity actually consumed in the whole year, 218 lbs.?—218 lbs.

Q. And I make that work out altogether—218 lbs. at 2s. 4d. a pound total expenditure, £25 8s. 8d.?—Yes.

Q. And of course if you had had it say at 1s. 2d. instead of 2s. 4d. the total would be £12 14s. 4d.?—Yes, sir, for seven officers.

Q. Seven officers during the whole year?—And 24 guardians.

Q. That is the total extravagance of which we have heard so much. Now about the Poplar sick asylum. You knew all through there was an increase of so many thousand pounds on a certain number of inmates?—Yes.

Q. Is that a correct way of putting it. There must have been for years a steady increase in the expenditure on the maintenance in asylums of all kinds?—Furniture, officers, schools, &c. You must remember these 35 patients might be multiplied by 30 times in a year, because patients are in and out.

Q. You have first of all to allow for the cost of the ordinary number of patients before you—that has to be deducted from the total increase before you allow for the increase on the 35 new patients?—Yes.

Q. It is ratio upon ratio, which I was dealing with the other day. Now as to tenders. You were asked about checking the figures, and were asked why your officials did not point out this or that to the board. But the board itself controlled the giving of contracts and the examination of the tenders?—Absolutely.

Q. The tenders were sent in sealed and put into a locked box?—Yes.

Q. And the box was brought to the board meeting and opened there?—Yes, in the presence of the board.

Q. The contracts were gone through, I think you said, the board spending several hours?—I never recollect a contract night in which there were less than four hours.

Q. And then the tender was accepted subject to the calculations being found to be correct?—Exactly.

Q. Was it correct to say that all the officers of the board had to do was to check the calculations of the tenders made by contractors?—No.

Q. And the responsibility of dealing with the figures and the prices was the responsibility of the board, not the officials?—Entirely of the board.

Q. And you always kept it to yourselves?—Yes.

Q. It is not the clerk's duty or the assistant clerk's duty to compare several years' tenders until he gets instructions from the board to carry out this comparison?—I hope that the Local Government Board will issue rules and regulations governing this sort of thing, and instruct that tenders should be opened certain days, and then a staff should analyse them and then be considered after the analysis, or words to that effect. I wish the Local Government Board would insist upon that sort of thing.

Q. I am not going all through with that correspondence now, because Mr. Lansbury happens to have it in hand, and will deal with it here. As a matter of fact your experience of the asylums of the London County has shown you what a great improvement could be made by a system of central contracting?—Yes.

Q. Now then, you were asked a question as to the Poplar sick asylum. Mr. Davy, if there is an inquiry it will be separate?—

(The Inspector.) Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) We want to know whether we are not called upon here to defend the expenditure of the Poplar sick asylum?

(The Inspector.) No.

(Mr. Grant.) Thank you, I assumed that.

(The Inspector.) Because, as I understand, the expenditure of the Poplar and Stepney sick asylum was the subject of correspondence or consideration by the guardians, and when the time came for appointing new managers they did, as a matter of fact, make a considerable change in the personnel of the guardians they sent.

(Mr. Robb.) May I take it that although we are not going into the general question of the Poplar and Stepney sick asylum, still we may question Mr. Crooks or other guardians as to what they did when the increase came under their notice.

Mr. Crooks.

25 July.

(The Inspector.) Yes, I think it would be a question as to whether the guardians did as much as they could.

(Mr. Robb.) I suppose you will have all the correspondence put in. It is clear there is no resolution of any kind.

(The Inspector.) Oh, I am perfectly certain of what happened.

(Mr. Grant.) As a matter of fact, Mr. Crooks, apart from documentary evidence, the members who sit on the Poplar sick asylum are also members of the board of guardians?—Yes.

Q. And it has repeatedly happened at meetings of the Poplar board of guardians that the expenditure of the sick asylum has been criticised?—We had a full hour's debate on it.

Q. I want to ask one question about Mr. Diamond. You have been asked about the way he was treated. But his complaint was made as to treatment at the Bow relief committee?—I understand that.

Q. He has not complained of the board of guardians?—He would frequently say, "Oh, I know I cannot get fair play, and before I start you keep these fellows quiet." It was particularly irritating when nobody had spoken at all.

Q. His complaint of the Bow relief committee would have nothing to do with you because you were not chairman of that committee?—No, and if he had got anything I put it right for him. It was only his inexperience.

Q. You were asked about a statement you made about the Charity Organisation Society, and your speech was read to you?—Yes.

Q. And that speech of yours, I think, was a reply to an attack by the Charity Organisation Society in their annual report?—Oh, yes.

Q. Now about the casual women workers down here. I want to get some heads of work the women are working on casually down here. Is there jam making?—Yes.

Q. Matchbox making and filling?—Yes.

Q. Various manufactured kinds of matches?—Yes.

Q. Clothes making?—A good deal of cheap shirt making.

Q. Are there pickle factories?—Yes.

Q. Jam factories, I put to you. And do they also besides that—do many of the people in Poplar go away in the summer, both fruit picking and hop picking?—A fair number do, and then there are also those poor women—and one cannot help saying so—engaged in unloading bottles in the docks. Awful employment to put women to at all. But it is difficult to say they should not do it, poor creatures, they have got to do something. Fancy women acting almost like stevedores.

Q. Would you call the rope works and the sack works—are they regular or casual?—I do not know. They do not come within my ken.

Q. You do not know of them?—No. The nearest I know is Frost, up the street.

Q. Now you were asked about casual labour on the other side of the river?—Yes.

Q. And especially about the Surrey Commercial Docks?—Yes.

Q. Is the labour, the casual labour, in the Surrey Commercial Docks organised in the same way as it is organised on this side?—I really do not know, but a very singular thing happened last night. I met one of the workmen who knows all about these wharves along the riverside, and his story was worse than anything I think I have ever said or pictured. Great strong men standing in groups. Men will come out from the warehouses and call them on, and the rush he tells me to get within the view of the foreman's eye is simply appalling. And he had just witnessed a rush like that, when women and children were knocked down in the street in the rush to get an hour or two hours' work. The foreman comes out and calls twenty men. About 150 are waiting to go on, if only for a shilling, and instead of behaving like men their hunger makes them behave more like brute beasts.

(The Inspector.) Was that the other day?—He told me it happened on Monday, sir.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, Mr. Crooks, you were asked questions about your services to the ratepayers?—Yes, I

am a little bit surprised. I did not think any more about it.

Q. It was put to you that within the year ended March 18, 1906, you made 39 attendances at the workhouse?—Yes.

Q. I see on three occasions you were there twice in one day, and that is not counted to your credit?—No.

Q. I have had a return taken out from the time when you began your work at the workhouse. You were chairman, I think, in 1897?—Yes.

Q. And in 1897 you made 94 attendances; in 1898, 91; in 1899, 72; in 1900, 76; in 1901, 64; in 1902, 104; in 1903, 71; in 1904, 47; in 1905, 36; and in 1906, 39. So you had served your apprenticeship pretty well at the workhouse after you had been on the board?—Yes.

Q. And besides the actual record of ins and outs at the workhouse kept by the gatekeeper, you had lived within a few minutes—two minutes—walk of the place, and you are constantly in and out of this place attending to the work of the board of guardians?—As a matter of fact it is not 100 yards—it might be 50—from here to my house, and whenever I may be coming away from home to go somewhere, I would go through the offices here.

Q. Just look in to see if—?—To see the old people. A special reason why I come here every morning is because I do strongly object to little children being brought here to associate with the grown-up people on relief. Whenever I see persons coming with a child, I always say to the parent: "Leave that child at home." We are not like the old guardians, who insisted on you bringing your brood. We much prefer children not to become associated with the poor law, and it has taken a good while to weed it down; but we rarely now have a child brought here. Of course that brings me, and sometimes I run up here to see Mr. Lough, sometimes the relieving officers, sometimes the out-relief stores, sometimes the dispensary here, and my average must be well over five a week.

Q. Now you were asked whether you approached your task with an equal sense of your duty to the ratepayers?—Yes.

Q. I want to show what you have done for the ratepayers of the district while you have been here. Have you secured, with the help of other persons, three open spaces?—Practically, three open spaces were secured really by my individual efforts. There is the Bromley recreation ground, over which I have a personal spite against somebody, for there when I brought a deputation down somebody sneaked my coat. And then there is the Tunnel gardens.

Q. Wait just a moment, Mr. Crooks. The Tunnel Gardens, they have been there since the tunnel opened?—No, later on. There was a wretched road along there, and we came to the rescue of a very large ratepayer in the district, to whom it was a great burden, who lost a lot of money, and had always been complaining—I mean the dock company—so we told them if they would let us have the road we would turn it into a recreation ground, and we would join with them in helping to make the road down to the pier. Of course, we did them a good turn, and we did the poor people of the district a turn at the same time.

Q. The Island Gardens; are those also?—Yes, the Island Gardens. They took a very long time to talk about, and finally we had to get round the Admiralty over it, and succeeded in getting something off. However, that was a charge upon London, and not upon Poplar.

Q. Now—?—And then I think you might add there also that subway which was wanted for Poplar down there, which we fought through pretty hard, and the incidental expenses which were to be a charge upon the locality we managed to put on London, and thus save the local ratepayers' money.

Q. Now with regard to the libraries. Were you able to obtain from Mr. Carnegie £1,500 for establishing additional libraries?—I was in the fortunate position at the moment of hearing Mr. Carnegie speak, and he was speaking of his experiences in America, and he was quite willing to invest money here in the same way if he could get a guarantee, and I immediately came back to Poplar and wrote him a letter, pointing out the flourishing and luxurious condition of Bromley and the Isle of Dogs, that our people were intelligent although they were poor, and we should be very glad if he could assist us, and at the end of the fourth letter which passed

between us he placed £1,500 at my disposal, which has built a library on the island, and another one has just been opened in Bromley proper.

Q. Has a school of engineering been started down here?—Yes, a school of engineering has been started in High Street, Poplar, at a cost of about £40,000, and I do not think anyone will deny it will be of great educational advantage in a district like this; and I can only refer you to Mr. Marsh, who is sitting next to you, as to the enormous amount of trouble and difficulty I had in securing that place.

Q. Now, with regard to the help of the rates—definite help of the rates—during times of crisis. Were you able to secure from Mr. A. Hills considerable help towards the assistance of your relief committees?—Yes, the thousand pounds that I managed to secure from Mr. Hills enabled us to tide over that fearful period in 1894 that has been spoken of several times.

Q. And I think that directly saved, on that occasion, an appeal to the rates?—Oh, indeed it did.

Q. And the experience you learnt then in opening the stoneyard taught you that that was a very undesirable way of attempting to deal with distress?—Yes.

Q. And whilst you were Mayor of Poplar I believe you received a whole host of personages, the King, Prince and Princess of Wales, Lord Mayor and Sheriffs of London, all came down to visit Poplar, and all of them came without costing the ratepayers a single penny?—Yes, and I think we ought to get a medal for that. I do not know any borough in the kingdom, not even the Royal borough of Kensington, or of Tunbridge Wells, ever received royalty without calling upon the ratepayers to display their loyalty. We asked the ratepayers here and they did it splendidly without costing the ratepayers a penny.

Q. You got organised voluntary contributions?—No, we did better than that. We did not ask anybody for anything in the way of a donation. We appealed to the people's sense of their loyalty, being poor. When their more wealthy brothers of the west end asked them to show it, and they did it, and the press gave us the palm of London. Naturally the Lord Mayor was a big draw.

(The Inspector.) We have been told in the evidence pretty clearly that you devoted the best part of your life to municipal work in Poplar?—Yes, my public life.

Q. And that when you came on the board of guardians your election was something of an event?—Yes. You see there was no possibility of a man like me to get on the board of guardians until that year when Mr. Ritchie was the subject of an appeal—strange to say we met at the Trustee board—that the qualification should be lowered, and you remember he lowered it to £10.

Q. But now your board of guardians is quite a democratic board?—Oh, yes, representing almost every class.

Q. But would half the members—about half of them—be labour members?—No.

Q. How many labour members?—I ticked off a list the other day, and by no stretch of imagination could you make it more than 10 out of 24.

Q. I believe half the members are compounding householders, any way?—You mean they pay their rates through their rent?

Q. Yes, what I am getting at is that it is the first time you have had a board of guardians which is really democratic?—Yes.

Q. Now that board of guardians has never made any secret of its opinions with regard to out-relief or the general treatment of the poor?—Oh, no. But I am sorry now—when one gets living in a small house it has a limited amount of room to store documents. I have had as many as would fill the Guildhall, but I did for a long time keep a record of what is called "the fighting programme."

Q. Your election addresses?—Yes, I remember my very first fight. A person—I think he is a respected member of the present municipal alliance, who said to me, "Well, Crooks, do not you hope you will get in?" while the votes were being counted in the old board room, High Street, Poplar. I said, "Really I do not care." "Oh," he said, "A man never puts up for anything unless he wants to get in." I said, "I do not know whether I am different from other people, but I do not." He said, "Why?" So I took out of my pocket his programme, and he was for further out-relief

to the aged and respectable poor, better treatment of the aged inmates. I said, "That is exactly what I am fighting for, and though you are a Conservative I am not going to—If I get in I will try to do it. If you get in I will try to make you do it."

Q. But what I am putting is that it is a very different policy on the part of your board of guardians?—Yes.

Q. From the policy anywhere else?—Oh, no.

Q. It was absolutely open, and for some years you had the ratepayers supporting that policy?—Yes.

Q. Ever since you have been chairman?—Yes, of course, the last two years—I do not think we have had four quarters of the 12s. rate yet. I do not think we have. We are not in the fourth now. I am subject to correction. Now, then, the order in which we make our rates is quarterly, and I think there have been three shillings paid—

(Mr. Robb.) There have been four?—There have been four; only when the rates came up to 12s. in the £ very naturally people began to cry out about the rates, and very properly to cry out. I do not object. I wonder they have not cried out long ago. If they had taken my advice they would have joined the labour party and insisted on equalisation long ago. (Applause in Court.) Please do not. It is very important to all of us, those who agree and those who do not; and the 12s. rate, of course, has been looked at in all sorts of ways. We look at it from our awful obligations. First, as I have already said, we were surrounded with people. What could we do? No one suggested that we should put the able-bodied and our children in the lethal chamber. The fact is, we had to keep these people. Well, the rates go up to 12s., and within the last two years naturally everybody has been agitated about it.

(The Inspector.) But practically you were amongst friends. There has been no question about your policy, and you have had the majority with you?—There was no question about the policy at all, so far as our kindly treating the people we were responsible for.

Q. Mr. Martley and Mr. Mosley both said that one of the difficulties of Poplar was that the persons who drew large incomes from it were not resident and took no share in municipal affairs?—No, they did not take a share, but it is a little hard on some of them to say that, because there are one or two very excellent men who give time in the day, but who do not take a share in the work. If you like, I could quote you the first Mayor, Mr. Green, or Mr. Bullivant, who really come amongst the first for taking an interest in the place in the day-time, but beyond that he does not take a share.

Q. Both Mr. Martley and Mr. Mosley said they thought it would be a good thing if what they called magnates, were to stand through an election. I do not suppose the ratepayers would elect a man simply because he is a magnate?—No.

Q. They would have to conform with your policy?—I do not think that. Let me give it in my own language. I do not think that any magnate could come to Poplar and fight on the strength of his own name. I think he would be badly beaten. But I do think that a man with a reputation say like Mr. Yarrow or Mr. Green or Mr. Bullivant, running in their respective wards, where their worth is known, I do not think a labour man could beat them, although taking the borough collectively, taking the borough of Poplar properly—and then of course you have got to regard the fact that they could win taking the County Council—

Q. They have never won in recent years?—No, Mr. Bullivant got in for the County Council, you know, in 1889 or 1888, and in 1892 I beat him by a thousand votes. He would perhaps have beaten me by two or three if it had been at Millwall, where he works.

Q. Do you think one of these gentlemen could get in even in his own ward, unless he accepted your policy in regard to out-relief, for instance?—I have not the slightest doubt in my mind, no matter who came on this board, the moment they came in contact with the people, they would do exactly as we have been doing. I would trust any of them. I would even trust Mr. Robb. Surely, I am sure you would, sir.

(Mr. Robb.) Well, if I did not, I should be in a minority of about two, should not I?—No, I think you would be in a minority of one. You would feel lonely, and come over.

Mr. Crooks.

25 July.

(The Inspector.) You claim that the board of guardians, with some justice, have been the pioneers of a great many changes that have been made in the workhouse for ameliorating the conditions of the workhouse inmates, do you not?—Yes. I want to give one credit who certainly does not belong to us, and that is what I venture to call, with all deference, the greatest man, Mr. Rathbone—

Q. Mr. William Rathbone?—Yes, whose own initiative brought trained nurses to the sick in the workhouse at Liverpool. With that exception, I think we may fairly claim to have done much.

Q. And you succeeded, I think, a board of guardians who were rather—I mean to say not immediately succeeded, but there was a former board of guardians who were rather hard?—One does not like to use that term.

Q. I use it in no bad sense, but I mean strict?—I do not think they were; I think they were very indifferent, and that certain people could get certain things and other people could not get anything. Take Mary Street and Sophia Street—

Q. There was a sort of reaction when you came?—Take Mary Street and Sophia Street. In those days rents were collected by a member of this board, and everybody had out-relief there. They said, "If you want any relief you have got to move into Mary Street or Sophia Street." You could not call that a policy, could you?

Q. No, but if I may judge by figures they did not have the same difficulties to deal with as you had?—They did, and it was brought very forcibly to my mind. In 1866, which we have been talking about, we got in a worse muddle than ever we tackled, except perhaps 1895 in that frost, because in 1866 there were soup kitchens springing up all over the place, and every man who had a front room opened a bureau and collected funds, and there was tremendous distress. In March, 1866, there were 3,000 odd people on out-relief. In April of 1867 it had jumped up to 9,000. That must have been worse.

Q. What I have in my mind is this fact. I jump another 20 years to 1885. From the year 1885, and before, up to 1891, the pauperism of Poplar was lower than the pauperism of London?—Yes. You see we did have on the island what we have not got now, in the shipbuilding there, and a tremendous lot of people came up every night. You could meet them in thousands every night and they circulated all over the Tower Hamlets. They did not settle here at all.

Q. The figures run like this. In 1885 the ratio per 1,000 of the pauperism in Poplar was in Poplar 20 and in London 24. Then you rise to 24 in 1891 and London remains at 24. So at that period you and London were equal as regards pauperism. But from 1891 you increase so as to leave London far behind. For instance, there is 1896. You become 31, London 24. In the next five years you become 34, London 24, and last January, which, of course, was quite an exceptional time, you were 68 and London 28?—Yes.

Q. And so, I do not say it is the result of your policy, but at all events during your period of office the pauperism of Poplar has increased out of all proportion to the pauperism of London?—Yes. I think in the last 14, 15, or 18 years improvements in London have been going forward at a very rapid rate, and there has been a driving down East of certain people. I think we made it pretty clear yesterday there was a clearance in Whitechapel, and a very large increase in the alien population just above us which must have driven people down. That is to say people who could afford to have two rooms have been driven to one and that is overcrowded, and they had to get a cheap room at that. That largely accounts for it, and then of course there are the industrial changes.

Q. But some of this increase, I think you will admit, was due to your policy also?—I cannot quite see that. Of course, I think other people ought to have the same policy as ourselves, because if you have a universal policy in London, even if ours had gone up to 68 per 1,000 our 68 would not look so glaring.

Q. The commentary on that would be:—Here is a board of guardians whose aims are the highest, but it shows as far as statistics are concerned an extraordinary proportion of increase in pauperism to the rest of London. How far is that increase due to their aims and policy, how far is it due to the increase of the poverty of

their union?—I should think very largely from the increase of the poverty of the union. I will put it both ways if you will let me. When the people are driven out from Bethnal Green for clearances, and Whitechapel for clearances, and Stepney and St. George's, or Stepney and part of Limehouse, or the alien immigrants have driven rents up, they come down here because rents are cheaper. That has been going on for eight, ten, or twelve years. People in this little district over here are tremendously overcrowded. It was originally cottage property, very nice places, where a man could keep himself and his family. They are now crowding in four families. There are factories on the other hand, which sometimes complain about the rates, but stop in the district for the convenience of the cheapness of land and water way, and convenience of the shipping and railway. That is to say, you cannot imagine—I hope I do not intend to offend any person—but take Spratts, who have come down and built their place within a few years, well, since our rates have been high. It is not reasonable to suppose the high rates were not known to them, yet they come down and buy a piece of land, or hire a piece of land, put up excellent warehouses and factory, and conduct their work there, which is a boon to the neighbourhood. You see, it is cheap land, plus rates, which by no means matches the condition of things in the West End.

Q. May I add to your list of the advantages of Poplar the fact that you get here cheap labour?—I am coming to that in a second. Supposing, for instance, rates were a consideration, rates only the consideration, because that has been the argument against us all the time, that we have driven everybody and everything away because of our rates. You see, there are places in London where rates are only 6s. in the £, or 6s. 6d. Now, say a firm like Bryant & May pays 12s. in the £ on their assessment value. Supposing they look at a 6s. rate somewhere or 7s. rate, and went to Kensington or Marylebone and bought land, what would immediately happen. Then £1 at Bow would immediately become £3 at Kensington or Marylebone.

Q. In value of land?—In value of land. Instead of paying 12s. on their rate they would pay 21s. in the £.

Q. The ultimate burden of the rates falls upon the landowner?—I wish it did, but he manages to escape somewhere. The point with me is that here it has been an advantage—we are getting crowded up with poor because they can get a room, and our factories, who complain about the rates, have the advantage of having a commercial community. Talk about us driving trade away. I do not know a spot to let in the island.

Q. That brings me to my next point. You seem to be of opinion that the poverty of Poplar is growing and likely to grow?—I would not like to say that, because I agree with you that some better system to make labour more fluid must be introduced.

Q. You see, Mr. Crooks, what is in my mind is this: You are responsible to a great extent for Poplar, and I am responsible to a very considerable extent for the general administration of the poor law unions; if you are going to increase in Poplar in the same ratio we none of us are going to have a very good time. Do you think, in your judgment, there is any likelihood of another union or two falling into the same state of high rates and high pauperism as Poplar?—Yes, I should think there would be, and there is a tremendous need of centralising the burden. You see, take Poplar—

Q. Just wait a minute, Mr. Crooks. Now, it would seem from your evidence that there is a positive surplus of labour here, but I understand there is a great objection on the part of the dominant political party down here to emigration?—Yes, the love of home you know is inborn with us. I am quite serious about it. It is difficult to make emigration popular. There are always the energetic spirits who want to go, and after all are the best colonisers, but practically the dominant party down here says a man should have the option of yea or nay. He should not be compelled to go.

Q. But on the other hand he should not be anchored on the spot?—Oh, no.

Q. Even by means of out-relief?—Oh, no, out-relief will not keep him if he can get a living elsewhere.

Q. Primarily, what is wanted is a better organisation of dock labour if that is possible?—Yes, but do not you see if you compare the number of men employed with the number who could be employed, and go back to the old time, who is going to abolish the machinery, get rid

of the big ships, or have sails when you could get steam? It is an economic law.

Q. And then men are driven out by what you call an economic law?—Yes.

Q. But what is the remedy?—The surplus might be absorbed in a variety of ways. I do not think there is only one solution to the whole trouble. One of the solutions of the whole trouble is that men should have a chance of acquiring knowledge of their trades. The adaptability of a man gets more difficult after 40. A man cannot change his trade very quickly after 40, but up to then he can.

Q. That is a tempting subject for discussion, but we must remember we have got to get through this Inquiry. I come to my next point. I understood you to say that had the Government decided in that fateful November to have an autumn session, you probably would not have had the organised demonstrations that happened here in that month?—Oh, I think we should, whatever happened, for this reason that after all, if we had had an autumn session, and things were discussed immediately, we could not have got to work very soon. We have still got to feed people in the meantime.

Q. Who is Mr. Salmon?—One of the local workmen. There are two brothers.

Q. He happened to be the spokesman on that occasion?—Yes, it always happens with a crowd of men, one will take the lead when you least expect it.

Q. Was not he a paid orator?—I am not in a position to say. He was not paid by the guardians.

Q. As I understand the position, you were brought face to face with an organised demand that something should be done for these men?—I suppose it was organised and not organised. I pointed out that when you get an aggregation of men on a given spot, looking for a day's work, while a man comes for the six o'clock call or the eight o'clock, and finds only four or five men taken on, leaving outside 200 or 300, what is but natural that one will begin talking rather loud.

Q. Now we come to the question of the rates. You are very strongly in favour of the equalisation of the rates, are you not?—I am very strongly in favour of the equalisation of the rates.

Q. Do you mean complete equalisation?—Well, I am prepared to accept 95 per cent. to go on with.

Q. I am going to put it to you. At that deputation to Mr. Balfour, at which you and I were present, he put it in this way: he said he was quite clear any further equalisation of the rates must be accompanied by curtailment of autonomy?—The same thought was running through my mind, but—I am not sure whether I said it—we said if you come and feed the people we do not care 2d. for the autonomy.

Q. Anyway you assented to it?—Oh, yes, and do now.

Q. On what ground?—Well, the ground that I took up was that the conditions of life as we understand them—the life of the big town—you get centred in different districts for the convenience of the town. The London districts are for work purely industrial, the carrying on of manufactures, the distribution of goods and the rest, all of which must of necessity be carried out by a certain class. Some people in any condition of life break down and frequently go into your hospitals, or sick asylums, or become chargeable on out-relief medical orders. Children are not as well and as regularly fed as they might be, owing to the casual nature of the father's employment, which does not tend to thrift. Rather the contrary, because supposing a man is out all this week; he gets work on Saturday. Suppose he gets 6s. on Saturday, what does he say to his children? "Have a bust up; do not know when we are going to have the next." You get that class of man in all districts in London. Take the right-hand parishes. You say you get a different class of pauper or a different class of applicant here. We come to look upon people, sometimes I do not think that they really mind it, when we talk about the lower class, because if you are talking of the lower class and tell him he is one, he would say, "Get off my back, and I shall be a bit higher up, I have got to keep you and myself too," but it is for the convenience of the whole of the metropolis there are localities like ours. It is for their convenience. Well then, it seems to me, if it is for the convenience of the big town, the town ought to bear the whole responsibility of the breakdowns and the rest. Marylebone in their workhouse have got a different type of inmate

altogether, broken-down actresses and the rest, who ought to be described in a different manner.

Q. Quite so; your point is London is homogeneous, and therefore you think the burden of the rates should be equally distributed, with the responsibility of keeping the poor?—Quite so.

Q. Who in your judgment serve all London. But my point is this: How is that doctrine to be reconciled with the doctrine that each locality, each union or borough, should manage its own affairs. You think it could be done?—I have always been against it, you know. I have been for unification, those have been for "fortification." They chop up into 30 unions; parishes of the rich and the parishes of the poor. The rich must of necessity be stronger than the poor. They can organise while we are earning our daily bread, and can put brains into effect while our men have only got muscle to put into it.

Q. Yes, but you would say there was a danger in giving A's money to B to spend?—There might be.

Q. Would that be the ground on which you suggest curtailment of autonomy?—I laid down pretty clear lines that I had authority, and if it was I should say we are going to pay that under certain conditions. We are going to pay that, and then over and above that you pay yourself it may be 5 or 10 per cent. Supposing you put all the aged poor on a central fund, you yourself, the Local Government Board would draw out a scale or scheme showing the income of the family consisted of so and so. If you satisfy your local committee who report the matter say to us, if that is the case, you pay on a 4s., 5s., or 6s. scale, as the case may be. You will have a proper auditor to go through the accounts, proper officers to go through them, and if the local committee was wanting to spend more money outside on certain things, I would restrict it to this extent, they should clearly define what they wanted to raise the extra half-penny for. If you had central control the man in the West End would have some concern in keeping the body and souls of men together in the East End, and so on, and it would not be a question of money, it would be a question of what could best be done to keep the body and soul of the people together. I ought to put on that the other point as to what to do with the able-bodied men who would not work. I could tell you exactly what I would do with them, but this question of the equalisation of the rates seems to me such an excellent claim. Supposing you made London all equal the rate of London would be seven shillings and a fifth. Supposing all the rates in London were equal for everything, well, that would not hurt anybody who is not paying less. Suppose the City pay 6s. 4d., another 8½d. would not hurt them. But look what it would do for us. It would take 5s. off us—you would be helping the poor.

Q. Do you mind what the rates are. I put to you the question, because there is a school that thinks the ideal state of the world would be if real property was transferred from the private individual to the State?—It might be all right, but here at this Inquiry if I was to say rates were no consideration, it would be placarded all over London: "Mr. Crooks does not think rates are of importance." I think they are of awful importance, having regard to conditions of life. There are many struggling little people who pay rates and have no more education—if one must be forgiven for saying so—than an ordinary workman. They know they have got to pay, and do not know why. But of course, as you—I mean that is true. Mr. Robb smiles. As a matter of fact, you pay about £4 per head of the population on taxes, and nobody notices it; but rates, of course, are a different matter. When you get a central authority that will absorb the wealth I do not think you need trouble about rates at all. We shall not be talking about that. The needs of the people would be met.

Q. At the present time the rates are a most oppressive burden on certain classes of the people?—Certainly they are, and it is true that many and many a shopkeeper, here especially, works more hours than the ordinary workman. He works, but he struggles for the liberty that has no price; he is his own master, very often his own slave. But the fact remains that in a district like ours, as I have said a hundred times over, a 2d. rate in Westminster would mean a 4s. 7d. rate in Poplar. It would not hurt the rich, but it does hurt the poor. A question that has not been put to me that I thought was coming out was—

Q. Let me get over my disagreeable question, which is this: Why did the board of guardians vote Mr. Madeley

Mr. Crooks.

25 July.

Mr. Crooks.

25 July.

a gratuity?—I am rather indignant about that £50, but he was entitled to that £50, and I do not think I was quite fair. I voted against it, but I voted against it because I felt something wanted clearing up at that moment, but the fact remained he had earned that money. He was the superintendent of works, if you remember, and the Board allowed it from time to time.

Q. What was your other point?—My point was that somebody might say how is it there is a great falling off in the out-relief this year? Well, there are a good many reasons for the falling off. The Church Army, you notice, spent £2,000 against £800 in 1904, and the Queen's Fund of £160,000 was raised.

(Mr. Oxley.) In 1905.

(Witness.) And a great deal of work has opened up and a dozen different jobs are going on about here. Last winter there were a good many little things done. We had decided in Poplar not to ask anybody for anything, hoping, of course, that work would be organised and our men would be set to do it, and while money was pouring into the adjoining parish we got nothing. A few friends, without asking at all, placed at our disposal a few hundred pounds quite quietly. I had better not mention names, because names leak out; but certain unfortunate persons, and 154 families, women and children, were taken up, and we found them week after week food and clothes, who, without it, would have been on out-relief.

(The Inspector.) The Board of Trade in the last report says that dock labour is worse than it was a month ago, and only a little better than it was last year?—Yes, generally speaking about here. That was for the middle of the summer. Work is as bad this summer time as it has been for a very long while. There are a kind of fluctuations you know.

Q. The Board of Trade returns take the whole month?—Yes. Oh, but it may be two months. You may get a month overlapping. You see the Board of Trade returns are only from rough calculations, because there are a good many thousand men outside trade-unions, and other unions which send no record to the labour department, saying what their return is. You may always multiply from between 15 and 20 per cent. The number of officers dropped up, sir, as to whether we have controlled our officers in the manner they ought to have been controlled, and a good deal was made at the early part of this Inquiry as to the coercion by the guardians of certain relieving officers. On the whole, I am very proud of our relieving officers here, and I think we have got an excellent lot of men, and I will say this in defence of any and every guardian. The astonishing thing to me is how few things do come out, but the relieving officer is not the

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Anderson in his evidence promised to get figures in regard to the Amalgamated Stevedores Protection League, and he has handed me a table from which Mr. Marsh has been good enough to compile another table, which makes it more simple. If you will allow, I will simply put the document on the shorthand notes. It has been checked. It shows (1) the number of persons in the branches, (2) the numbers in arrears in branches, and (3) the number of members struck off for arrears.

(The Inspector.) Have you copies?

Mr. C. H. COLVIN; sworn and examined.

Mr. Colvin.

25 July.

(Mr. Johnston.) Is your name Charles Henry Colvin?—Yes.

Q. You are foreman painter to the Poplar guardians?—Yes.

Q. Were you employed to paint and redecorate the interior of the workhouse chapel in 1892?—In 1902.

Q. 1902. How long did the work take to do?—As far as my recollection carries me back, seven weeks.

Q. What time of the year was it?—Six weeks before Easter and one week after.

Q. Seven weeks altogether. Was that all the work done at the chapel?—No.

Q. There was other work?—Yes. Bricklayers' work, pointing, painting—bricklayers' pointing over paint work.

Q. Did you do it?—Not the bricklayers'.

Q. What work did you do?—When the scaffolding was put up I did the scaffolding.

master of the guardian, it is the guardian who is master of the relieving officer.

Q. The board of guardians?—Well, no matter whether it is two or more, but surely if a guardian thinks that a case is worth relieving he has the greater responsibility. He has, indeed, because he is the elected person. He cannot make a relieving officer commit an illegal act, because a relieving officer may decline to do an illegal thing even if the chairman of the board of guardians asks him to do it. After all, a guardian must be master over an officer.

Q. I think not. I should say the board of guardians?—You might put it in that way if you like. Whatever it is, it is subject to the approval of the board of guardians. One of the criticisms hurled at us is that we want here a system like the Elberfeld system. Mr. Robb smiles and shakes his head. Thinks it is something quite wonderful if the relieving staff have done it. Elberfeld has a population of about 180,000, and consists of 620 officers. If the Poplar Union, for example, was staffed in the same proportion, it would have about 560 relieving officers. As a matter of fact, it has only nine.

Q. Just one other question. We have heard a good deal about the casual labour of women employed by what Mr. Sydney Webb calls the parasitic industries being supported partly by the rates. What view do you take of that. Would that be the effect of out-relief?—I do not think it makes the slightest difference. It is a singular thing, but you find men with full bellies will decline to work at a low rate. They may be starved to accept a low rate of pay but I should decline to starve a man to make him go to work for anybody at a low price. I object to our women on out-relief who get sufficient to keep them competing with the women in shirt making. I think it helps to keep wages down, and I believe that your order that no relief should be given to persons in employment made many years ago is an excellent one. On the other hand, you have a few people who earn 1s. or 2s. which covers that very extraordinary Order of yours about paying rent.

Q. A good deal has been said about that. The intention of that Order was to prevent guardians making themselves responsible for it?—One other question was taken up—about the children—whether the instruction we have given the children would fit them for public life or service. I am only going to say two words about that. As our girls are trained now we are able to get positions for them long before they are able to leave school.

(The Inspector.) Who is your next witness, Mr. Grant? I am very much obliged to you, Mr. Crooks.

(Witness.) I am very much obliged to you.

(Mr. Grant.) It simply shows in these particular years what proportion of people were in arrears with their contribution to the union, the assumption being that a man lets his contribution fall before his rent or food.

(Mr. Robb.) Is not that rather dangerous, because one will have to assume whenever a man lets his contribution to his union fall into arrear, he does it because he is unable to pay. There may be people who let their contribution fall into arrears for other reasons. They may desire to sever their connection.

(The Inspector.) That is probably what occurs.

Q. Have you a specification of the work?—No, I have not.

Q. Have you got it there. Have you got the entries there. Read them out?—"To cleaning and redecorating the interior, cleaning off, restoring and varnishing the roof and painting the roof trusses in party colours, making and hanging new glazed sashes to the ventilator openings, putting in new bullseye window in west gable, and providing opening arrangements for the same. To cleaning down the brick walls, repairing where necessary and drawing the joints. To cutting away the timber of floor, and building new pipe trenches in brickwork with stone coping, making the stonework of chancel and aisles and laying tile flooring, cleaning, touching up, and varnishing the whole front of organ loft and pews. Redecorating the chancel." The cost was £221 6s. 10d.

(Mr. Grant.) The total amount is a little more than that, I think?—

Mr. Colein.

25 July.

(Mr. Oxley.) Page 49?—"Cleaning and decorating" "chancel." See page 119"—£225 7s. 2d.

(Mr. Johnston.) Just tell me in regard to the work. Did you have any difficulty with the scaffolding?—Yes, of course; the roof was a gable roof, and it ran up slanting, which wanted three tier of scaffolding.

Q. Three tier of scaffolding, yes. What was the shape of the roof?—The shape of the roof was one, two, three, right up to a peak.

Q. In rows. Have you made a rough sketch?—That is a rough sketch.

Q. Well, whatever the correct shape, it did require three separate tiers of scaffolding?—Yes.

Q. Tell me about the master's sitting room?—The assistant master's sitting room?

Q. Yes. What was done there?—Paint was burnt off from the walls which had been on for years, and wood-work rubbed down, repainted, and the walls were made good with Keen's cement and size and rubbed down and painted. Light ceiling the same, cleaned and painted. Woodwork painted with three coats, varnished with varnish—oil varnish.

Q. What were the dimensions of the room?—I believe as far as my recollection goes 10 ft. 6 in. or 11 ft.

Q. 10 ft. 6 in. high?—Yes. You have got it there.

Q. Do you remember what it is?—I cannot. Only give a rough guess. It takes 13 pieces of paper.

Q. 13 pieces of paper?—Yes.

Q. Was anything done to the blinds?—Yes. Well cleansed, twice varnished.

Q. The stove fittings?—The stove was made good and blacked with Japan black.

Q. Can you tell me what the weight was?—One coat of paint for the woodwork. The refuse of the old paint.

Q. What was the total cost of the whole job?—£14 17s. 7d.

(Mr. Robb.) Were you foreman for these jobs?—Yes, sir.

Q. Who do you work under, Mr. Gillock, the labour master?—On the chapel job under Mr. Gillock.

Q. Under Mr. Gillock in the chapel job?—Yes; superintendent of works.

Q. Do you produce any time sheets?—Yes.

Q. Do you produce them?—Yes, every fortnight.

Q. Have you got them?—I have not got them with me.

Q. Mr. Gillock would be the man to tell us most about the chapel?—He was the man who directed it.

Q. The man in charge?—Yes, I superintended the painting.

Q. He is alive and well, and not living far off, could be called. He was your superior?—Yes.

Q. Was he a reliable man, Mr. Gillock?—That I could not say.

Q. I mean was he a man whose statements could be relied upon?—Yes.

Q. You think they could. If Mr. Gillock told the chaplain that £200 was spent on labour alone—

(Mr. Grant.) No, no, Mr. Robb. The chaplain—

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Grant, you must not interfere. I am reading from the note. If Mr. Gillock told the chaplain £200 was spent on labour alone and he thought the amount of money spent on wages was scandalous, do you think Mr. Gillock, if he said that, would have said it unless he meant it?—I should not think Mr. Gillock would say such a thing.

Q. If he did he would have meant it?—I could not say.

Q. With regard to this room, you say it cost £14. Or is it £17?—£14.

Q. And we know from the books £12 was for labour?—£12 was for labour, yes.

Q. Do you think that is a reasonable amount to spend on a small room of that character. And you call in blacking up of the stove to justify it. That was a large job?—It takes a certain amount of time. Painting work takes time.

Q. How long ago was this?—Two years, six months.

Q. Did you keep a record of the job at the time?—Not exactly.

Q. How do you know all these details?—Because I have a head.

Q. Because you have got a head. I see. And you remember about this one cwt. and three qrs. old paint. That is in your head. You made no note at the time?—No.

Q. And I suppose you have done hundreds of jobs before and since?—I think so. I have had 37 years at it.

Q. And every job you carry in your head. The amount of refuse you throw away?—No. Don't be so personal.

(Mr. Grant.) I call Mr. Ford.

Mr. E. J. FORD, Guardian; sworn and examined.

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Edward John Ford, do you live at 26, Prestage Road, Poplar; have you been a member of the board of guardians for nine years?—Yes.

Q. And you are now vice-chairman?—Yes.

Q. How long have you been vice-chairman?—During the lifetime of this board—since April, 1904.

Q. I think originally you were a seaman?—Yes.

Q. And then you became a stevedore?—Yes?

Q. Are you now treasurer of the Amalgamated Society of Stevedores?—Joined the Amalgamated Labour Protection League in 1892.

Q. What other office did you hold?—Branch secretary, secretary of No. 5 branch since 1895, one of the largest branches in the society.

Q. I want to ask you about the system of tendering. Dealing with contracts first of all. I believe the tenders are advertised for in the daily papers?—Yes.

Q. The Daily Telegraph, The Daily Chronicle, East End News, East London Advertiser, The East London Observer, The Municipal Journal, and The Local Government Journal?—That is correct.

Q. Tenders to be sent in sealed to the clerk?—Yes.

Q. And they are put in a box and locked up until the meeting of the board?—Yes.

Q. At the meeting of the board they are opened in the presence of the guardians, with the press and public both present?—Public meetings—open meetings.

Q. As each tender is opened, is the name of the tenderer read out, and the amount of the tender?—Yes. Our system is each member of the board is supplied with this form, on which they can note the names and prices. I have a record before me, as far as this year is concerned. I have the original memorandum.

Q. The memorandum on which you work?—Yes. It shows some interest is taken. I have every item here, and kept them.

Q. Now, all the tenders having been opened, are they put to the vote?—Yes.

Q. I believe there has been sometimes a proposal to send a particular set of tenders to a committee?—Yes. It has been done on two or three occasions. Done in the matter of coal and drugs. Those are the only two I can remember at the moment.

Q. If that is not moved, the tenders are put to the vote, and decided by the guardians?—That is so. I ought to say that it is competent for any member of the board to propose any particular name or contractor.

Q. Any member of the board may propose that any particular contract should be accepted?—Yes.

Q. Suppose there are four, is a vote taken on the four?—Yes.

Q. And the lowest of the four is struck out?—Yes.

Q. And you take the vote on the three?—On the remainder

Mr. Ford.

25 July

Mr. Ford,
25 July.

Q. And the third is struck out?—Then a vote on the two, and the one that gets the most votes between the two gets the contract. So there is a gradual process of striking out tenders. Then the last one who is left in, if anyone objects to him, it is in the power of any member to divide the board, and have the names taken on the last one.

Q. So a man might have a majority and the board might reject it?—It is just possible.

Q. Have you a return showing the highest and lowest tender for the year 1906-7?—Yes.

Q. Does that show the tenders accepted make £40,274?—The whole of the tenders accepted, Mr. Grant.

Q. Yes?—£41,630 are the exact figures. I meant that is the nearest fraction to a £.

Q. Quite right. The tenders amount to £41,628. The highest tenders, taking them all through, amounted to £47,965?—That is so.

Q. The lowest tenders all through to £40,627?—That is correct. I gave a wrong figure just now. The total tenders accepted £6,338 below the highest and £1,006 above the lowest. It is £6,335 below the highest and £1,002 above the lowest.

Q. It does not matter about the units. Now, during the nine years you have been on the board have you had considerable experience of the tenders submitted to you for acceptance?—I think I can claim I have taken a fairly intelligent interest in the matter.

Q. Do you think in dealing with tenders that the board always ought to accept the lowest tenders?—No, I do not, decidedly not.

Q. Tell me why?—Well, there may be a good many reasons in the minds of a board operating at that particular time why they should not accept the lowest tenders. One has to bear in mind the credibility or ability of a firm to undertake a contract.

Q. First of all, the question of the ability of the firm?—Yes.

Q. To carry out a contract?—Yes.

Q. For instance, you have a contract for milk. If a man who had just started, and sold 10 or 12 quarts a day, put in a tender, you would consider, although he put in the lowest price?—We should think he was not in a position to carry out the contract.

Q. Supposing next you had a firm which had a contract previously, and their deliveries had been very bad and you had to complain of them and return the milk, even if they were the lowest tender, would that be a matter which would come under consideration?—Yes.

Q. You mentioned credibility. Suppose you know a firm is in difficulties, and like to go into bankruptcy?—We should not handicap ourselves by accepting his tender. I should not, at least.

Q. Well, now, in regard to the deliveries of food. Of course you would be put in a very awkward position if they did not get deliveries regularly to supply the people they had to feed?—That is so. One has to remember you have statutory obligations you have to fulfil. One is bound to feed the sick and old people and all classes at given times with given quantities, and it is no use entering into a contract, say, for meat, which is to be served at 12 o'clock, if a firm cannot get it delivered until 10 or 11. The danger is also if the things are not up to sample, they are apt to be rushed through the oven and overlooked. One has not time to examine them and test them.

Q. Well, now, next in regard to the contracts—still on this year, Mr. Ford?—Yes.

Q. I will come to previous years presently. Take the question, for instance, of flour. How is that contract dealt with?—Everyone who tenders for flour has to submit a sample. That sample is received at the office here and some distinctive number or marks is given to the sample by the clerk, and when it is too late to accept any further samples or tenders the samples are submitted to an expert.

Q. You have a sample, and put a distinctive mark upon it. Do you then take a certain amount of flour—a third taken out—and mark that with another mark?—I believe it is so.

Q. And these samples of flour, are they all sent to the master-baker to examine and test?—In conjunction—I

think we have one of the foremost experts on the board at the present time, who is a master-baker, being an authority. He, in conjunction with the master-baker, generally tests these samples.

Q. And do they report on the samples submitted—on the number on the sample?—That is so. What they are in their opinion. No. 1 or No. 5 is best; No. 3 second, and what in their opinion is the exact position.

Q. Is that report delivered to the chairman of the board on the day when the contracts are dealt with?—No. At the end when all the board are seated and we are dealing with the letting of the contract. The report is not known until the board sits. The first contract let is the miller. Your experts report that sample No. 5, for instance, is the best.

Q. Then by the list in the clerk's office you ascertain that No. 5 is Mr. A's contract?—We never ascertain that until after accepting it.

Q. You take the lowest tender and examine the sample?—My point is they recommend a certain sample—say No. 5. The tenders would be opened and the prices quoted. The board would not know whose particular tender that was. For instance, they recommend No. 5. The tender is opened and we have the price of No. 5. Perhaps the second one would be No. 3, and there might be not a great deal of difference between the two samples. If there is a great deal of difference between the two prices, it may be the board would take what I may call their second string. But in this particular instance it appears the sample is not only the best, but the cheapest.

Q. The sample of flour which your master-baker, and Mr. Jungblut, chose as the best, having nothing to go by except the flour. It was also found that when you came to open the tender it was the cheapest?—That is so. £611 below the highest tender.

Q. And the price, £3,423?—Yes, £3,423.

Q. Now with the butcher. The highest tender from the butcher is £15,382?—That is so.

Q. And the lowest, £13,017?—£13,017 is right.

Q. You accepted the tender from Mr. Blott at £13,066?—Yes.

Q. You paid £49 more than the lowest tender?—Yes.

Q. What is the reason?—My reason for voting for Mr. Blott is, he has always served the board conscientiously and well. I have never seen Mr. Blott in my life, and I do not want to, if it comes to that. He has done the board very good service and in fact he has always been the lowest tenderer as far back as I can remember, with the exception of this present year.

Q. This particular year?—He happened to be £49 above the lowest tenderer who was unknown to anybody on the board.

Q. Therefore you chose the man who served you well in the past and carried out his contract conscientiously and satisfactorily?—That is so.

Q. The other firm, who were unknown, were £49 lower. They were unknown to all of you?—Perhaps I ought to say although he was £49 above the lowest tender he was also £2,316 below the highest tender—a remarkable variation in figures.

Q. And the highest tenderers were Gunton Brothers, of known repute?—Yes.

Q. Well known. Now poultry. You accepted Wickes' tender at £161 as against Geary's £155?—Yes.

Q. £6 difference between Wickes' tender and Geary's?—Well, the reason that made me support Mr. Wickes was the fact that we entered into a contract 12 months ago with Mr. Wickes at a given price—an annual contract—to supply eggs and poultry to the board. What happened last year was that the board practically supplied these from Laindon, the whole of the summer months. When we could not supply them any longer we compelled Mr. Wickes to supply us during the winter months. That seemed a bit of sharp practice, Mr. Davy. The man enters into an annual contract for eggs and poultry based on the fact that he is to supply for the whole of the year. I think that served him rather roughly. It was that reason which led me to move that Mr. Wickes' tender be accepted, and make it a 6 months' contract instead of 12 months. Also in that case, although it is £6 above Mr. Geary, and both good tradesmen, I would

like to point out the fact that it is £72 below Whiteley's, of Westbourne Grove, and they ought to know their business. Whiteley's is £78 above Geary.

Q. Greengrocery. Hall's at £161 was accepted—£10 above the other tender. So Mr. Hall, who had supplied you before, was the lowest tender?—Yes.

Q. A local tradesman?—Yes.

Q. Easily got at?—Always rendered the board good service.

Q. So you thought he should have the tender?—Yes.

Q. Yeast. Matthews', at 5½d. per lb., was the lowest, and was accepted?—Yes.

Q. On milk you took Whitlock's at 9d. per gallon. They supplied excellent milk. 9d. a gallon works out at 2½d. a quart, Mr. Ford?—Yes, 2½d. a quart.

Q. And the specification called for 10 per cent. of milk fats?—That is our specification—10 per cent. of cream.

Q. And is every pint of milk that goes into the work-house tested by lactometer to see that it is good?—Yes, and a daily record kept and entered up of all the supply.

Q. You see you get what you contract for at this price?—Yes. Perhaps you will allow me to say on that question of milk. I look upon milk as a very important article of diet to children, aged and sick infirm. It is practically their staple form of food, and enters largely into the dietary scale as ordered by the Local Government Board. Personally I do not care where it is bought. I shall never vote for any milkman who undertakes to supply 10 per cent. of cream at 8½d. a gallon. I cannot buy it under 16d. To ask a tradesman to supply milk at less than 9d. a gallon is giving him a direct incentive to adulteration and fraud.

Q. Now the grocer. £177 above the lowest tender and £113 below the highest?—That is so.

Q. Meal. The accepted tender £5 above the lowest tender and £53 below the highest?—£58 below the highest.

Q. With regard to the beer you were asked about, not only was Whitbread's price the highest, but was Whitbread's the best?—Undoubtedly, Mr. Grant.

Q. In regard to the cheese-monger, giving the contract to Percival—the reason was that they supplied the board for a number of years, and always satisfactorily?—That is so.

Q. The oilman, Mr. Heaton, £1,374?—You have missed one—the soap-maker.

Q. Yes. Wilkie & Soames at £574 was accepted, £73 below the highest?—That was the lowest tender, and £73 below the highest.

Q. That was the lowest tender. So again with disinfectants, the lowest was accepted?—Yes.

Q. The oilman. Heaton's tender at £1,374 was accepted as against £1,251, the lowest. That was £123 above the lowest, and £130 below the highest?—That should be £180 below the highest, which was Bailey's.

(Mr. Robb.) Which year?

(Mr. Grant.) This year. Heaton is a local man?—Yes.

Q. And has he in previous years supplied you always to your satisfaction?—Yes.

Q. And as a rule in dealing with these contracts, where a man has served the board well, with nothing to complain of in delivery, and the work effectually carried out and satisfactorily done, you have not taken the contract away to give to another man with a lower tender, but about whom you knew nothing?—No.

Q. Brushmaker. You took the lowest tender?—Yes. £112 below the highest.

Q. Earthenware?—Accepted the lowest tender, which was £131 below the highest rejected tender.

Q. In the ironmongery contract, of which we have heard so much, you accepted Mr. Pyle's tender at £748, and that was £18 above the tender of Pryke, Palmer, & Co.?—Yes, and it was £51 below the highest rejected tender.

Q. Which was £899. In that year did you get a number of new samples supplied—a variation of the

tender?—Yes. We had a complete new set of samples, that had to be tendered to.

Q. Do you know as a matter of fact whether Pryke & Palmer looked at those samples or not?—I cannot say from actual knowledge, but to the best of my belief they have never seen them.

Q. We hear a lot about coffee-pots and the comparison of years. Were the coffee-pots in 1905 half-pint pots at 6½d. and were the coffee-pots in 1906 Britannia metal coffee-pots, 6s. 6d.?—Yes. The former coffee-pot was a 6d. article you buy in a bazaar.

Q. Serving a single person?—Yes.

Q. The other was for the table?—Yes. Mr. Davy has seen the two samples. My opinion is that they are not to be bought at the price quoted to us—5s. each. I believe as a matter of fact the sample cost 6s. 3d.

Q. The sample you used?—Yes.

Q. Electrical supplies. For that you took the lowest tender?—Yes, £17 less than the highest rejected tender.

Q. Cartwright. Did you take their tender for clothing?—Yes.

Q. It was £94 in excess of the lowest?—Yes, and also £109 below the highest rejected tender.

Q. What reputation has that firm with you?—An excellent reputation. They have always done the board real good service. My opinion is they are a model firm of employers in every possible shape and form. They have done this board good service.

Q. If Mr. Diamond's statement is true that there has been sub-contracting going on and sweating, the board if they had had any evidence would have gone into it.—He had not the moral courage to give us an opportunity to do that. He says that Cartwright sub-contracts and puts part of the contract out. That is as Mr. Diamond puts it. He sullies the name of these people and does not give the names of the parties to the sub-contract, which is not fair to the contractors, and does not let them get at the bottom of it. If I made an assertion of that kind I would give the firm the name. Perhaps it would be worth while to ask Cartwright's to send us down their wages list or whatever it is. We ought to have it.

(The Inspector.) Get it through the guardians?—My point is the allegation is not only against Cartwright but against us. If they are sweaters we are charged with encouraging sweaters. I am the last man to do that.

(Mr. Grant.) Whatever the reputation of the Poplar board of guardians, it is known as a board that has sought to maintain trade union rates of wages?—Yes.

Q. And stamp out sweating?—That is so.

Q. Whatever other experience Mr. Diamond had, if he came to the board with a charge that one of the contractors did not pay trade union wages and sub-contracted he would have come to a board that was sympathetic?—We would never sleep until we had got to the bottom of it.

Q. Tender for uniforms. The accepted contract is £5 above the lowest tender?—Officers' uniforms?

Q. Yes, officers' uniforms. Was that given to Beaumont?—Just a moment. Yes, given to Beaumont.

Q. Is he a local man?—Yes, in the High Street. A very good firm.

Q. The highest tender is £57 in excess of his?—Yes.

Q. Did not the children's underclothing go to Cartwright at £6 in excess of the lowest and £5 less than the highest?—It went to Cartwright, and it was £6 above the lowest and £5 below the highest.

Q. Well, now, uniforms and children's underclothing were not contracts running to large amounts?—No. The two combined that were accepted were £10.

Q. Drapery is a big contract?—Yes.

Q. And that contract went to Cartwright at £5,026, and their tender was the lowest tender?—Yes.

Q. £941 below the highest rejected tender?—One striking thing about the main contracts is that we have got frequently near the lowest and in a great many cases they are absolutely the lowest.

Q. Haberdashery—Cartwright's tender again accepted?—The lowest tender.

Mr. Ford.

25 July.

Mr. Ford,
25 July.

Q. Tailors' articles?—And £75 below the highest rejected tender.

Q. Now tailors' articles?—The lowest tender accepted.

Q. £211?—£211.

Q. £42 less than the highest tender?—That was £42 less than the highest tender.

Q. Shoemaker. The tender of Wilkins was accepted at £1,450, and the lowest tender?—Yes, and £382 below the highest rejected tender. That is another instance of the main contracts.

Q. For leather you took Pocock's tender, £760, refusing the tender of Pangbourne at £735?—Yes.

Q. Were there several reasons?—Yes. We had had a good deal of trouble with Pangbourne in delivery. Not the quality of his articles. Here again the question of time—dispatch—operates very often. We accepted a tender which was £25 above the lowest tender and £328 below the highest rejected tender.

Q. Now on yard goods, Passmore's tender is £7 in excess of Byford's?—Yes.

Q. What was again the reason?—No special reason.

Q. Passmore's tender was £33 below the highest?—No, I do not know there was any special reason I could assign to it. It was only a small item. The only thing although it is £7 above the lowest it is £33 below the highest.

Q. Lead and glass. You took Pyle's, £3 above the lowest and £8 below the highest?—A small item of £96.

Q. In the books and accounts, only one tender, and given to Knight & Co.?—Yes.

Q. Printing?—I believe, although we advertised specially, you have not got all the world to draw upon. Knight & Co. are the specialists. They are the only people who tender. Never any competition.

Q. Did you get a tender from a man named Furbey, for £306?—Yes, tender from Furbey.

Q. And did the board decide to give it to him subject to reports as to whether he could carry out his contract and whether he complied with the trade union conditions of the London Society of Compositors?—Subject to that he would have the contract.

Q. Investigation was made and the board was advised not to accept Furbey's tender?—That is so.

Q. And on that did the board accept another tender from Straker's at £437?—Yes.

Q. Which in the opinion of the board was the lowest genuine tender?—That is it. One moment. I am told it was Bean's tender, not Straker's.

Q. There was a difference of £131 on that contract?—Yes.

Q. Now Mr. Oxley's figures showed if the board accepted the lowest tender in every case there would have been a saving of £1,000?—I agree with him.

Q. But £131 out of that is accounted for by this contract?—£243 difference between. I accept your figures.

Q. £131 upon a contract you were to accept at the lowest, but you found the man incapable of carrying out the contract. Stationery. Take the next three, stationery the lowest; tobacco and snuff the lowest tenders?—Yes.

Q. Funerals you accepted; Johnson's at £2 1s. 6d. per funeral, as against a rejected tender of £1 19s. 6d.?—Yes.

Q. Why. Did the board go into the question of that?—I did, I assure you. I did not think the time had arrived to bury paupers for £1 19s. 6d. I do not think £2 1s. 6d. is a proper price to ask anyone for any person's funeral to be conducted in decency. I should like to read the specification—this specification, Mr. Grant. "For the removal of bodies of the in and out-door poor from the workhouse or their own homes, and their interment in coffins of 3-inch elm, smoothed and oiled, with shrouds and plate inscribed with the name, age and date of death, in a hearse, with a separate conveyance for six mourners at the East London Cemetery, Plaistow, Essex; to include use of pall; persons over the age of 10 years." I submit, if it is possible to get all that for £1 19s. 6d., there is not much left to live for. It is cheaper to die.

Q. The point I want to put to you is this: There was not just simply a rush through of the contracts?—No.

Q. Each one was considered on its merits. The board used their discretion in regard to each of the contracts, and as far as you are concerned, at any rate, you were governed with the honest idea to do what is fair to the ratepayers, and the persons who had to consume the things contracted for?—That has always been my endeavour.

Q. Now we come to the Laindon contracts. The Laindon bread was 10s. 6d. per cwt., and that was the only tender?—I believe it was the only tender; about 4½d. the 4 lb. loaf.

Q. Meat. The difference between Wright, who proposed to deliver on the farm at £732, and Blott at £725, was £7?—Yes.

Q. You took Wright's tender?—Yes. There is apparently a loss of £7. As a matter of fact, it is not so. Wright is a local man, and delivers right on to the farm. Blott's tender only called for delivery at Laindon Station.

Q. How far was the farm from Laindon Station?—I think, perhaps 3½ or 4 miles. Certainly a 7-mile drive there and back.

Q. Therefore you would have had, if Blott's tender had been accepted, to fetch the meat from the station, and carry it back to the farm?—Yes. No doubt to save that £7 it would cost £100 a year for trap hire.

Q. In your opinion the tender that you did accept—Wright's, a local man—was the lowest actually, taking all the conditions into consideration?—Yes, and we should have given the tender to Blott when he does our business here if it was possible to do it. There was every reason why we should give it to Blott if he could have done it. He did not have it because the other man was cheaper.

Q. And a local man?—Yes, on the spot.

Q. Grocer. Took the lowest tender there, Jones' at £581?—Yes.

Q. In meal you took Dove's tender at £398, again the lowest?—Yes.

Q. That I think clears up these contracts?—Yes.

Q. Now, if you had accepted the highest tenders throughout, would the expenditure have been £6,458 more?—May I read the whole of the figures?

Q. Yes?—The totals of the highest tenders were £47,965. The lowest tenders were £40,628. The accepted tenders were £41,630, being £1,002 (eliminating the fractions) above the lowest and being £6,335 below the highest. The value of these figures, in my opinion, is that—perhaps we are all the same and think we can run other people's business—the value of these figures is to prove that when men who are at the top of their trade or business or profession cannot get within £7,000 of each other, how can they expect laymen to do so? I am not clever enough to assume I know their business. The point is we have got a long way between the extreme of the highest and lowest tenders.

Q. In regard to 1905, I just take the totals. I will not go through every tender. In 1905 the highest tenders amounted to £57,816. Is that correct?—The exact figure, £56,853.

Q. Would you read your figures. They have been checked again?—The highest tenders for 1905 amount to £56,844. They were the highest tenders. The lowest came to £52,367. The accepted tenders £53,837. They are carried forward I see. I shall have to commence again.

Q. The wrong total. Strike that all out?—The highest tenders are £57,816. You were right. The lowest tenders £53,301. The accepted tenders, £54,783 being £1,482 above lowest and £3,033 below the highest.

Q. We are not going through them in detail, Mr. Ford. I intend to put it generally. Were these tenders dealt with as carefully as this year's contracts?—Quite. There is a point about 1905. We did not have the value of Mr. Diamond's assistance.

Q. With that exception they were just as carefully dealt with. And there are reasons for variations in regard to this printing contract of Furbey's?—Yes.

Q. Come to the most important point, the question about the drinking. Mr. Walton said you used to go into the room where the beer was stored, and that he had seen you having beer with the master?—I think you are referring to Dr. Lamont's evidence.

Mr. Ford.
25 July.

Q. Mr. Walton is the one I pay most attention to. I thought he was more important. No matter whom?—I would, rather—and most important—I admit what Mr. Walton has said right off. What I question is the doctor's statement.

Q. I shall just read you the shorthand note first of all. (Q) Have you seen the guardians drinking in the cellar?—I have seen them on their business meeting "day"?—May I interrupt one moment, if you do not mind?

(The Inspector.) The better way would be for Mr. Ford to give his explanation?—Just one thing I overlooked. I do not want to evade that point. I had summarised the results of these tenders, Mr. Grant.

(Mr. Grant.) I did not want to trouble about that?—They ought to come out. The effect of them.

Q. Well, let us have them. The effect on the total contracts?—What I find is as follows. The result of the above figures as dealing with the two years is as follows: If the lowest tenders for the past and present years had been accepted the guardians might have saved £2,470 on an expenditure of £95,467; that is, the sum of £2,470 would have been a saving of three-fourths of a penny, thus reducing the rates three-eighths of a penny per annum. That is the net result of our extravagance—three-eighths of a penny per annum.

Q. That, of course, Mr. Ford, would involve no ability on the part of the guardians. They could have taken the lowest year by year?—They could have accepted the lowest every year. It would mean nothing more than $\frac{3}{8}$ d. per annum.

Q. And there would have been all sorts of difficulties with the lowest tenderers and probably have had an expenditure far greater than you might have saved. Now, coming to the point about the drink, Mr. Ford. "Tell me the names of any of the present guardians?—I have seen Mr. McCarthy there and Mr. Ford. I cannot go through all of them. (Q) Have you actually seen them in the cellar drinking the beer? Is it true that they were drinking from Mr. Madeley's private cask?"

(The Inspector.) He says he does not know, and cannot say?—Is that the doctor's evidence? I think you will find a little further on the point. The point is the statement he made that he had seen me there every day for the past seven years.

(Mr. Robb.) Every day you went to the workhouse.

(The Inspector.) It is qualified afterwards?—Excuse only makes the matter worse.

(Mr. Grant.) I cannot find that at the present moment.

(The Inspector.) What have you got there?

(Mr. Grant.) I cannot find the passage?—It is here on record. Perhaps Mr. Smith will find it. My point is—

Q. You were asking him yourself?—Yes. Here it is. I ask the following question. "I think you said 'you have seen me in the beer cellar?'" His answer was, "I have seen you go there every day for the past seven years until recently." There is only one construction to be placed upon that. You have got to remember that is the statement of a member of an honourable profession, who is also a barrister and should know the value of sworn testimony.

(The Inspector.) What have you got to say about it?—I hope you will give me as much time as you gave the other people who have made the charges. I have got to say as follows: that I admit the correctness of the evidence given by Mr. Walton as far as concerns myself.

(Mr. Robb.) Wait a moment. Let us be clear.

(Mr. Grant.) Wait, Mr. Robb. There is no need to interrupt him?—I have never denied having been in the beer cellar. What I say is that I have never drunk a glass of porter or stout there or anywhere else at the ratepayers' expense. The

first time I was ever invited by Mr. Madeley to take a glass of ale with him I declined on the ground that I would take no refreshment at the expense of the ratepayers. He assured me that what he asked me to accept was his own, and showed his receipted account for the same. That was the first time I had a drink with Mr. Madeley. He showed me his invoices that he received. He never supplied me with anything other than a glass of ale. With the exception of Christmas ale was never given to inmates. I believe it was always stout or possibly porter. While admitting the correctness of the evidence given by Mr. Walton, I take strong exception to that given by the medical officer, Dr. Lamont. He has sworn that he has seen me daily for the last seven years in or on my road to the beer cellar. This has been partly refuted by Mr. Davy, who shows that my weekly visits have averaged $4\frac{1}{2}$ for the past twelve months. I wish to carry the matter further. On reference to the lodge-keeper's book, I find in 1899 I visited the house on 92 occasions, in the year 1900 on 48 occasions; in 1901 on 88 occasions; in 1902 on 204 occasions; in 1903 on 159 occasions; in 1904 on 185 occasions; in 1905 on 230 occasions, being a total of 1,005 for the past seven years, or an average of 2.76 weekly visits. It is perfectly true to say that at least a fourth of the times I visited I was never near the administration block.

Q. Was that where the beer cellar was?—Yes. During the past seven years Dr. Lamont has been absent by holidays, leave, and illness for 268 days—nine months. He has been to Montreal in Canada, and he could not see all the way from there. The fact that during that period he has been absent—

(The Inspector.) Probably you were not there?—On your investigation. Let me say to the conclusion, that I had been there on the average nine times every fortnight for the past twelve months. I want to cover the whole period.

Q. See what Dr. Lamont says?—"When you were there? Would it be possible to see me there every day for seven years?—When you were there, of course, I mean. I could not see you." He qualified it after you had told him it was wrong. After you pointed it out that it was not possible to be true he qualified, but he got his charge in. I have visited on an average 225 times for the past seven years. I do not know what Mr. Robb would consider the happy mean. Mr. McCarthy has been too often, Mr. Crooks not often enough. As a matter of fact, during the past seven years, I have been out of London myself on the whole 10 or 12 weeks. I have got nothing further to say. I absolutely and totally deny the statements of Mr. Genery, that he has taken me to the beer cellar. While not denying that I have been there, I do deny I have ever been there at the same time that he has been there, to the best of my knowledge.

(Mr. Robb.) If it is only to the best of your knowledge, how can you call another man a liar?—I give you the possible exception. I do deny being there in his company, and it is totally false to say he has supplied me with beer at his or the ratepayers' expense. I am not going to say one word in extenuation, or minimise one action of mine as a member of this board. But I am not going to allow anyone to magnify those actions to my disgrace. I said I have never been there with Genery, with one possible exception. I do not know whether it is an exception. If I have been in the beer cellar at the same time as Mr. Genery it would be one Christmas morning serving the Christmas beer, and I cannot swear I saw him then.

(The Inspector.) What else have you got to say?—That is all I have to say on that point.

Q. Have you any other point?

(Mr. Grant.) There is a good deal in the prices. We might stop now. I dealt with Mr. Ford's personal matters. Mr. Ford has investigated the matter about Carey, and there are figures about that. It will take some time.

TWENTIETH DAY.

Thursday, July 26th, 1906.

(Mr. Grant.) I want to ask your directions, sir, on one point before we go further, in order that I may prepare when Mr. Lansbury comes into the box presently. We have had a good deal said by Mr. Robb about the Shenfield schools. But about the Shenfield schools, the only reference to it in the evidence was some questions put to Marden, the constable, and one or two to Miss Grant about what she thought ought to be provided for children. The question in regard to the Shenfield schools is a very large one, and if necessary I should—if you are satisfied there is no extravagance in the Shenfield Schools, and that the guardians only did what was necessary, it would be unnecessary for me to trouble you.

(The Inspector.) I have prepared a précis of all the correspondence, and I have a report from our architect on the Shenfield schools. Our Architect says, as far as he can judge, all the money borrowed is expended. I also find, although we made some representations in favour of a cheaper scheme, it was on our motion that the guardians were obliged to leave Forest Gate, and incur the expenditure. The cost is no greater than the expense in several other unions.

(Mr. Grant.) What you have said is our answer to the Shenfield schools.

(The Inspector.) What I have to consider is how far my Department were parties to this very large expenditure, and whether in future we cannot manage to set a better system of allowing expenditure. I think we all of us do not question in any way that the expenditure was with the sanction of the Local Government Board, and that we had to hold an Inquiry here to enlarge the borrowing powers of the board to meet the cost of the

Shenfield schools. We gave the printed order form of the house. The matter was fully discussed and was put on the papers.

(Mr. Grant.) You said Mr. Hooper should examine into the electric light matter. Has he made a report to you on that?

(The Inspector.) Yes. But I may say generally as to the electric light, I have just this moment received the preliminary report, the effect of which is that it was a costly proceeding to put the electric light into the workhouse at all; but that, looking to what was done with the electric light, and looking to the difficulties of the situation, the cost could not be said to be extravagant. That is all about it.

(Mr. Grant.) Whatever report Mr. Hooper will make, you will let us have a copy?

(The Inspector.) I will let you have a copy before I deal with it in any way. Further, I will send down all he says.

(Mr. Grant.) What we wanted to say was, we want to know if there is anything we are called upon to answer.

(The Inspector.) Certainly.

(Mr. Grant.) When you get your report, you will kindly say anything.

(The Inspector.) I will take care you are not in any way unjustly treated.

(Mr. Grant.) You take the electric light in your own hands.

(The Inspector.) Yes. You remember Mr. Robb said he would accept anything Mr. Hooper said.

Mr. E. J. FORD; recalled, and further examined.

Mr. Ford.
26 July.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, Mr. Ford, I want to ask you, first of all, for a summary of the three years' tenders that you have prepared. I will just take this table for the years 1906, 1905, and 1904?—1903.

Q. 1903 should be 1904—3-4; 4-5, and 5-6?—3-4; 5-6; 6-7.

Q. Mr. Marsh says the year 4-5 is not there. That is, there is a year forgotten?—Yes. That was when we could not find the tenders for the purpose of comparison, and we agreed to take 1903.

Q. I want to make sure. The figures 1906, the highest tenders, £47,965; lowest tenders, £40,628; accepted tenders, £41,630; in excess of the lowest, £1,002; below the highest, £6,335; 1905, highest, £57,816; lowest, £52,677; accepted, £54,783; in excess of lowest, £2,106; below the highest, £3,033. 1903, highest, £35,335; lowest, £31,100; accepted, £32,457; in excess of lowest, £1,357; below the highest, £2,878. Now the totals for the three years: highest, £141,116; lowest, £124,405; accepted, £128,870; in excess of lowest, £4,465; below the highest, £12,246. Had the lowest tenders in all cases been accepted for the three years there would have been a saving of £3,841, equal to 9-8th of a penny, or an annual saving of 3-8th of a penny in the £?—That is correct.

Q. I want to ask a question about Carey, who we heard of. I find from the returns that Carey was aged 35, his wife was aged 33, and he had five children, aged 11, 9, 6, 3, and 14 months. He was relieved on four occasions, the total being £1 2s. 9d. The fourth application was made in February, 1906. The relieving officer visited the house and found it a case of urgent necessity, no food whatever being in the house at the time. The wife's mother, Ellen Pilgrim, received 14s. out-relief weekly, and no relatives were in a position to assist. He lived at 7, Barchester Street, Bromley. He was a dock labourer, employed at the docks for many years off and on?—The Millwall Dock Company.

Q. He is one of the 28 constant gangs of the company, and he is a member of No. 4 gang—a gang of seven men. How do these gangs work, Mr. Ford? Do they take their share of the work?—Yes. Although they are permanent gangs, they are not necessarily permanently at work. They take a share in turn of what work they have to give.

Q. What work came into the dock: Work of discharging grain?—Yes.

Q. It is a seasonal trade?—To a large extent it is a seasonal trade.

Q. You examined the book of the company by the courtesy of the Millwall Dock Company?—Yes.

Q. And do you find that for the week ending 4th November, 1905, No. 4 gang earned £2 13s. 6d. per man?—Yes.

Q. For the week ending 6th January, 1906, they earned 23s. per man; week ending 13th January, 1906, 27s. per man; week ending 20th January, 15s. 3d. per man; and for the week ending 4th February 18s. 4d. per man?—Yes.

Q. Now, is there any evidence Carey was working in the gang on any of these dates?—No, I interviewed the foreman of the gang, Peter Corry. I also interviewed Mr. Britain, head of the grain department, and I interviewed an agent whose name I do not remember for the moment. Yes, Whittle, and none of them could give me any guarantee that the man was at work. Corry, the foreman of the gang, I took him categorically through the foregoing periods, and he was unable to say whether Carey was working or not. One or more members of the gang used to be absent, and he was occasionally absent himself. He states that Carey could have been working on the dates given, and may or may not have been. He gives no record if a man is absent. His place is taken by another man, who completes the job. Members of the gang are frequently, from various causes,

absent, due sometimes to the unexpected arrival or delay in the arrival of a vessel. Men living in Poplar are affected by the various bridges, often causing them to be late, when their places are immediately filled up. I know that is absolutely correct. I have some considerable experience in the work myself.

Q. I do not think we want the names of the gang. Was Carey on the 6th of June indisposed?—Yes. That is July, I think. While in the employment of the Millwall Dock Company, and in consequence is entitled to compensation under the Workmen's Compensation Act, then the company stated that they are prepared to recognise his claim, and to compensate, based on his average earnings for the past 12 months.

Q. Is that 19s. 5d. weekly?—Yes.

Q. The last payment under the Compensation Act would be due on the 27th of this month?—Yes.

Q. Now, refer to the relieving officer's book. Do you find the total relief given is £1 2s. 9d., and was that on the 6th January, 5s. 6d.; 17th January, 5s. 6d.; 23rd January, 6s. 1d.; 31st January, 5s. 8d.; and the total £1 2s. 9d.?—Yes, that is correct.

Q. Have you considered whether there is any possibility of the prosecution of Carey for having obtained

relief under false pretences?—I want to assure you if there was any possibility of taking action against any man, and I could prove that he had received relief under false pretences, I would go straight for him. I am not a party to charging a man with an offence it is impossible to prove. We have had some experience of taking men to Arbour Square.

Q. The Thames Police Court?—Yes. We have had some experience, Mr. Grant, and every man that we failed to convict—I ought to tell you that Arbour Square gives the benefit of every doubt, and rightly, too, to the prisoner.

Q. The man charged?—The man charged. Every conviction we fail to prove goes, in my opinion, to discredit the board, and we are rather chary—I should be, of charging a man I cannot convict.

Q. Do you think there was any evidence in this case to begin a prosecution?—Not the slightest.

(The Inspector.) You will be here this afternoon when Mr. Robb is here?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) Then we will postpone the cross-examination?

(The Inspector.) Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) Now I call Mr. Lansbury.

Mr. G. LANSBURY; examined after affirmation made.

(Mr. Grant.) One or two returns I want to put in front of all before we come to your general evidence. The "Particulars of rations of officers' accounts for the year ended Lady-day, 1896 and 1905," I think you have that already?—Yes.

Q. Showing £1,600 in 1896 and £5,476 in 1905, showing how it rises—a large increase in the number of institutions you have. I want to be sure that goes in, sir?—Will you hand one to Mr. Davy?

Q. Mr. Davy has it. A little return has been given to me, sir, also of the "Particulars of conveyance, travelling and other expenses, 1901-5." I do not know whether it has been handed to you?

(The Inspector.) Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) I want that on the shorthand notes again. Now, there is a short table here in regard to temporary assistants to relieving officers, beginning 4th December, 1903.

4th December, 1903. Superintendent relieving officer received a letter from the relieving officers and out-relief distributor asking for assistance to cope with the increase in their duties.

16th December, 1903. General purposes committee recommended the appointment of three temporary officers to assist the relieving officers and out-relief distributor in their clerical duties, assistance being thus given for two days each week to each officer. (This arrangement—except for the out-relief distributor—was continued down to October, 1904.)

13th January, 1904. The superintendent relieving officer reported that the assistance for the out-relief distributor was found to be inadequate, and an officer was appointed from the 29th December, 1903, to be entirely occupied in assisting the out-relief distributor.

24th February, 1904. Superintendent relieving officer reported to the guardians fully through his report book on the abnormal increase of work in all the relief districts, and recommended the appointment of an additional relieving officer in each parish with a permanent assistant to the out-relief distributor. (Consideration of this matter was adjourned.)

12th October, 1904. Relieving officers of Nos. 1, 2, and 3 districts applied for additional assistance, and the Bow relief committee recommended that this be at once given. The general purposes committee instructed the clerk and superintendent relieving officer to arrange for adequate temporary assistance to be given to the relieving officers.

30th November, 1904. The board formally appointed eight temporary assistants for the relieving officers, three visitors and one assistant for the out-relief distributor for the purpose of charging their salaries upon the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund. (This was reported to the Local Government Board, and sanctioned for different periods ending May 19, 1905.)

14th February, 1905. The guardians submitted to the Local Government Board a scheme for re-dividing the

relief districts and appointing four additional relieving officers, in order to dispense with the temporary assistants. After correspondence.

13th June, 1905. The Local Government Board suggested that the permanent re-arrangement of the districts should be preceded by an experimental period during which the present relieving officers should be assisted by temporary assistant relieving officers, and after further correspondence.

11th August, 1905. The Local Government Board sanctioned the proposed re-arrangement of the relief districts and the appointment of four additional relieving officers for a period of 12 months from 29th September, 1905. These appointments were made on the 20th September, 1905, and

30th September, 1905. The services of the whole temporary assistants to relieving officers dispensed with.

Those are extracted from the minutes of the board. Now a question was asked on the typewriter used in the master's office. Was a regulation paper submitted to the guardians from the master on 4th January, 1905? (for the fortnight ending 28th January) the following entry appears:—C. Butcher, 1 Oliver Typewriter, complete, £22. (Order No. 412.) The committee directed this order to be sent to the Typewriter Company direct. On the estimates submitted by the master to the Workhouse Committee, on the 15th July (for the fortnight ending 11th March) the following entry appears:—Oliver Typewriter Company, 1 duplicator complete, £7 4s. 6d. 1 paper fastener, 7s. 6d.

(Order No. 548.)

Account attached.		
1 Typewriter	...	£20 18 0
1 Duplicator with accessories	...	7 11 9
		£28 9 9

Was that sanctioned with this result, that £28 9s. 9d. is altogether spent on a typewriter and duplicator?—Yes.

Q. And is that typewriter still in the master's office and being used?—So far as I know, yes.

Q. Now, in regard to the carriages, the broughams which are tendered for. As a rule, are these, what are called broughams, really private cabs?—Well, they are both sorts. Sometimes a kind of cab and sometimes an ordinary brougham.

Q. That ordinary brougham. Is it an old worn-out brougham?—Well, most of these carriages are the kind of carriages you would expect a contractor to supply for the workhouse.

Q. Now, have you examined the cost of the journey they have taken. Are they lower than if you take a cab off the rank?—Yes.

Q. You are outside the radius of 1s. a mile?—In all cases London journeys are less than an ordinary cab.

Mr. Ford.
26 July.

Mr.
Lansbury.
26 July.

Mr.
Lansbury.
26 July.

Q. Is it very necessary to use a cab in removing persons in accordance with the directions of the guardians?—Yes, especially if you are moving them from one institution to another institution, and especially if you are taking more than one. It is necessary for the officers who remain—or, rather, with the persons who remain in charge of the officer, and there is no option but to take them in some kind of private conveyance. It is not for the benefit of the person dealt with. It is to enable us to take them safely between one institution and another.

Q. When dealing with families they, as a matter of fact, take them from different institutions?—When removing, the officer has to travel down to the institution you are removing the family to, and therefore a man could easily clear off if you do not have a carriage of some kind, and leave him with the wife and family on his hands.

Q. It has happened that persons are unwilling to be removed?—It has happened. One does not like to admit that too much, because we should be told they did not want to leave Poplar. But it is true. In every union almost there is a difficulty to shift people. They do not like to be shifted.

Q. And sometimes you have to call in the assistance of the police?—Yes, to shift them on.

Q. Now, it was said—I should like to say I believe our method is the usual method of shifting them. I meet these carriages going about everywhere.

Q. It is not special to Poplar. It is the procedure of ordinary boards of guardians?—I think so.

Q. It was charged against you that you provided outfits for inmates leaving the workhouse. Is that necessary sometimes?—It is necessary, because sometimes the inmate has not any clothes to go out in, and there is a law against going about naked.

Q. Now, when they have to go out like that, do you provide them with clothing of a second-hand character?—Yes; they have second-hand clothing.

Q. And was the second-hand clothing purchased for that purpose for the 11 months to Lady Day, 1905, a total cost of £105 17s. 7d.?—That is the return I put in.

Q. Spread over some 1,500 inmates?—Yes. Of course that is spread over the number we are dealing with.

Q. I do not mean you give second-hand clothing to every inmate. Coming in and out among a population of 1,500 there is a considerable demand for clothing?—I should like to give one instance to prove how necessary this is. Our children at the schools are fairly well clad, and at one time we allowed the children of a man and woman to leave the school in the clothes belonging to the school. But we found some of the ins-and-outs would take the children out one day with a very nice rig-out of clothes, and come in a couple of days later just in rags. They had sold the clothes we gave them, and brought the children in an awful state. Well, we take them in between sending the children out in rags and sending them out in our good clothes in Forest Gate, and now we give, where necessary, just second-hand clothes, which are included in that cost. That shows the necessity of providing clothes of some kind. We have taken the mean between supplying school clothes and others. I take it these returns are an appendix?

Q. Yes. That is, Mr. Lansbury, in the case of the children sent to asylums?—The Metropolitan Asylums Board?

Q. Yes?—And remand homes, you have to supply. We are obliged to supply them with only decent clothing.

Q. I forgot to ask you. You are a veneer merchant by trade?—Yes.

Q. A member of the Poplar Board of Guardians from March, 1893?—Yes.

Q. You were elected a member of the Poplar Borough Council in November, 1903; chairman of the works committee of the Poplar Borough Council two years, 1903-4, 1905-6. You are chairman of the school committee since 1899, and chairman of the farms committee since January, 1904, to the present time?—Yes.

Q. You were appointed a member of Mr. Long's Central Unemployed Committee in November, 1905; chairman of the working classes committee, from November, 1905; and treasurer of the Poplar Representation Committee?—On that, Mr. Grant, I want to say that I am specially delegated by them to speak.

Q. On their behalf?—On their behalf, and in that respect I represent 5,000 of the ratepayers of this district—five to six thousand—5,500.

(The Inspector.) What body?—The Poplar Trades and Labour Representation Committee.

(Mr. Grant.) A federation of the trade unions of the district?—Yes.

Q. And especially of this borough?—Oh, only of this borough of Poplar.

Q. That is what I mean—trade unions of the borough, and you were recently appointed a member of the Royal Commission that is inquiring into the whole subject of the Poor Law?—Yes.

Q. Now, we had some details I want to get right. First of all, notwithstanding in the examination of Mr. Madeley reference was made to the newspapers supplied to the union?—Yes. I am putting in a return on that.

Q. It was put as though they were newspapers supplied to the master?—Yes; master and officers. That arose, as was explained, I think, by Mr. Walton, that the newspapers go, or did go, first to the master and the officers, and from them round the institution. Had I known that they did not go straight round the institution I should have taken some action in the matter. I never knew until it was given in evidence: none of us did, that they have not gone straight to the inmates. I did not know they were providing literature for the officers to read first. They ought to have gone straight to the workhouse.

Q. Inmates first and officers afterwards?—None of us are party to supplying officers with newspapers or journals. The newspapers and journals were bought for the use of the inmates of the institution.

Q. Well, now, Mr. Genery made a great point about the gardeners, that men were brought in and paid liberally for taking plants out of a pot and sticking them into the ground. A considerable area is covered by the workhouse. It comes to nearly three acres?—Yes.

Q. And there are considerable stretches of which you plant with flowers?—Yes, we pride ourselves we made it look nice at the entrance and right round, and it was necessary to have some skilled supervision. The man could not possibly have done the work at the price quoted. I have not the figure at the moment. As a matter of fact he just supervised the other men.

Q. The inmates?—Yes, a couple of old men who were as proud of the plants and flowers as any of us could be. They took a great interest in it.

(The Inspector.) Does it include the prime cost?—Yes, it included the prime cost of the whole thing.

(Mr. Grant.) The question was, Mr. Lansbury, that there were gardeners in the—styled as gardeners who could have done the work?—No, there were not. They were two old men who were fond of gardening. I question whether they could have done the work without some kind of guidance or supervision.

Q. I find in 1905 the total amount was £83 19s. 7d. spent on plants and garden, and £31 15s. 4d. of this was for labour?—That is right. That is the amount spent on labour there. It is very small.

Q. Well, now, there was a point made about luxuries which are supplied. New laid eggs were mentioned, for instance. What were they specified for in the tenders?—Specified for new laid eggs, so many to the lb., and the reason of that was that when we bought fresh eggs we got so many bad ones, and some of us thought that we might as well buy good eggs—new laid eggs.

Q. And get them good?—And get them good.

Q. As to fresh eggs, you got them half bad?—There was no economy in buying fresh eggs which you throw away a good proportion of. I was going to talk about Dan Leno's fresh eggs, but everyone knows it is difficult to define what is a fresh egg.

Q. And the eggs were partly supplied for the use of the sick?—Certainly; and also I would like to say of late, since the colony has been going, we have supplied ourselves with a considerable number of eggs.

Q. From the farm?—From the farm, and the price I understand that we paid for fresh eggs was 8s. a 100, and now I believe the price is 1s. a dozen. I fancy you will find that is the price.

Q. Then in regard to the luxuries which were mentioned—Stilton cheese and Lazenby's pickles. Were these

Mr.
Lansbury.
—
26 July.

small quantities for the officers?—Where they were so ordered they were for the use of the officers. I am under the impression very little of that sort of thing has been ordered, either at the schools or the workhouse. I can speak of the schools from my own personal knowledge. Only one or two bottles of pickles were bought over a considerable time.

Q. The tenders have been in use for years, and it does not follow because an item is on the tender specification that the guardians are going to order that particular article?—No. Of course we put everything into our tender.

(The Inspector.) We shall come to that by-and-by?—Just as you like.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, Mr. Lansbury, the examination of the books shows that—not in every case—that an officer was sent with patients coming or going from convalescent homes. Here is a return of patients sent to convalescent homes from the Poplar Union during the periods, 1st July, 1904, and 30th June, 1905. The total number sent was 205.

Travelled singly in charge of attendant	...	26
Travelled alone	...	6
Removed in 41 batches, with an attendant to each batch	...	172
Transferred by attendant removing other patients	...	1
	—	205

RETURNS—

Returned unattended	...	161
„ singly, with attendant	...	6
„ in batches, with attendant	...	23
	—	29
Died	...	5
Still there...	...	3
Removed under order of removal	...	1
To service (no attendant)	...	3
Maintenance transferred to another union without removal	...	1
Met at London termini	...	2
	—	205

The attendant who removed a case to Ramsgate took back with him and left at Margate a case who had been in the home at Ramsgate. Of these 29, three patients were transferred to sick asylum. One woman, aged—, and one woman transferred to sick asylum?—Yes, that is so. I think all these statements must have been made under a misapprehension as to meeting everybody and taking them to their homes. They are the real facts of the case. I do not know if Mr. Davy had that.

(The Inspector.) The fact of the case in regard to these expenses seems to be the guardians have many more institutions under control—direct control—and make more use of convalescent homes than formerly, and that involves greater expenditure in travelling expenses and also in officers. Whether that expenditure is justified or not remains to be seen.

(Mr. Grant.) With regard to the lunatic attendants, Mr. Lansbury, it was said that there were three nurses attending on one lunatic?—You see that might happen, because you might only have one lunatic in the observation wards, and three nurses for the 24 hours—eight-hour shifts—but only one nurse at a time on duty and one nurse to one patient. It is not true that three nurses attend on one patient at one time. You are bound to employ three nurses, whether you have one or twenty in the observation wards.

Q. If you only had one lunatic in the wards for a week it might be correct to say there were 18 nurses to one patient?—If you put it that way.

(The Inspector.) The difficulty came from the adoption of the eight hours' day?—I might put in the return to show the number at different times—three male and three female.

(Mr. Grant.) Lunatic attendants?—At the workhouse. These appointments are sanctioned by the Local Government Board, and the salaries are charged on the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund. They are employed on eight-hour shifts.

Q. This is your statement: “Three male and three female lunatic attendants are employed at the workhouse. These appointments are sanctioned by the Local Government Board, and their salaries charged on the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund. They are employed on eight-hour shifts so that at any time there is only one officer on duty in each of the male and female departments. The

“number of lunatics in the workhouse awaiting examination by a justice and removal to asylums, necessarily varies, but at no time have the wards been empty. It is never known when a new arrival to the wards may be expected, so that an officer must be on duty day and night. As many as six cases have been taken in one day; these have to be bathed, and the care of such persons in the first stage usually entails considerably more trouble than after a period of regular life and discipline at an asylum. The following is a statement of the number of lunatics in the workhouse on each Saturday the year just passed.” I will not read all the details, Mr. Lansbury. The highest figure is, I think, sixteen on 13th January?—The lowest looks like four.

Q. And the lowest is three on April 14?—Yes, three.

(The Inspector.) It is an awful waste?—It is an awful waste. If you had one for all London. I wish to say, Mr. Grant, in reference to that, that our board is strongly of opinion that some other method of dealing with lunatics in probation should be adopted. We think that either two or three nurses should be set up by one centre to which each union sends. This system is a very wasteful one and we do not approve of it at all, and we have passed a resolution, I believe, asking that some other method should be adopted.

(The Inspector.) If Mr. Lansbury is right about that resolution, will you send me a copy? It is a matter upon which I am interested very strongly. At present there is considerable hardship.

(Mr. Crooks.) We have several times done it, and I have been instructed to represent that to the London County Council in regard to receiving houses.

(Mr. Grant.) One other point—the point about temporary officers. Have you got this list of temporary officers?—I had it just now. But it is all right. Go on.

Q. There is a list of temporary officers employed at the Poplar Workhouse during fortnights, including the undermentioned dates:—19th April, 1905, 9 temporary officers and 28 workmen; 17th May, 9 temporary officers and 26 workmen; 14th June, 9 temporary officers and 27 workmen; 28th June, 9 temporary officers and 30 workmen; 12th July, 8 temporary officers and 28 workmen; 26th July, 7 temporary officers and 19 workmen; 20th September, 8 temporary officers and 16 workmen; 4th October, 9 temporary officers and 18 workmen?—Do you intend to read all of it?

Q. I will just take this one which I had in my mind: 1st November, 10 temporary officers and 18 workmen—two carpenters, seven labourers, one fitter, two bricklayers, two laundresses, one cook, one tailor, one hammerman, three engineers, four bakers, one wireman, one wireman's assistant, one male attendant, one machinist. If the dates are checked as I put them in, they show a variation from time to time in the number both of temporary officers and workmen employed?—That is so. Of course you will see in the number of workmen that we have a wireman, engineers, cook, and that sort of thing, and it may be that some of the regular staff would be ill at that time, and that would account for the variation to some extent.

Q. I see?—There is an explanation of this right at the end. If you put the whole return in—

Q. I am putting the whole return in. I want to ask you about—?

(The Inspector.) The return I have got shows you got a very large amount out of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund for your officers?—We did.

Q. You are exceedingly skilful in getting the money back?—That is one of the things we have taken care of our local ratepayers over. We have endeavoured to get on the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund as much as possible.

Q. That has become a sort of art?—

(Mr. Crooks.) Quite equal to the contractors' science.

(The Inspector.) And Poplar has shown itself rather a master?—

(Mr. Grant.) In all these things—whether Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, or any other of these general contributions—one body will be more cute than another in getting a share. I want to ask about Walton's family. He had, while he was taking Mr. Madeley's place—he had his family at the workhouse on Sundays, and they had their meals there?—I only know that on his evidence.

Q. It was not known to you before?—I only knew when he said it here.

Mr.
Lansbury.
26 July.

Q. Still it was?—Yes.

Q. If your attention had been called to it?—I should have told the workhouse visiting committee. I would have told them about it.

Q. You would have called the attention of the workhouse visiting committee to it?—I should want to know why.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Lansbury, am I right in supposing that, as chairman of the schools committee, you had about as much to do as you could afford time for?—I had, with all the other things I had in hand.

Q. The schools were your special province, and the workhouse you left to the committee—the workhouse visiting committee; otherwise there would be no use in having them at all?—The schools and the farm were the two things as far as the board is concerned that I have devoted most of my time to.

(Mr. Grant.) Then, sir, I want to put in a letter received from the Local Government Board in answer to a letter from us.—“Local Government Board, Whitehall, S.W., 12th July, 1906. Sir,—I am directed by the Local Government Board to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th ultimo, and to transmit to you the accompanying extracts from the report made by Mr. H. D. Gordon, district auditor, on the 19th April last, with reference to the cost of the in-maintenance in the Poplar Union. The Board understand that the guardians have been supplied by Mr. Davy with a copy of the report made by Mr. Gerald Walsh referred to in your letter, and of the tables which accompanied the report of the auditor.—I am, sir, your obedient servant, H. C. MONRO, Assistant Secretary. The Clerk to the Guardians of the Poplar Union.”

(Extract from Report.)

“This half-year at audit I have been enquiring into the question of the cost of in-maintenance, and the reasons why there has been a steadily growing increase from year to year, and why in one instance there was an increase out of all proportion to that which has now become regular in the case of Poplar. With this view I have prepared a statement which I hope will be of assistance to the board in appreciating the true state of affairs. It will be seen from tables A to E, that the principle items on increased expenditure on in-maintenance may be classified under the following heads:—1. New dietary (commenced 1st October, 1901). 2. Higher prices. 3. Opening of receiving home (1904). 4. Opening of Laindon Farm (1905). (1904?) 5. Maintenance of paupers removed from sick asylum to seaside sanatoria. The largest increase was £6,746 in 1905 compared with 1904, and of this sum no less than £5,800 may be directly attributed to the above causes.”

(The Inspector.) You have had this in before, I think?

(Mr. Grant.) I have not seen the letter.

(The Inspector.) But I mean this return?

(Mr. Grant.) Yes.

(The Inspector.) You intend putting the return in?

(Mr. Grant.) I only wanted, on the 10 per cent. of the beer, to call attention to the passages in your own report on workhouse accounts, 1905, in which you refer to the allowances in waste, and spoke of the habit of allowing definite percentage. I have not it here for the moment. I wanted to ask Mr. Lansbury?—No, I do not know anything about beer. You will have to get somebody else. I would like to say, Mr. Grant, in respect of this, that the board has relied, and I, as a member of the board, have relied, as far as our accounts are concerned, and this question of nurses—we have entirely relied on the fact that there is a Government audit of our accounts for the half year, and the auditor has never, to my knowledge, during the time I have been a member of the board, called attention either to the price we were paying for articles or the consumption of articles, or the question of waste, either in beer or anything else that we dealt with, and we are entitled, if the Government appoint an auditor, that he at any rate should be the man who is responsible if that waste is incurred. He ought to have called our attention to it. He has not, as far as I know.

Q. He has examined not only your accounts, but the accounts of many other boards of guardians?—Yes.

Q. And is more expert in dealing with these questions than you are?—He ought to be.

Q. And has before him the items of your expenditure, calls for any document he pleases bearing on your accounts, seeing how you deal with the 10 per cent. of waste, and his criticisms ought to have been offered at the time of the audit?—Exactly. If it was necessary to criticise it, I hold very strongly it was the duty, sir, of the district auditor to do so.

Q. Have you any personal knowledge that the cost of provisions was in excess?—No, I certainly had not. I knew, of course, we were supplying people with better stuff, but I had no idea it was so much.

Q. On that point you have never been advised at all—the auditor has never advised you at all?—The auditor has never advised us at all with regard to the prices we were paying.

Q. I had put into my hands this morning a motion which is now down for discussion at the Chelmsford Union. “Owing to the great”—this is a motion to be presented at the meeting on the 21st July—“Owing to the great age and infirm condition of the majority of the workhouse inmates, the Sunday dinner, consisting of very cheap bread and coffee and cheese (58s. a year), a pint of coffee and a piece of bread were substituted by some other nourishing and digestible diet.” Take that cheese, pint of coffee, and bread—is that a suitable dinner for old people in the workhouse?—No. I should like to say, in my judgment, the whole question of dietary wants revising. Very often we give old people good meat that they cannot eat, because they have not any teeth. I think we could provide outside dishes, and ought to provide them, for these old people much cheaper than we do provide the specified good food. I should never vote for a dietary of that kind for old people.

Q. It is common knowledge when people become old they do not want so much meat as they did in the middle age?—And I think it is very stupid that you have to serve it, whether they want it or not, and therefore you get pig tubs and slosh. The whole thing wants overhauling, and I have long considered so.

(The Inspector.) Perhaps you will find that a mincing machine is most valuable?—Yes; I told his present Majesty when I went on the Commission of the Aged Poor. It is dreadful to think of giving some of these old people meat they cannot chew at all.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, in regard to stores. So far as your observation is concerned, is it a fact that every contractor has been obliged to deliver goods up to sample?—The same contractors have supplied the schools and Laindon, and I am going to sit in this chair, and from my own observation say at the schools and Laindon these contractors have had to supply according to the sample, and we got what we contracted for. I stand by it, Mr. Davy. As to the workhouse, whenever I have occasionally gone there, the same thing takes place there; but I have not the same intimate knowledge of the workhouse that I have of those other two places.

Q. And in regard to stores, they have been to your knowledge rejected from time to time?—I asked for a report to be got up about that. A return of the goods sent back. That, of course, Mr. Davy, is a common sort of thing to send back goods from various institutions. It was done in 1858, Mr. Grant, with regard to the heads and shanks from the mutton. I have just had a note handed to me that a little performance took place in this union in 1858 and has gone on ever since 1858. I mean if it is lawful to do it there must have been a few artful people about then. We inherited it, and we have been contracting that the 10 per cent. of cream which is specified in the milk. I find no regulation of our board having done it since I was a member. We think that was an inheritance.

(Mr. Crooks.) That was an advantage?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) Finally, on this question of provisions, you stipulated for a definite quantity, and you fixed the sample which you required your contractors to keep up to. You did the best you could to secure a supply of articles such as you paid for to the workhouse?—And to the other institutions.

Q. I think your board for a long time has been dissatisfied with the system of tendering?—Yes, the majority undoubtedly are.

Q. And feel that you could not deal satisfactorily with the requirements of the institutions under your charge in the way in which it was done?—That is so.

Q. And from 25th April, 1905, before ever this inquiry was spoken of or thought of—before the Poplar Municipal Alliance came into existence—Mr. Loughsent the following letter to the Local Government Board:—"Poplar Union, 45, Upper North Street, Poplar, E., 25th April, 1905. My Lords and Gentlemen,—I am directed by the board of guardians of this union to forward, for your consideration, copy of a resolution which was unanimously passed at the meeting of the guardians held on the 19th instant, with reference to the supply of provisions and other articles to Metropolitan Poor Law Institutions. That this board is of opinion that the supply of goods for use in the workhouses or other institutions under the control of Metropolitan Boards of Guardians would be more satisfactorily and economically effected by means of central stores, from whence all supplies would be drawn as required. The guardians trust that the proposal submitted will meet with the concurrence of your board, and that you may be able to take steps to promote the object of the resolution.—I am, My Lords and Gentlemen, Your obedient servant, G. HERBERT LOUGH, Clerk to the Guardians."

"Local Government Board, Whitehall, S.W., 27th April, 1905. Resolution—Supply of Provisions, &c. Sir,—I am directed by the Local Government Board to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th instant.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant, S.B. PROVIS, Secretary. The Clerk to the Guardians."

As far as you are aware, Mr. Lansbury, has the Local Government Board taken any further notice of that resolution of the board?—Of course, it has undergone a change since then. We have a new president, and I am hoping one of the results of our long-suffering here will be that the tender system will be altered—the contract system throughout the metropolis will be abolished. It is obvious if you had a central store you could have decent buyers buying cheap, and supposing it is said that he is a decent man, he can be got at, you have only these dozen men, while at present you have thirty boards of guardians, thirty sets of schools, one hundred sets of workhouses and the officials who are to be got at. It is so obvious to me that a small quantity of people responsible is the right thing, and, as I say, I am hoping that one result of this will be a central store for the metropolis. Take the Metropolitan Asylums Board, which is a very large buyer of goods under the contract system.

Q. Under the present system, Mr. Lansbury, it may be that an official in the workhouse, comparing the low rate of wages, may be able to give information to a contractor which would be worth a large sum of money to him?—It is so obvious, I would not attempt to argue it.

Q. A keeper of the stores, if friendly with a contractor, could tell him enough to enable him to get the contract?—An ordinary contractor could get it by giving a glass of beer and taking things for them. You need not prove absolute corruption or collusion for a rival contractor to get the information he wants.

Q. And used his eyes carefully whenever he went to the workhouse?—And also used his brain when he met an officer.

Q. He might get all the information he wanted for a glass of beer, a smoke, or something of that kind?—Certainly. Our board as a board is dead against it altogether, and we hope the result will be to abolish contractors as far as we are concerned. We do not want to handle the money. We had rather the board transacted through the Local Government Board.

Q. The Local Government Board might be encouraged to undertake that task by the experience of the London County Council with their asylums?—That I do not know.

Q. Mr. Crooks told us. That is so. They have a central office at Waterloo Place and the asylums draw by a docket on the central office. If you buy out of tender you get done out of prices. If you put all the goods you are likely to want on the tender you give an ample opportunity to this method of tendering?—That is what happened to us. We thought we would get rid of out-of-contract business and put every conceivable thing in our tender form. I remember ten years ago

when it was done, and the result has been people contracting for us somehow have got to know, and this year especially, because we are going to open our new schools at Shienfield, and they calculated we should want certain things.

Q. That you did not usually want?—That we did not usually want, and the swings and roundabouts worked. It can be argued for equalisation, because no one knows of the fact that you are opening schools. It was the same with Langley House. All that would be got over if the thing was done centrally. You will not get over it while you have the thing in the locality. There are too many people in the know and too many people on the look-out.

Q. Your proceedings being public, long before you can even buy the land for a public institution, the contractor is considering what you are likely to want when you come to furnish?—Then you can buy the land.

(The Inspector.) You have taken a great deal of interest in this question of tendering, and have done your best to keep the thing pure: Is that so?—That is so.

Q. Why did the guardians adopt the present system of tendering: why did they not make a system of ordering as is done in some places?—I have never heard of that until from you or Mr. Oxley.

Q. Never heard of it?—Never.

Q. And it was never suggested to you by anybody else?—No.

Q. And then you might have split the tenders?—Oh, on that I believe we did once try to split the tenders. We split so many, and I believed the argument used then, just for what it was worth, it was considered unfair to the contractor—that is, to take out the cheapest and leave out—to buy the cheapest and leave the dearest. I think, if you would go into Bethnal Green again, with regard to the drapery contract, I fancy the reason you got that split is because they gave all the infirmity to some people who supply hospitals, the Hospitals General Company, and the others were given to Cartwright. I do not think that it is because they were necessarily cheap. It struck me there was nothing in the argument.

Q. Well?—But I have never heard, as a matter of fact, except, I believe, once—Mr. Crooks is not here to bear me out—it was a long time ago that we tried to split tenders.

Q. And you would naturally not pay much attention to devices for minimising the evil, because you have in your mind a strong opinion that the whole system ought to be swept away altogether?—That was the thing I had in my mind, and it was not only in my mind, but in the mind of the majority of the board.

Q. Then what view do you take, Mr. Lansbury, of this system of giving contracts to ratepayers?—The labour men are always stigmatised because we are supposed to be against that system. People who will not give local work to local men are stigmatised throughout the district.

Q. In fact, you are a Free Trader in this matter?—Absolutely.

(Mr. Grant.) Have you a return of goods that have been rejected by the Poplar guardians?—Yes.

Q. What period does it cover?—1903, 1904, and 1905.

Q. Yes?—During these three years we have rejected the following:—Butter, 10 cwt. 2 qrs. 20 lbs.; milk, 218 quarts; oatmeal, 7 cwt. 2 qrs.; fat, 21 lbs. I expect that that was in excess of the amount we ought to have had. Beef, 32 stone; pork, 1 leg; split peas, 10 cwt.; haricot beans, 1 ton; potatoes, 8 sacks; cocoa, 28 lbs.; brushes, 3½ dozen; flock, 1 ton; brooms, 6; boots, 237 pairs; leather, 21½ lbs.; soap, 2 tons. All these were rejected because they were not up to the contract:—Unbleached tape, 12 dozen; white apron string, 240 yards; black knitting wool, 240 yards; table cloths, 1 dozen; Singer's sewing machine needles, 4 dozen; bed cases, 12 dozen; girls' stockings, 5 dozen; hessian, 418 yards; boys' stockings, 8 dozen; white muslin, 245 yards; twill calico, 160 yards; bed rugs, 3 dozen; flannel, 90 yards; galatea, 56 yards—

(The Inspector.) Have you nearly finished?—I thought I would run them over, and then Hamlin was rejected because of short weight, and we cancelled his contract.

Mr.
Lansbury.
26 July.

Mr.
Lansbury.
26 July.

(Mr. Grant.) In regard to the administration of the workhouse, Mr. Lansbury, you have been taken to task for stopping the breaking of stone and the picking of oakum, and the substitution of work in the workhouse for the so-called able-bodied men?—Yes; and I stick to that. I adhere to the abolition of task-work.

Q. In your opinion is the present system, first of all, better for the discipline of the workhouse?—In my judgment it is, and, moreover, it makes the inmates themselves happier than they were when they worked at picking oakum and breaking stones. Personally, I do not think the able-bodied men are so much attracted now as they were when I first came on the board.

Q. Breaking stones is not very hard work for some men?—No, some can do it easily.

Q. They learn it easily and get the knack of it, and to men not used to it it is a very hard task. Picking oakum is exactly the same, and both these kinds of work have the effect of bringing to the men's minds the impression that they are not useful and do not serve any good end?—Of course, all this workhouse work, whether it is picking oakum, breaking stones, grinding corn, &c., no one can defend from the economist point of view, and in my judgment the able-bodied sooner or later—the able-bodied problem I mean—in England has to be taken hold of. You will have to take the unemployable and the waster away from the other kinds of men, and will have to deal with them in an altogether different fashion to what you have dealt with him up to now.

Q. The man who won't work must be treated in some sense as a criminal?—Not exactly as a criminal, but as a person who is really not all there.

Q. And in your opinion he will have to be dealt with and trained until he does become in some sense a decent member of society?—And if he does not do this you must remember that you will have to keep him all his days and do the best you can with him. I am going to ask you, Mr. Davy, if you will accept this copy of a paper I read at the Poor Law Conference. "As to the able-bodied, you will have noticed I have left out the word 'relief,' and put in the words 'organisation of labour.' For my part I do not recognise the right that these should be 'maintained without work'; and, therefore, consider that 'society has no right to relieve the able-bodied except on 'one condition, the refusal of society to supply work. I hold the true and only policy consistent with the good of 'the community in dealing with the able-bodied, so to 'organise their labour that they can maintain themselves.'" I said that in 1897.

Q. And you have not altered your opinion since?—No.

(The Inspector.) In fact, if they will not work, lock them up?—Yes. What I would do with the man who will not work is not to let him eat. I would not feed him, because the only thing that would make him work is the fear of starving, and that is a hard thing. Now, the bell goes, and he gets his meal whether he works for it or not. If, when the bell went, he did not get any grub he would want to work.

(Mr. Grant.) Now with regard to the diet of the aged, infirm, and sick, the Poplar Board of Guardians have materially improved the dietary during the last few years?—Yes. We first of all got our own dietary scales. The Local Government Board framed a new dietary for the whole of England. Our dietary was lessened a little in some respects. Our dietary was altered so as to come into line with the dietary all over England as laid down by the Local Government Board.

Q. At that time you were in advance of the Local Government Board dietary. They issued a new one, and you brought yours into harmony with it?—Into harmony with one of them.

Q. The Local Government Board issued a better dietary for this class of people?—For the aged, infirm and children—no doubt about it.

Q. So much, then, for the indoor workhouses. Now, I want to come to the question of Poplar generally, Mr. Lansbury. I need hardly ask you how long you have known Poplar, but I believe you have known it for a good many years?—I have been living in the East End ever since I was a lad of seven. I was out of it for eighteen months, when I went to Australia, and I was out again for another eighteen months, but excepting these two periods I have been in the East End all my life.

Q. And the main part of it living in Bow?—Twenty-one years.

Q. Is it correct to say, as Mr. Martley said, that the Borough of Poplar is on the whole steadily getting poorer?—That is my judgment distinctly.

Q. Any one I mean who looks at the present condition of the borough can see, Mr. Lansbury, that at one time people of means lived in the borough, and transacted their business or profession in it?—Yes.

Q. Men connected with the shipping industry, for instance, lived in East India Dock Road?—Yes.

Q. Now, this class has gone away to other districts, and their place taken by poorer people?—That is exactly what has taken place.

Q. Now, also, do you agree with what has been said about each winter for many years past. The Board before and since you came on have had to deal with acute distress in the borough?—Yes, only that was as a rule done until the winter of 1904, mainly through the late Poplar Board of Works and the Poplar Borough Council. The guardians—

Q. First of all, you had every winter acute distress, and this up to recent years was dealt with by the provision of work by the Poplar Board of Works and after that by the Poplar Borough Council?—The Poplar Board of Works and then by the Poplar Borough Council.

Q. By the Poplar Board of Works and then by the Poplar Borough Council which succeeded the Board of Works?—Yes, and I would like to say, Mr. Grant, that I date all that from the issue of Mr. Chamberlain's famous Circular in 1886. I hold that the provision of work for the unemployed dates from that, because then the State for the first time recognised its duty to the unemployed, although in a very half-hearted way, if you like. The local authorities were empowered to provide work for the unemployed so that they should not go to the guardians, and in that way two relief authorities were formed—one the guardians, which carried a disability to those who received assistance, and the other the local authorities, which did not carry a disability—and the Poplar Board of Works acted on that Circular pretty regularly.

Q. Every winter?—Practically.

Q. And what was the effect of that. First of all, the borough council, I think, opened a register and took the names of every man who applied and gave them a certain number of days' work a week?—Three days.

Q. They provided three days' work in the week. Now what was the effect of that policy on the finances of the borough?—The effect that has had on the finances of Poplar is that there is now a very heavy loan debt, and the work, according to the borough surveyor, cost something like 80 to 100 per cent. more for labour for work done under these conditions than it would otherwise have cost.

Q. Have you a copy of the report of the borough surveyor for April, 1905?—Yes. But before you have that I would like you to have the figures for 1903, because that will show exactly what I mean. Here are the actual details of the register for the unemployed. Number on register, November to March, 4,021—and here is the crucial point—number given work, 3,300; that was on the three days' system—3,300, which works out as follows:—in Poplar, 1,140 men had three days. Out of the 3,300, 1,041 only got three days once, 585 men had three days twice, and 118 men had three weeks or more. In Bromley, 1,038 men had three days once; in Bow, 821 men had three days once; and 442 had three days twice; and in Bow, I expect that was because I live there, 18 men got work three days three times. Now, I hold that that is the most pernicious system possible, because you just tide these men over in exactly the same way as you do with out-relief. They get their three days and shove through the best way they can, and here is the crucial point, that of the total sum paid in wages £3,506, the surveyor estimates the extra cost for road making under these conditions was a third of the total paid, that is to say, out of the £3,506, £1,200 extra was paid through employing men in that sort of fashion. You see the men had no incentive to work, because they knew they would have their three days whether or no. They had got to have it.

Q. And I think on that work you made a strong comment?—This is what I said: "The giving of work

"by borough councils and public bodies in the way it is done just now, while absolutely necessary under present conditions, is calculated to have most disastrous effects in the future. It means that the cost of your work will be greater than otherwise, and means that work which should be done by the efficient will be done by the inefficient, and encourage men to be satisfied with the casual conditions of labour, whereas they should be discontented and organise to obtain permanent conditions."

Q. Where is that taken from?—It is taken from evidence I gave before a Special Committee of the Charity Organisation Society, which inquired into the relief of distress caused by want of employment during the autumn of 1903 and the winter of 1904.

Q. Now, coming to 1904. Now, in consequence of your dissatisfaction with this system did Canon Barnett, Mr. Vallance, the clerk to the Whitechapel Board of Guardians, Mr. Maynard, of the Charity Organisation Society, Mr. Crooks, and yourself write to the *Times*, the leading London newspaper, pleading that any work given to the unemployed that winter should be given on normal lines?—Yes. I have a copy of that letter here.

Q. Will you just read it?—Yes. It reads:—"To the Editor of the *Times*. Sir,—Many of the municipal authorities are proposing to offer work as a means of helping the unemployed. As a result of varied experience, we would submit that if this is done it is inexpedient (a) to give only partial employment; (b) to release workers from the stimulus of having to satisfy an employer.

"(a) Partial employment does not secure the health and upkeep of the home. It leaves the family impoverished and unfit for work, while it gives the man enough money to enable him to compete with other workmen at a lower wage. It does not release the workers from the need of seeking charity.

"(b) Work which is designed to employ the workers and not to satisfy an employer is often demoralising. Many of the workers become slack and the better class incline to fall to the level of the worse. Made work tends to be regarded as a source of relief rather than of earnings; it is often as tempting to the idler as it is repugnant to the self-respecting workman.

"On the other hand the provision of regular employment on ordinary lines for steady men, even though directly touching a smaller number, relieves the labour market more effectively, and at the same time avoids wasteful expenditure on inefficient labour. As, however, even such work, started during times of distress, is liable to prove attractive to unemployed single men all over the country, it would be advisable to employ only men with settled homes in London.

"We would therefore submit that the municipalities which may decide to take a part in meeting present needs could best do so by leaving distinctively relief duties to guardians and other agencies, by starting or carrying on, as good employers, works which have a definite public advantage, and by requiring of each worker the best work during a continuous period under thorough supervision.—We are, Sir, your obedient servants, SAMUEL A. BARNETT. WILLIAM CROOKS. GEORGE LANSBURY. H. R. MAYNARD. E. J. URWICK. W. VALLANCE. October 14th."

Q. That was in October, 1904?—Yes.

Q. Can you give the exact date?—October 15th, 1904.

Q. Now, we find that as the result of that letter the new policy you suggested was adopted by the Poplar Borough Council?—It is quite true that, as Mr. Davy says in his memorandum, no definite resolutions were come to by the Poplar Council on the matter, but this is what happened: Under Mr. Walter Long's scheme a distress committee was set up here in Poplar. The borough council allowed the surveyor to take all his men through that distress committee for the extra work he had in hand. The borough surveyor took them—took the best of our men—and employed them continuously instead of for three days under the old arrangement. I would like to point out that Mr. Long said that no person of bad character should be employed, that preference should be given to persons with established homes with wives and families, and that employment should be continuous for a definite period. Well, the distress committee adopted all that, and they asked the borough surveyor—we could only ask him—to go on the lines of the scheme, and he did so. I have a report which I

am going to put in. It shows that we registered altogether—

Q. Before you come to that. As the result of that, did the borough surveyor report that the increased cost on the work done in the winter was only some 10 or 15 per cent. as compared with 80 to 100 per cent. in the previous year?—I will give it to you. This report contains reports with reference to the men, which I consider highly creditable to all the men employed. The foremen who engaged them, and everyone who had anything to do with them speak in the highest terms. Here is what is said:—

Q. Just summarise it. It comes to this, that you maintain these reports of the surveyor, and the foremen say there was a genuine desire for work on the part of the men, and the work they did was done to the satisfaction of every independent person?—That is so. This report bears it out. Labour has cost 15 per cent. more than it would have done in the ordinary way.

Q. Compared with 80 to 100 per cent. in the previous year?—Yes. Here is what he said: "There have been very few cases in which the men have been unsteady or lazy, but a number of them have been unable to cope with the work successfully although in every way willing to do their best. Where possible, lighter work of some kind or a watchman's job has been found for them in such cases, or failing this they have, after a fair trial, been paid off before the completion of the particular work, whereas had they been competent, they would have continued until its completion."

Q. Now that policy was begun in 1904, continued through 1905 and 1906?—Yes.

Q. And the result was that whereas in 1903-4 the borough council employed just on 700 casual labourers, the number was reduced in 1905-6 to 179?—That is so.

Q. And are those figures supplied to you by the borough surveyor of Poplar?—Yes. I maintain, Mr. Grant, that the people I represent here have been of real benefit and service to the ratepayers of this district. Even although you may pay this out-door relief, you have the work for the borough council organised on decent lines. Men have fairly good wages, and they are expected to give a fairly good return for the wages they receive. Casual labour has been reduced to a minimum, as you see. During the last winter the average has been 179 instead of 700 in previous winters. I claim that as the direct result of our policy in Poplar it has abolished the three days' system, and has prevented the borough council or municipal work being degraded to the level of relief work. I hope I have made myself clear. I ought to say that out-relief comes off the ratepayer of to-day, whereas when money is borrowed it is spread over a number of years, and the future ratepayer has to pay a share of it, as well as the interest.

Q. Let me just contrast the two policies. First of all, the old policy met the distress, the usual distress or the yearly distress in Poplar by casual employment by the borough council?—That is so.

Q. That was reformed, and decent men were found work through the winter—a certain number of decent men were found work throughout the winter by the borough council?—Yes.

Q. The result of that was to leave a number of less efficient men with no work at all?—Yes, and a large number of very efficient men too, because here are the figures. There were 2,346 who were eligible to come before the committee. There were 414 single men not dealt with at all, 450 ineligible—that is to say, men who were physically or mentally, or for some other reason, who were not able to come under the scheme at all. We had these two figures on our hands. We only found work for 1,504 out of the 2,346 who might have been found work, because they came within the four corners of the scheme. So you see that we had a very large number of our people left on our hands, nearly 2,000.

Q. Yes. Some men who were physically capable could not get work, and also a number, a very large number, who were the less competent of those applying?—That is so.

Q. Now, as we have been told during the pressure at that time a small amount of out-relief was given in kind to the wives and families of some of the men?—Yes.

Q. In your opinion, first of all, was that the cheapest and best method of dealing with the difficulty?—It was

Mr.
Lansbury.
26 July.

Mr.
Lansbury.
26 July.

the cheapest from the point of view of money, no doubt. I do not want to be thought I am in any way desirous of giving out relief to able-bodied men except as a last resource, because I am against it absolutely. I do not think it is right.

Q. But I elicited from Mr. Crooks that you only had two alternatives. You had to give relief in kind so as to stave a family over a period of depression, leaving the man free to look for work wherever he could or you had to give an offer of the house, breaking up the home, and running the risk in some cases, and the certainty in others, of making the men permanent paupers?—Yes, there is no doubt about that. It was certainly the cheapest thing for us to do, undoubtedly. We could not have given them admission into the house and created any number of more workhouses. It would have been absurd to have done that.

Q. You would have had to get a large number of additional officials?—Not only that; but the waste would have been fearful.

Q. So far during the period of depression no doubt some undeserving cases did get relief?—Well, I want to say, Mr. Grant, a word about that. During the early days of the distress I put in a great deal of time at the relief committees, and so did my colleagues. To say that we did not investigate and did not inquire into the applications made to us is a travesty of the facts. I have sat five hours on the Bow relief committee, and Mr. Watts, who is not here, has sat week after week four, five, and six hours going into the applications. I do not know a more painstaking chairman than Mr. Watts, the chairman of that relief committee. I have often been surprised at the infinite trouble he has taken over the cases.

Q. Persistent way?—And persistent efforts to get at the bottom. For instance, when the men came back from Morecambe they went before him, and, Socialist as he is, he refused to give them relief because he considered they had no business to give up work, which no man ought to do. He was so strong against encouraging men to give up work of any kind that he refused to give relief.

Q. After they had walked back?—Yes. I had a telegram from someone asking me to send them some money. He took the view that if men could get work of any kind, they had no right to live on their fellows, and my judgment is the same. Of course there are some men who may be unfortunate rather than wicked—he may be mentally unfortunate, physically unfortunate, or unfortunate in the sense that there is not enough work to go round.

Q. Now, this relief we have been told amounted to nearly 7s. a week to the wife and family?—I would point out to you that this 7s. was the highest figure. A man would not throw up a job bringing in 30s. weekly to obtain for his wife and family 7s. of food. It is so absurd that it answers itself.

Q. Now, at Christmas, 1904, did you determine to deal with the best of the men under what is known as the modified test?—That was in 1905. The 3rd of February, 1905. That is the date of the Order.

Q. After that date you determined to put the Order into force at Poplar?—Well, so far as accommodation could be found at Laindon.

Q. I will put it the other way. To put that Order into force you secured premises at Laindon?—We extended them. We had an old barn there and we turned it into a dormitory for 50 men, and we had 50 men down at the time.

Q. Laindon was started before February, 1905. It was started originally as a place to which you were going to take some able-bodied men in the workhouse in the hope of raising them in the scale?—There never was any idea when we started Laindon of having any there but the able-bodied pauper. We had no idea of taking unemployed men there.

Q. But when this crisis came about you took men who applied for out-relief and sent them to Laindon under the modified workhouse test Order?—I would like to say this, Mr. Davy: as you are aware, sir, that test came into existence through the action of the Whitechapel Board of Guardians.

(The Inspector.) Well?—It gave us power to say to a man who wanted help in times of pressure, "you must submit to the discipline of the workhouse," and we could

give his wife and family relief outside. We dealt with it exactly as Whitechapel did, except that we took the man to Laindon instead of sending him into the workhouse. It is exactly on all fours.

(Mr. Grant.) In doing that you had to mix the two classes, the pauper and the unemployed man?—Yes, that was the drawback.

Q. And you disapproved of that?—Yes, and the whole board did, but we had no option.

Q. You could not help yourselves?—No.

Q. And now with regard to the men who were so dealt with. Have you ever heard of any complaints except the one that was mentioned by Clarke. He gave evidence?—You mean about getting money?

Q. Yes?—Only one.

Q. In regard to cases of drunkenness, there were, I believe, one or two?—Yes, and they were always dealt with, and most severely, too.

Q. And there were only one or two of these?—So far as I know.

Q. Now, for the most part you were specially concerned with Laindon?—Yes.

Q. Almost every man who went to Laindon came under your own personal observation?—Yes.

Q. And were they for the most part decent good men who had either been employed at the docks or the gas works, building or other trades, who had been displaced by the new policy adopted by the Poplar Borough Council?—Yes, and the astonishing thing about the men at Laindon was that a good many of them, when you asked them where they worked last almost invariably answered "We worked last winter for the borough council." The late President of the Local Government Board went down there.

Q. Was that Mr. Long?—No, Mr. Gerald Balfour; and I think nothing interested him so much as the fact that here were these men displaced by one local authority being taken up by the guardians.

Q. And besides Mr. Gerald Balfour, did a number of guardians from different unions visit Laindon?—Yes, I am putting in, if Mr. Davy will allow me, a return giving copies of statements made by people who visited Laindon. Most of them were experts in one way or the other. All this goes to show at any rate that they did know. They looked on it as a definite experiment, and that is how we looked on it, as an experiment.

Q. And the suggestion that the men there simply wasted their time is a suggestion of someone who had never been to the place?—There again I will put in a return of the crops at Laindon. There are a large number of acres under cultivation. You will remember that Mr. Clarke gave some figures as to last year; and Mr. Martley also gave some figures. These are the figures for the present year: Potatoes, 34 acres; cabbages, 5 acres; peas, $\frac{3}{4}$ acre; onions, $1\frac{1}{4}$ acres; carrots, 1 acre; parsnips, 1 acre; broad beans, 1 acre; turnips, $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres; kidney beans, 2 acres; lettuce, $\frac{3}{4}$ acre; radish, $\frac{1}{2}$ acre; marrows, cucumbers, and tomatoes, $\frac{1}{4}$ acre; oats, 12 acres; mangolds, 2 acres; grazing land, 20 acres; fallow land, 12 acres. I think you will find these figures are somewhat different to those Mr. Clarke gave.

Q. A large acreage of the land under cultivation is market gardening?—Yes.

Q. Requiring a large amount of labour?—That is the reason why it is being done so and especially at this time of year.

Q. Now, Mr. Lansbury, what would the family get under this new Order. What would the family get?—It would depend on the size of the family and the discretion of the committee. I think you have already got that in the evidence already given.

(The Inspector.) Did it get up to 10s.?—Yes, in some cases.

(Mr. Grant.) And then you had to add to that the cost of the men at Laindon?—Yes.

Q. And it is said that the two put together amount to 25s. I think you will consider that a high estimate?—Yes, I consider it a high estimate, because what is done with regard to Laindon is that the whole of the capital charges is put in, and the number of days' maintenance is worked out, and these are supposed to give the total cost there. But I want to point out that in other cases you would put the cost of clothing, furniture, &c., with the initial cost.

Mr.
Lansbury.
26 July.

Q. The capital expenditure?—Yes. Against the ordinary expenditure on the maintenance of the inmates of the workhouse. But apart from that, even if I admitted the 25s. was the correct figure, it is much cheaper than taking the people into the workhouse, because the average cost there is 11s., and if you take a man and his wife and four children it would cost as much as 66s. a week, and the fact that you get a portion of the cost from the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund does not prove that it is any cheaper. Consequently it is more costly to relieve them in the house than in the way we did.

Q. And at the same time you are endeavouring to do something for the man instead of reducing him to the level of a pauper?—Yes, and I think altogether with regard to these men we dealt with at Laindon, these unemployed men, that the chief good that resulted from that was that we got them into really good physique. That fact is proved by the fact that some of them are working to-day as navvies in the East India Dock Road. That is proof of the good we did for them. You must remember that very often when a man gets work under present conditions he is physically unfit; he is unable to do the work that is given to him. That is the difficulty we are placed in here.

Q. Now in the old times you had men who had fainted at their work?—We had one man who died when put to work.

Q. Now, despite the so-called attractiveness of a full diet and a country residence, is it a fact that out of 563 men who were sent there—I am not speaking of re-admissions—only 120 are now chargeable to the rates, in addition to 15 who were in the sick asylum and three in the lunatic asylum?—That is so.

Q. And is it a further fact that out of 314 men discharged 118 have not been seen since?—We have not seen anything of them.

Q. And you claim that these have been received back into the working community?—Yes. I may be asked to say where these men are, but I have no business to be asked that, Mr. Grant. As a poor law guardian I have only to deal with a man when he comes here, and not as to what he is doing when he has gone away. No one can tell what happens when he has gone away.

(Mr. Robb.) You are anticipating some of my questions, Mr. Lansbury?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) Now with reference to the holidays, it is said you gave them holidays to come up to London, and that under the Local Government Board Orders you said you were empowered to give them 12 hours a week?—Yes.

Q. You gave the men 48 hours a month?—Yes.

Q. Exactly what you were allowed to do?—Yes, that is so.

Q. And the men came up to London, and by doing so they had an opportunity of ascertaining where there was work?—Yes, with regard to the unemployed men, I am going to hold this strongly, that you have no right to keep a man away from his wife. I am not sure you ought to keep him away a month, but certainly you have no right to keep him away longer than a month. From that point of view I defend them coming up once a month. I know that in some cases this works out bad because a man's friends are such fools that they will give him beer, and make him drunk and get him discharged. That evil, however, is nothing as compared with the evils of keeping men too long from their wives and children. I would say that it is the unemployed who get this 48 hours a month and not the ordinary paupers.

Q. The effect is this: that, coming up on the Saturday, a man would see his mates, who would tell him what work is to be found and where, and a very large number did actually find work and did not go back to Laindon again after they had gone home?—That is so, and I would also like to say, Mr. Grant, that our figures do prove this. Further, I would say that to the waster the idea of work would be abhorrent. He does not like work. To the man willing to work a stay at Laindon would be nearly as abhorrent, because he would handle no money at the end of the week. A decent man would not wish to stop at Laindon a minute longer than necessary, because instead of a week's money he only got food, and his wife an allowance. Therefore, no decent man would put up with that a minute longer than necessary.

Q. Then he has no inducement to stay?—I hold proof of my statement. Here are figures, and figures that prove the truth of what I say.

Q. Now you are criticised for letting them come home for week-ends on Saturdays. Is that the best time of all for a man to ascertain from his mates what work is going about?—Yes, not only that, he gets a Sunday with his wife and children. I don't think there is anything in the argument against us of the week-ends at all.

Q. As to the inmates of the workhouse, as to the 100 men who went from the workhouse to Laindon colony, are 33 of them now getting their own living?—Yes; and I think that a very good result—about a third.

Q. Yes?—These chaps get sick of working for nothing. That is what has happened. They went down there, and turning over this Essex clay is hard work, and when they got nothing at the end of the week for their labour, but only their food and the 6d. you have heard so much about, it was not good enough for them, and they shoved about for themselves and got out of it. They were single men in the main, and married men with no children, and they shoved all round and got away. I think 33 out of 100 is a very good result. At any rate, we have not got them here. The ratepayers have got rid of them, for they are not on our rates now.

Q. And do you think any workhouse in the country can show a similar result in dealing with that number of paupers?—Our workhouses cannot, that is certain.

Q. Now, with reference to Mr. Martley's letter, I want to call your attention to that?—Do you mean his letter to me? Mr. Martley and I are very good friends, and in some ways, I suppose, we are thoroughly in agreement; but in regard to Laindon neither he or Mr. Witherby really appreciate our position. Their idea is that we should have a fewer number of men, cut up the land, and give to each so much to cultivate, on purpose to see what personal attention each man gave to it. You cannot do that until you have power of detention, because at present a man might no sooner get his plot in order than he would go away and come back in a few months' time. We could not do what Mr. Martley wanted us to do. His principle is an ideal principle for a labour colony that would be dealing with the unemployable rather than the ordinary average man. And then I would also like to say that I quite agree with him that Laindon is too small, and I am hoping, although it is a desperate kind of hope, that we shall get that 500 or 600 acres lower down in Essex before long—the Nipsells estate.

Q. Nipsells estate, did you say?—I believe that if we can only get that and stick to it for the able-bodied, and not have to mix them with the unemployed, if we can only do that we shall be able to do some really good work.

Q. Now, let me deal with some of the other small points that have been raised. One of the witnesses referred to the fact that you had purchased a motor car?—No, we had a motor wagon. I must say that to a large extent I am the unhappy person who is responsible for the provision of that motor wagon.

Q. Let me take you up step by step?—

(Mr. Robb.) Don't stop the witness?—I admit it straight off.

(Mr. Grant.) When you took the farm you found it adjoined the railway?—That is so.

Q. And you anticipated that you would be able to have a siding to carry manure and other stuff right on to the farm?—Yes.

Q. You began negotiations with the railway company as to the siding?—Yes.

Q. But they at first flatly declined to entertain the idea?—Yes.

Q. And thereupon did a deputation from the guardians see the assistant general manager?—Yes.

Q. And then did he point out that there were serious engineering difficulties in the way, because at the point where the farm adjoins the railway there is a long gradient?—Yes.

Q. And there would be a source of danger to passenger traffic if a siding were placed there, because if a truck broke loose it would run for miles?—Yes.

Q. And then did he further agree to consider the matter?—Yes.

Q. And did they say that the cost of constructing a siding would be between £4,000 and £5,000?—Yes.

Mr.
Lansbury.

26 July.

Q. And that they would further require you to guarantee a minimum traffic of £600 a year?—Yes.

Q. That showed you a siding was impossible?—Yes.

Q. And you then applied to the Local Government Board for power to purchase a steam lorry?—Yes.

Q. And did you receive sanction from the Local Government Board to purchase a wagon from the Yorkshire Steam Wagon Company for £600?—Yes.

Q. And that is the answer for the motor-car at Laindon?—Yes. There is some question about us travelling about there in pair-horse broughams. I have been to Laindon many times, but nobody goes there in pair-horse carriages at the expense of the rates. I have very often hired them, but I did not pay for them. The people who went paid for them. Mr. Marden must have taken these deputations for our board of guardians. The only pair-horse vehicle we employed as a board was a pair-horse brake to take down eight or ten of us at a time. I do not think anyone will object to a pair of horses drawing that number from Brentwood to Dunton. Mr. Gerald Balfour, when he went, paid for his carriages. The cost did not come out of the rates. I say that because Superintendent Marden must have been misled by seeing us travelling about.

Q. Mr. Marden did not appreciate the amount of interest your experiment was creating amongst guardians up and down the country?—He did not appreciate the distinguished visitors who were visiting his district.

Q. Now, I want the return prepared showing the analysis of the cost and details of expenditure with regard to the colony?—

(Mr. Robb.) Let me have a copy.

(Mr. Grant.) You have it already.

(Mr. Lansbury.) Will you get him a copy.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, Mr. Lansbury, we had put in a report by the superintendent of police, dated the 8th May, by Mr. Marden on what had happened at what he called the Dunton farm colony, and appended to that report were the observations of the committee on that report. Did the committee instruct Mr. Butler to go thoroughly into the police report, and to enquire into the statements made therein, and was that report submitted to the board of guardians on the 26th of July last year, and did it not deal in detail with the allegations which had been made by Mr. Marden?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) I put in that report.

(The Inspector.) We have a copy of it. It has been forwarded to the Local Government Board.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, with regard to dietary at Laindon. Did Dr. Carter, medical officer, make a report, on 13th February, 1906, and is that report as follows: "I have gone carefully into the question of change in the dietary at the farm colony, and I am strongly of opinion that the No. 3 diet now in use is a better dietary for breakfast than any of the dietaries under the Workhouse Regulation Order. I consider the nutriment value is greater, and the cost I should say is something less. It is also more in accordance with the inmates' ordinary

mode of living, and I can safely say in a large experience I have never seen either porridge or gruel on a poor man's table. I have seen gruel taken away in pails to the pigs at Billericay workhouse day after day. The character of the work is severe. Men are using tools they are not accustomed to, and lift a greater ton weight per day than any ordinary work to which they have been accustomed. On every poor man's table in England tea, coffee, or cocoa are found night and morning, and I am unable to see why this could not be included in the dietary at the Laindon colony. It would be more acceptable. There would be no waste, and no increased cost."

(The Inspector.) I think I should say, in reference to that, it has been the subject of very prolonged correspondence between the guardians and the Local Government Board, and Dr. Downes differs from the guardians?—Our dietary has been altered since. Can you get me a copy of that dietary from the office? I mean what the Inspector says is correct—we have been negotiating about the dietary right from the start.

(Mr. Grant.) It is a difference of opinion, then, between you and the Local Government Board. You are wanting to raise the physical condition of the men, and the Local Government Board want you to keep them on what is called the ordinary workhouse diet?—It is a difference of opinion about dietetic values.

Q. Of the food?—Difference between our food experts.

Q. On a difference between food experts, a mere lawyer may not venture to express an opinion?—I have given it up because Dr. Downes has told me such startling things on what you can live on that I reckon very soon we won't want food or work at all. I mean Dr. Downes is an expert on this matter, and I have very great respect for him, indeed. I am not saying that in fun—I have very great respect for him indeed. He certainly has given me pause about dietaries. I have not practised on myself, though I might do so when this Inquiry is finished. It is hardly safe now. But I don't think, Mr. Grant, we can get any further with regard to the diet, because the matter is still under consideration.

(The Inspector.) Have you nearly done?—I don't know.

(Mr. Grant.) Something was said about pocket money you gave the men at Laindon?—I never gave it. I took two friends there one day. I think as a matter of fact the money was provided by three people. I was simply the person who disbursed it.

Q. My point is this, that the money never came out of the rates?—Everybody knew that.

Q. Not everyone. It was suggested that you were giving the men pocket-money out of the rates?

(Mr. Robb.) I did not?—As a matter of fact it did not come out of the rates. Private people gave it.

(The Inspector.) And some of the guardians did not approve of their getting it?—I don't know. I think most of them did.

(The Inspector.) What is the course of procedure?

(Mr. Grant.) First Mr. Ford, and then Mr. Lansbury.

Mr. E. J. FORD; recalled, and further examined.

Mr. Ford.

26 July.

(Mr. Robb.) You gave us some figures—aggregate figures relating to the tenders in three years?—Yes.

Q. They were simply the comparisons of the actual tender figures on the basis of the estimated quantities?—Yes. I think that is the same system—

Q. And they do not therefore disclose the actual position. The actual position would depend upon the actual deliveries as against each tender?—Yes, that is so.

Q. What you have disclosed in your figures is merely a hypothetical position: the position on the basis of the tenders?—I do not put it that way. I put it the actual figures.

Q. For instance, by way of example, you know that Mr. Pyle's deliveries considerably exceeded the estimated quantity for which he tendered?—1905?

Q. Yes?—I really could not tell you what the actual deliveries were.

Q. Without labouring it, you know that did happen in some cases?—I take your word for it.

Q. Therefore, we cannot gauge the exact position, saving or loss, without going to the actual deliveries?—Just so. Of course (I am sorry you were not here this morning; it would have saved time) that works both ways. In particular cases where we have accepted the lowest tenders—you ought to give us credit for that—where a delivery has been in excess of the estimated requirement, there, of course, there has been an additional saving.

Q. You have only dealt with the tender figures?—I worked them out on the same basis as Mr. Davy did in preparing his Memorandum. You must remember that the question of deliveries had not then arisen. I worked exactly on the same method.

Q. Then, again, you have not dealt with the saving that might have been made had the contracts been split?—No.

Q. You have only worked them out on acceptance in bulk?—Just so.

Mr. Ford.

26 July.

Q. Mr. Ford, do you think, after the evidence you have heard, that acceptance in bulk is liable to danger and abuse?—I do not think there is any form of getting supplies that human ingenuity could devise that would be absolutely perfect.

Q. No, I agree?—You always stand to be shot at when you go to the market to buy anything. The doctrine of splitting, I may say, is an entirely new doctrine to me. I have never heard of it before; and I do not agree with Mr. Oxley that it would work out as he supposed it would do. You may "have" them once, but not all the time.

Q. There is no question of "having" the tradesmen, is there?—Of course they lay themselves open to be shot at.

Q. You do not suggest that any public institution wants to "have" tradesman?—I assure you I do not want to "have" anyone—tradesman or contractor, or even you, Mr. Robb.

Q. I am very much obliged to you. Do not your own forms say, in extra large type, "the guardians do not bind themselves to accept the lowest or any tender, and they reserve the right to accept a tender for any one or more articles without contracting for all articles included in such tender"?—Yes, that is so.

Q. And do you say that the doctrine of splitting is new to you after that?—Yes, it is.

Q. When you have provided for it on your tender form?—Yes, I think for a very good reason. We specify a tremendous amount of articles in our requirements. It does not necessarily follow that we are going to have all those we schedule.

Q. Have you ever in any instance split a tender under the power you reserve for yourselves?—I have no knowledge of it; I don't think we have.

Q. Well, you know, if you take the figures on the basis of a possible splitting, and if you take the figures on the basis of the actual deliveries, the saving to the ratepayers would be more than the amount you name in the three years?—Yes, of course; that is possible.

Q. And even the figures you showed, I think, you said?—Of course, there are two morals to be drawn. If we split it, we might split it to our disadvantage. We might land ourselves to accept only the high-priced articles.

Q. Do you think you would split it to your disadvantage in taking articles from Pryke & Palmer's 300 or 400 per cent. less than Pyle's?—Well, there are just as many peculiarities—

Q. Oh, Mr. Ford?—Would you like me to call your attention—

Q. Will you please answer me that question?—Will you put the question again. I was not quite clear about it.

Q. Do you think splitting would be to your disadvantage had you accepted some of Pryke & Palmer's items 300 or 400 per cent. less than Pyle's?—I think there are a few things on Pryke & Palmer's tender we could have accepted to our advantage, but very much to Pryke & Palmer's disadvantage.

Q. I am not giving all of it, but there is one example: Pyle's price 12s. a dozen; Pryke & Palmer's 3s.—?—Just a moment, I want to follow you, Mr. Robb.

Q. There is no need to labour it; there are thousands of items here, as I think you know?—Pepper boxes, item 42?

Q. Yes. Pyle's price, which you accepted, was 12s., in 1906, per dozen; Pryke & Palmer's was 3s. in each year per dozen—a difference of 300 per cent. Would not it have been to your advantage to have split them, and said, "We will take pepper boxes from Pryke & Palmer at 3s. per dozen, and not from Pyle at 12s."?—Possibly so.

Q. And so on right through; that is a very minor item, you know; there are thousands of examples?—I want to make it perfectly clear. Although I want to meet you as far as possible, I do not want you to imagine I am defending any one of these particular contractors. I want to get that out of your mind.

Q. Did you think that by entering into a contract with Pyle at—?—I will not answer that question. When the proper time comes we shall deal with it on its merits.

Q. I hope you will. And I hope you will deal with it with the tenders and items before you. Whose duty was it, after the acceptance of the tenders, to go through them and enter them up in your stock books. Did you really think there was any necessity to go through them after you had accepted them?—At the proper time—

Q. I ask you whose duty was it to go through them?—After they were accepted? No one's duty.

Q. No one ever went through them?—It is someone's duty to correct the titles.

Q. Will you please follow me?—If you please, Mr. Robb, I—

Q. I will have an answer to my question?—I will answer the question.

Q. We have been told that no one went through them before they were unsealed in the board room?—That is so.

Q. Who went through them afterwards?—They were accepted subject to one condition. I will read you—

Q. Who went through the tenders after their acceptance, and entered them?—The office staff went through them to check the carrying out and the addition. The tenders are subject to that.

Q. Who checked the invoices by the tenders when the invoices came in?—The heads of the various departments would be receiving the deliveries.

Q. Did the heads of the various departments draw your attention to these discrepancies?—Discrepancies in what manner?

Q. Why, discrepancies like this: spoons, mustard spoons, 15s. per gross one year; 5s. 6d. a gross the next?—You would not suggest that that is a matter for the heads of departments to call the attention of the guardians to?

Q. I do, certainly?—Well, they check the prices as invoiced as against the contract price.

Q. For instance, Rodgers' table knives, 30s. one year and 27s. the other?—You have not cleared up the previous question. Let us clear up as we go along. Will you accept my explanation?

Q. I will have an answer to my question. Did any officer ever draw your attention—you, as the gentleman having control of the contract department?—I have not the control of the contract department.

Q. You are called to deal specially with it?—Just so.

Q. Did anyone ever draw your attention to that?—To what?

Q. To these inconsistencies and irregularities?—There were no inconsistencies and irregularities.

Q. You say there are no inconsistencies and irregularities in Pyle's tender?—That is not my answer.

Q. I want your answer?—I will not let you have it that way. You were dealing with the acceptance of deliveries.

Q. Just tell me?—Just a moment. I have the floor. You will not put me down in a thousand years. You will have to listen. You will have to hear it. Mr. Robb asked me a question—

(The Inspector.) Please answer the question?—And he would not allow me to answer it. He presupposes something which is not in my mind.

(Mr. Robb.) I am the injured person. You will not allow me to put a question. Do you tell me there were no inconsistencies?—

(Mr. Grant.) Let him answer the question, Mr. Robb?—In respect of the deliveries of goods—

(The Inspector.) Answer the question first?—I told him it was the duty of the head of the particular department to accept delivery—

(Mr. Robb.) No, no, Mr. Ford?—Mr. Robb immediately followed that.

Q. One moment, we have had enough of this?—I will answer the question if—

Q. I asked you whose duty it was to enter this tender in the stock book, and check the invoices by the tenders when they came in. You told me the heads of the departments?—Just so.

Q. I went on to say, did the head of the department ever draw your attention to the inconsistencies and irregularities in Pyle's tender, and you said there were

Mr. Ford.
26 July.

no irregularities?—So far as that particular head of the department is concerned. I want you to get that on your mind. He has to accept the delivery, check the delivery, verify the prices.

(The Inspector.) You are asked whether he ever called attention to the inconsistencies in the tender?—I say no, but Mr. Robb assumes that it is an inconsistency on the part of the person who is accepting delivery, which is a totally different thing.

Q. Mr. Robb is trying to see whether any of your officials ever found out what Mr. Oxley has done at this Inquiry—ever called your attention to it?—They have got nothing to do with—

(Mr. Grant.) May I say that officials did not have the rejected tenders; they simply had the contract. How could they see the inconsistencies?

(Mr. Robb.) I am dealing with the variations between Pyle's prices in two years, Pyle being the accepted tender.

(Mr. Grant.) That is a fresh point altogether, and it would be some one's duty to check Pyle's invoice when it came in by Pyle's tender prices?—Yes, just so.

(Mr. Robb.) I suggest that that person ought to have given you the information?—And I suggest that he would have been exceeding his duty if he had done anything of the sort.

Q. Exceeding his duty to point out to you what Mr. Oxley has had to find out in public at this Inquiry?—Mr. Oxley has had the facilities that the heads of all departments, except the clerical departments, did not get in touch with. To put a case—we took a contract—

Q. You say your own officials?—Let me put a case. We entered into a contract for ten tons of coal, and pay £1 2s. 5d.—

Q. I do not want to know about coal, but about your contracts generally?—Is the person who accepts delivery to say, if we pay £1 2s. 5d. as against 15s. last year that—

Q. I am not upon deliveries, but upon the duty of the person who checks the invoice when it comes in by tender prices. That is what I mean?—I follow you.

Q. Do you mean to say that person has not access to your books?—He has not access to the rejected tenders. He has to the accepted tenders.

Q. I am not dealing with the rejected tenders, but the variation between the accepted tenders in two different years?—He has only to deal with one at a time—not last year or next year.

Q. Should you think that was a fair and reasonable way to answer the question?—Yes, I do. I think it is the correct way, and it is absolutely true.

Q. Now, I want to take you to something that was said about the milk. Mr. Whitlock's milk was condemned by the medical officer, and the contract cancelled. Is that so?—You say so.

Q. Is that so?—No, you say so.

Q. You have heard it in the course of this Inquiry?—Do you want to know the actual facts?

Q. I want to know whether Mr. Whitlock's milk was condemned by your medical officer, and his contract cancelled?—I do not think you have got—

Q. I want an answer to my question?—You will, if I like to give it. Do not think you will if I do not like, because you will not.

(Mr. Grant.) The witness is not allowed to answer.

(Mr. Robb.) I will have a plain answer?—If I like to give it to you. You have got hold of facts wrongly.

Q. I want a plain answer to a plain question—was Mr. Whitlock's milk at any time condemned by the medical officer, and his contract cancelled in consequence?—You see, you are asking two questions.

(The Inspector.) Answer the first?—It was not condemned by the medical officer.

(Mr. Robb.) Was his contract ever cancelled?—Yes, and I helped to cancel it.

Q. I am satisfied; and then, after that, you accepted him again at 9d. a gallon, and rejected the Museum Dairies at 8½d.?—Whitlock's contract was cancelled.

Q. Let us deal with the fact first. Did you accept Whitlock's at 9d. and reject the Museum Dairies at 8½d.?—8½d. or 8¼d.

Q. Very well; you said, in answer to Mr. Grant, that, with regard to deliveries of food and so forth, you had to deal with reliable people?—Just so.

Q. The Museum Dairies Company—are they equally reliable with Whitlock?—Well, it is very difficult to say who is reliable in these days.

Q. A very much bigger firm, are they not?—I do not know anything at all about that—their size or magnitude.

Q. And you preferred Whitlock at 9d. to a lower tenderer, having made no inquiries as to the lower tenderer's stability and position?—Just a moment. How do you know that?

Q. I take it from you, you know nothing about them?—I know a bit more than you do.

Q. Mr. Ford, if you know anything about the Museum Dairies you should tell me. You said you knew nothing about them?—I believe they are in the same boat as Whitlock. They all have to go to court occasionally. There is no trade I know of that is more liable to be got at than a dairyman, unless he is a publican.

Q. Do you know that Mr. Whitlock has been recently prosecuted at North Greenwich?—I did not know. Allow me to finish the milk; it is important.

Q. I want to know what you know about the Museum Dairies?—I am not on the Museum Dairy Company at present. I am on with Whitlock, and when I have cleared him off I will get to the Museum people.

Q. I will have an answer?—You will if I like to give it to you.

Q. What do you know about the Museum Dairy Company?—About as much as you; that is nothing.

(The Inspector.) You know nothing about it?

(Mr. Robb.) Mr. Ford, you are vice-chairman of the board, and you are doing yourself and your colleagues—?

(Mr. Grant.) All this is a waste of time.

(The Inspector.) Will Mr. Ford tell us?—Will you allow me to answer in my own way?

(Mr. Grant.) The Museum Dairy Company was fined in connection with the Stepney board of guardians quite recently?—I did not want to give them away.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Ford says he knows nothing about the Museum Dairy Company beyond that they were prosecuted for supplying inferior milk to Stepney.

(Mr. Robb.) Why did not you tell me just now?—You did not ask.

Q. Did you know Whitlock has been recently prosecuted?—I did not know. If I knew it I would admit it.

Q. Do you know that the Museum Dairies are a much larger firm than?—I do not know the size or the scale of the business.

Q. Did you make any enquiries as to the position and stability of your various tenderers?—Yes, generally—sometimes.

Q. You told us yesterday you knew nothing about certain people?—If we have any doubt we make enquiries. Can we get back to Whitlock? Mr. Davy, I appeal to you, because it is suggested I am acting in collusion with Whitlock, and I want to clear the matter up. I don't hold a brief—

(The Inspector.) Don't make a speech?—I will state the bare facts. The facts are that Whitlock was convicted in '92, when he contracted to supply the Forest Gate schools.

(Mr. Robb.) 1902?—Thank you; and it came to the knowledge of the board, and we cancelled the contract; he was fined £3, I believe, at Stratford. I took a prominent part in cancelling the contract. In 1903, of course, he did not get the tender. I think some West End firm got it. In 1904 he got it, but not my vote. In 1904–5 he supplied the board extremely well, Mr. Davy, and here is a table showing you that in the two years he supplied, the milk contained considerably more than 10 per cent. of cream which the specification calls for—would you like to see it—and this year I voted for him, because his offence might have been a slip. He had a defence, certainly.

Q. How do you know he had a defence if you hold no brief for him?—

(The Inspector.) Was not his defence that someone put water in it?—Yes; which does occasionally occur in the best regulated firms.

(Mr. Robb.) Has Mr. Whitlock recently offered the same defence at Greenwich, and been convicted, and kept the man in his employ who is supposed to have watered it?—I know nothing about the Greenwich conviction.

Q. You told us Cartwright's were an excellent firm who had done you good service?—Yes.

Q. And, I suppose, in recognition of that you accepted them at a considerable excess over other tenders?—Which year are you dealing with?

Q. With the drapery contract in 1905-6, where, altogether, Cartwright's excess is nearly £800 over the other tenders—£624 8s. 1d. on the drapery alone. Is it so?—I believe that is so.

Q. Now, these excellent people who had done you such good service?—I should say also, with the exception of Watts, it was the only tender in that year. Watts we could not have had at any price.

Q. In 1905 your price for bed-ticking was 8d. a yard, in 1906 11d. a yard when you accepted the tenders?—Yes.

Q. They are supplying Bethnal Green with 36-inch bed-ticking at 5d.?—I do not know what they are supplying Bethnal Green at. It is obvious there could have been no collusion between Cartwright and our officers. If Cartwright had known we had a stock of some 1,500 or 1,600 yards in—well, as a business man, instead of putting 3d. a yard on the contract price he would have taken 6d. off to reduce the aggregate. It is a splendid proof that there was no collusion.

Q. Red and black cloth for table covers. You accepted them at 4s. 6d. a yard and rejected the other tender at 2s. 3d. a yard?—I have those tenders before me; I will accept them.

Q. Serge, all colours, 52 inch. In 1905, Cartwright's price was 2s. 2½d. a yard, and that of the rejected tender 1s. 1d. a yard?—I am taking your figures. I will follow you if I can.

Q. In 1906 Cartwright's price was 2s. 6d. a yard. The same contractors supply Bethnal Green with serge, any colour, 54 inches, two inches wider, at 1s. 11d. Can you explain why you should pay Cartwright 2s. 6d. a yard when they supply a two inches wider article, any colour, to Bethnal Green at 1s. 11d.?—No, I do not know that I can. What I do know is, as a matter of fact, that it is about £900 below anyone else's this year.

Q. But £800 above the lowest in 1905?—No, £624.

Q. That is on drapery alone?—You are dealing with drapery now, are you not? If you add the totals together for this year you will find it is £1,000—considerably over £1,000—below the next.

Q. Now linen sheeting. Cartwright's price is 2s. 11d. a yard. He is supplying officers' linen sheeting, 60-inch, to Bethnal Green at 1s. 6d.?—Yes, this happens to be 80 inches in the 100; that makes a bit of difference.

Q. That is the firm you say are doing the board excellent service. You described to us the way you went to work on contract nights, voting on each contract, and so on—three or four voting for one, and a good many for the other. I put in the minutes for 1904-5, when you accepted 39 sets of tenders?—Pardon me. Mr. Davy, I ask you to rule anything applying to the 1904 tenders out of order. We have already agreed to take 1903 contracts, because we were not able to find the rejected tenders of 1904 to compare. Is that fair?

Q. 1905?—You said 1904-5.

(The Inspector.) Let us get on.

(Mr. Robb.) Will you show me on the minutes where there is a single division on the 61 tradesmen in contracts?—Just a moment. Do not be in a hurry.

(The Inspector.) What is your explanation?—Although the board did not divide on any particular tender, it might have been that a dozen contractors were voted upon, but the final vote on the exhaustion principle was taken all through, and no division was called for. That is the reason.

(Mr. Robb.) Have you seen the minutes for this year?—Yes, I have.

Q. When Mr. Diamond was on the board?—Yes, it was a great pity he was not here last year.

(The Inspector.) The explanation is that if a division is not called for, the voting is not entered on the minutes?—Just so. I venture to say the same thing operated in 1905.

(Mr. Robb.) Compare the minutes. This year, when Mr. Diamond was present, there were amendments moved to nearly every resolution. I suggest there is not a single amendment in the minutes for 1905?—I have given the explanation—simply because the board did not go to a division on the last one; but it was open for Mr. Diamond or anyone else to move an amendment.

(The Inspector.) I notice from the minutes that the board met at 6.30 and rose at 9.15, and that all the business they did was to accept tenders, and if there had been any division I do not suppose—

(Mr. Robb.) But how comes it that this year there are numerous amendments shown in Diamond's name, and not a single one the previous year?—Because he was not here the previous year. He shirked his responsibility the previous year.

Q. And no one else assumed it—to move amendments?—Mr. Diamond, I would point out, found himself in a minority of one.

Q. You did not deal in your evidence with the beer contracts. You know that in 1905-6 you might have saved £106 5s. on that?—Yes.

Q. And the present year £118 2s. 6d.?—Yes.

Q. Why did you accept the highest tender in both years?—Because Whitbread's is presumed to be the best beer.

Q. Although you had numerous other well-known firms tendering at lower prices?—I do not admit they are well-known firms.

Q. Will you look at the list?—I think I gave the explanation yesterday, that in Whitbread's tender they deal with the question of specific gravity, and I suppose that is the real test of the quality of beer.

Q. You said the others were not well-known firms. Who is a well-known firm—Lovibond?—No.

Q. You admit having drunk beer with the master?—I do.

Q. But before doing that you took the precaution of calling upon him to produce his invoice?—On my solemn oath, I did not take the precaution of calling upon him to produce his invoice. He volunteered that when I asked him whose beer it was.

Q. So you had your suspicions?—No, I did not.

Q. Then did he fetch his invoice?—He had it in his pocket. He had a habit of carrying them.

Q. A habit of carrying them to produce to any guardian who wanted refreshments?—No, he carried bills and accounts, and many other things.

Q. So that when you wanted evidence he had the invoice in his pocket to produce before you had a drink?—He had it at the time; I will not carry it further.

Q. Your doubts were allayed, and you had the beer?—Exactly, and I would have another one with him tomorrow if he were here.

Q. You had it on many occasions?—I did.

Q. You, the deputy-chairman of the board, thought it a proper and dignified thing to accept free beer on many occasions at the hands of your servant?—Dignity and swelled head are kindred diseases, and I do not suffer from either, Mr. Robb. If you had knocked round the world considerably, as I have done, you would have had some of the dignity knocked off.

(Mr. Grant.) I would call attention to the minutes of 1904, which will show that there were a number of divisions. It is not suggested that Mr. Diamond was there?—When Mr. Diamond was selling collar studs down Petticoat Lane.

Q. About splitting contracts, Mr. Ford. You know now, from enquiry the board has made, that splitting contracts is not adopted by the majority of boards of guardians in London?—We know it is not.

Q. This was Mr. Oxley; you look so surprised, sir. (To witness) Mr. Ford, if you did accept a split contract, you might get the advantage of it that year, but do you think you would get the advantage in succeeding years?—It is a moral certainty you would not.

Q. Do you think that that is the reason why other boards of guardians, having had experience, would not adopt it?—You might shoot a tradesman once, but not twice.

Mr. Ford.

26 July.

Mr. Ford.

26 July.

Q. You have been asked about the price of something at Bethnal Green and the price at Poplar. Have you any knowledge at all as to whether the articles supplied were the same in each case?—I do not think it was, because I saw in the press yesterday that even that model union, Bethnal Green, had been giving the inmates brown paper boots, and they have just found it out. We have not got any of that class of boots.

Q. Your officers were supplied with the quality of the goods to be supplied, and the price that it is accepted at in the contract. Did they ever have prices for two years to compare?—I do not think so. I am certain they did not. They have the current rate, and have to check the invoices by that.

Q. When a new contract comes into force they are supplied with a new list, and destroy the old one?—Yes; that applies to a very few officers—probably the superintendent of the Forest Gate schools, the master of the

workhouse, the engineer, and another set at Langley House and Laindon, that is the total.

Q. When the contracts were considered by the board they could not know what the quantities were that were likely to be wanted for the year?—Certainly not.

Q. They would go on the estimates supplied to them?—Just so.

Q. And they could not tell how much was likely to be delivered during the coming year until the year expired?—Certainly not.

(The Inspector.) Will Mr. Lansbury go into the box next?

(Mr. Grant.) May I ask a question? I put in this morning a list of temporary officers, &c. Might I ask whether you want it on the notes?

(The Inspector.) I do not think so.

Mr. G. LANSBURY; recalled, and further examined.

Mr. Lansbury.

26 July.

(Mr. Grant.) During the time from the autumn of 1904, has there been a distress committee sitting in Poplar, of which you are a member?—Yes.

Q. And is that made up from members of the board of guardians, the Poplar town council, and persons in the district who are experienced in dealing with this question of distress?—Yes.

Q. Now, in 1904-5, were there altogether 3,460 applications for relief to that committee?—I have got it in months.

Q. I think we had better have it as you have got it?—This is a return which contains the census of the unemployed, and the census was taken on November 28th, 1905. That shows that the total wage-earners in the district, men and women, were 38,788. Of these there were out of employment male persons who are usually in regular work 449, and 83 women who were generally in regular employment. There were casual labourers out of employment, 5,894 men, 717 women. That really is a percentage of 18 per cent. persons out of employment throughout the district, men and women. The striking part of those figures is that you have 532 only out of those thousands who are usually in regular employment. It stamps, once and for all, the fact that the people out of work are casually employed, and not in regular employment; but we also took at the same time a census of casual labourers in and out of work, men and women. We had 9,427 men, 1,395 women. That is the total casual workers in and out of work, and that, again, is 28 per cent. of the total wage-earners of the district. That was a house-to-house canvass undertaken by the central unemployed body, who paid the whole cost.

Q. It was taken throughout the whole of Poplar?—Throughout the whole of Poplar, and the figures of regular employment to casual employment prove the kind of person we had out of employment. They establish the fact that you have 1,395 women casual workers and 9,427 male casual workers; and prove the truth of Mr. Martley's statement, and of our statements, as to the number of casual workers there were in the district then. This is rather a long return. I do not know whether it wants reading. I thought if I handed it to Mr. Davy—

(The Inspector.) Has it been printed?—No, the central unemployed body are rather chary about doing a lot of printing. They are thinking of that halfpenny rate. I should also like to put in another statement here in reference to the same body, and also some particulars with reference to a labour exchange that has been opened here.

(Mr. Grant.) Let us deal with one at a time. I want to see what we have to get on the notes. This return, Mr. Lansbury, you handed in, the first are—?—That is a return of the work of the distress committee since its establishment in 1905.

Q. Do you want that on the notes?—

(The Inspector.) I do not think so. I think Mr. Lansbury has given a summary of it.

(Mr. Grant.) Will you give me a summary of the first sheet?—

(The Inspector.) The summary is that the work here is very largely casual work—at Poplar—and that at that

particular time 28 per cent. of the casual workers were out of employment?—No, no; not quite that.

Q. Of the working population?—No, 18 per cent. of the working population were out of employment, but as to the remainder, there were 28 per cent. who were only in casual employment, who might be in work to-day and out of work to-morrow.

(Mr. Grant.) What was the next thing you handed in following on that. You handed in two documents we have not dealt with?—That is the same; you have another one showing a complete record of the distress committee.

Q. What is that summary?—Simply a summary of the census.

Q. Do you want that on the notes?—I have just given you that; that will be on the notes.

Q. Now, then, was it the third paper you put in; I was not following it?—No, this is it here. This is a statement got out to the 29th of May, 1906, of this year. It shows there a total number of applications this year of 1,954; that there were 588 skilled men, 463 labourers of various kinds, 27 other skilled men, and 876 labourers. They would include dock labourers and general labourers mainly—dock labourers, 520; general labourers, 205. In class "A" there were 1,896 married men; the remainder would be single. The ages went like this: 16 to 25, 275; 26 to 35, 558; 36 to 45, 532. I call attention to these two sets of figures: 46 to 55, 365; 56 to 65, 191; 66 to 75, 33. Of these, 1,013 had relief in one form or the other, and 941 had no relief. There were 144 who belonged to trade or labour unions, 27 belonged to sharing-out benefit societies (that is, the so-called slate-club arrangement), and 82 belonged to benefit non-sharing-out clubs. That is the record of this current year to May, 1906.

(The Inspector.) Does that show an improvement?—An improvement on last year, certainly.

(Mr. Grant.) I will take you to the figures for 1904-5?—I think you have got them over there.

Q. In that year you had a total number of applications, 3,460?—Yes.

Q. And of these 2,346 were men who were of good character and settled homes, and entitled to relief?—That is right.

Q. Out of 2,346, 1,504 found work, under Mr. Long's committee, the borough surveyor, and the board of guardians, leaving 842—just one-third of them—for whom no help could be found at all?—I make it more than that; that is right. I mean of the decent men (I mean decent in the sense of being physically fit). I do not mean that in any other sense.

Q. In addition to the amount, there were 414 single men not dealt with at all, and 450 who were returned as chronics and ineligible?—Yes.

Q. And that shows, if you add these three figures together—842, 414 and 450—that while you helped 1,504 men, you left 1,706 unhelped?—That was so.

Q. That was the problem with which the guardians had to deal, and that is the problem which has still to be faced in Poplar?—Yes, the distress committee sent them on to the guardians.

Q. Now, then, did the same thing happen in the last winter, and is the problem as reasonably certain as anything can be to have to be faced in the coming winter?—I think so. Without any doubt someone has got to face it.

Q. With regard to work in Poplar: in your opinion has work been increasing or decreasing?—Work is better now, definitely, than it was at this time last year. I do not think there are any two opinions about that.

Q. But as a general thing, during the past five years has work increased or decreased?—Work has decreased, for a variety of reasons.

Q. Now, take 1904-5, which we have talked about so much, can you tell me what the decrease of wages in the docks was?—Well, Mr. Brodribb, the Secretary of the London and India Docks Company, gave those figures (they are not at all private) to the assessment committee. He said that from January to October the dock company paid £109,000, in round figures, in wages; for the same period in 1905, January to October, they only paid £70,700. That was in the East and West India Dock, because the other docks did not come under assessment.

(The Inspector.) What are the dates?—January to October, 1902 and 1905. The first figures were from January to October, 1902, and the others 1905—the same period.

Q. A drop of £39,000 paid in wages?—Yes, that is so; paid in wages.

Q. And, as a consequence, was the rating of the dock decreased?—The rating of the two docks was decreased from £52,000 to £48,000.

Q. Amongst the industries that have been slack, are there large wall paper works here?—Yes, they were very slack both winters. Alderman Mason over and over again bewailed the fact that they were so slack.

Q. Was a new kind of machinery introduced at the gun factory?—Yes.

Q. Did that result in the discharge of a number of men?—In 1904, Mr. Martley, in giving evidence before the Charity Organisation Committee, says "that 700 men" were displaced at the gun factory, and there is no doubt "they have a splendid set of machinery there now which is displacing men wholesale."

Q. And in the cabinet trade, boot trade, and other kindred industries, were they at that time in a very bad way indeed?—They were, sir.

(Mr. Grant.) I want to ask you some questions about the Memorandum on pauperism at Poplar, which has been put in by the Local Government Board. That takes the cost per head of the population in 1905?—Yes.

Q. Now does that year operate very badly in the case of Poplar?—I think it does, because —

Q. I mean, I am not putting it in any except the purely statistical sense, is it unfair to Poplar to take 1905 as the comparing year?—It would be to compare it in that sort of way. I am sure Mr. Davy won't mind me saying this, that I think, considering we were giving so much relief at that time, that the fairest thing to have done would have been to have taken our total expenditure and compared it with other unions rather than simply what we were expending on in-maintenance and out-maintenance.

Q. Yes, just let me stop on the in-maintenance and out-maintenance first of all. The in-maintenance includes expenditure on institutions over which you have no control at all, does it not?—That is so.

Q. And then you were going on to say?—Mr. Grant, I should like that set of figures I gave you.

Q. Take my brief, I have cut it about a good deal, but it will give you the figures, at any rate, I quoted.

(The Inspector.) From the 1st January to the 1st March there is an actual decrease compared with 1904?—I think I can make it clear. If you take the total expenditure of the union and the total expenditure of the Metropolis it works out thus—For the Metropolis it is 12s. 2d. per head, and for Poplar it is 18s. 6d., Bermondsey £1 6s. 11d., and for the eastern district 16s. 1d. They are the figures for the total expenditure. But if you take the figures given by yourself—I admit your basis is a correct one because you have simply taken the amount for in-maintenance and out-relief—I think as we were giving so much out-relief at that particular time it operates against us and swells it all up. If you take it in the bulk, the Metropolis instead of being 6s. 5½d. is 12s. 2d., Poplar instead of

being 12s. 2d. is 18s. 6d., Bermondsey instead of being 11s. 6½d. is £1 6s. 11d., and the eastern district, instead of being 8s. 2½d. is 16s. 11d. I mean the proportion between it is fairer, stated in that way, than in the way it is stated. These figures are taken from the same return.

(Mr. Grant.) Now, next as to the eastern district, and I want to get this on the notes, Mr. Lansbury. The table on that front page of the Memorandum takes indoor paupers, does it not?—Yes.

Q. And the cost of the same. But that includes paupers in all institutions paid for by the board of guardians, whether under the control of the guardians or not?—Yes.

Q. I have a list here. I will just give you the heads of them. "Institutions for the deaf, dumb, blind, "paralytics, and idiots," "Hospitals and convalescent homes." Under heading of "Institutions for the deaf, dumb, and blind" there are fourteen institutions, under "Hospitals and convalescent homes" seven institutions. These are "Maintenance in training and industrial homes and schools," "Maintenance in the Lingfield and "Hadleigh Labour Colonies," "Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum"—That is the biggest item.

Q. And the Metropolitan Asylums Board. Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum is £15,977 for the year, and the Metropolitan Asylums Board is £5,600 a year. So that, in 1906, four-tenths of that expenditure shown in that table is not controlled by the guardians?—That is so.

(Mr. Robb.) What table are you taking?

(Mr. Grant.) The first table, on the front of the Memorandum. (To witness.) Now you think it would have been the fairer way instead of taking the cost. And, then again, what is called the mean number of indoor paupers is simply the number of paupers on the 1st January and 1st July added together and divided by two?—Our point is, instead of taking the severe period, you should begin the year 1895 in February. We really ought to have the figures for February and March.

(The Inspector.) In 1894 you had 2,541 out-door paupers, and in 1895 you had 2,080?—Yes.

Q. Almost the only time where you show a drop?—Yes.

(Mr. Grant.) That, you remember, was an open winter. The frost had not begun. I agree the criticism Mr. Lansbury makes is against us, because you had got in 1895 a balance in favour of the argument he gives. The cost does not come in; the number of paupers does not come into the period, while the cost does?—Of course I have been all the time—all through the Inquiry it is the number of paupers I have had in my mind. It is the point we have got to keep steadily in front of us.

Q. These tables look as if they have been taken for 10 years. The first one, I take it, is for 11 years?—One table is 11 years.

Q. And the next one I think is 12?—Yes, that is so.

Q. I mean at first glance they look as if they are 10-year periods?—No, they are 11 and 12.

Q. And I am told in one of the years there happened to be 53 weeks in the year, which is not accounted for?—I see; well, that I do not know.

Q. Now I want to make the point clear about the comparison of percentage which applies to both these tables. You see, Mr. Lansbury, it is stated the number of indoor paupers shows between 1895 and 1906, an increase of 36 per cent.?—Yes.

Q. Well the cost shows an increase of 86 per cent.?—Yes.

Q. Is that what may be called putting a ratio upon a ratio. There is first of all an increase of paupers which necessarily would bring about an increase in cost?—Yes.

Q. And then there is also the increase in the cost itself?—I should prefer to say on all that, that, as the Inspector well knows, the cost has gone up enormously everywhere.

Q. Everywhere?—And our cost, apparently, for two or three years, went up more than other people's. But there, again, there seems to me from the Auditor's report reasons for it. The Inspector has this, but I would like to just point out the figures. Mr. Davy would remember. Take the lunatics in 1890. They cost for maintenance, all over the country, £419,565, and you

Mr.
Lansbury.
26 July.

Mr.
Lansbury,
26 July

had a total of 17,344. In 1905 you were spending £2,335,474 on lunatics alone, and you had an increase to 83,816. Those figures show an increase on numbers of 383 per cent., and an increase in cost of 456 per cent.

Q. But, Mr. Lansbury, what I am putting to you is that statistically that is an incorrect and unfair way of making a comparison?—Well, I may leave that to somebody else. I mean, I think it ought to be put that that increase is for the whole of the institutions, the whole of the inmates; but, personally, I am not concerned to anyone about that after the Auditor's report and his return on the matter.

Q. The one put in this morning?—The one put in this morning.

Q. But that criticism applies equally to the in-door pauperism and the out-door pauperism?—Yes, both, while the out-door pauperism, I think, balances itself pretty well.

Q. Now I want to come next to the comparison in the series of charts F, of Poplar with Bethnal Green, Stepney, Whitechapel. Do you contend that that comparison is an unfair one?—Take Whitechapel for a start.

Q. Let me just get the reason why you say it. Is the reason this; in the period which is dealt with in this Memorandum there had been a very large increase in Jews in the other unions, and that has had the effect of relieving ours to a considerable extent?—Yes, I should say that is admitted.

Q. Oh, it is admitted. We have had it admitted. But I mean that is the reason why the comparison in the Memorandum is an unfair comparison?—I do not think Mr. Davy, with great respect, can compare Poplar with Stepney, or Whitechapel, or St. George's-in-the-East.

Q. Or Bethnal Green?—Or Bethnal Green—No.

(The Inspector.) This shows the increases and decreases?—Yes, I agree. Only when you are comparing things you must, to some extent, see that they are comparable. The conditions of Poplar cannot be compared with Whitechapel for this reason—the total population of Whitechapel is 78,768, the Jewish population is 29,188; that leaves a total of 49,580—these figures are supplied by the clerk to the Whitechapel guardians. The number of paupers, &c., on the same day was 2,176. That gives a percentage of pauperism in Whitechapel of 4 per cent., 2 per cent. higher than when you include the Jewish population. I mean you have just got a table there of the percentage of pauperism. I say in comparing us that is the proper method—if you take St. George's-in-the-East these are supplied and they are very startling.

(Mr. Robb.) You mean just the reverse?—Oh, yes. I mean it is 2 per cent. lower.

(Mr. Grant.) The figure here which is given?—Just take St. George's, will you.

Q. Very good?—The curious thing there is you have a 4 per cent. pauperism and a Jewish population, while our pauperism in 1904 was 4.4, and I shall contend that is a better year to take to judge us fairly than the year we have just been going through.

(The Inspector.) What is the population of St. George's?—The Jew population, 13,746, from a total of 48,851.

(Mr. Grant.) Has the same thing happened at Bethnal Green?—Yes, but you cannot get at present the figures to cover Bethnal Green. I think all of us will agree that taking the southern half of the Bethnal Green Road, it is literally filled up with Jews, aliens, and foreigners.

(The Inspector.) Have you got something of the same sort?—We have not had yet. I disagree with Mr. McCullum that when the "children of Israel" come here in large numbers there won't be any need for municipal alliance, for rates will be quite steady, and all the rest of it; but Bethnal Green on one whole side has been filled right up.

(Mr. Grant.) Whatever other objection there might be to the aliens coming to the East End, Mr. Lansbury, as far as they are Jews, and they are mainly Jews, they do not come upon the rates?—No, I am no anti-alien, and, there again, I am a free-trader everybody knows.

Q. But, Mr. Lansbury, your contention is that this increase of aliens since—?—Since 1875.

Q. Since 1885, within the period covered by these tables, throws out the comparison of these unions with Poplar?—All the experts agree upon that, and I am hoping the Inspector will agree to that. You must compare with something comparable.

(The Inspector.) Of course, they vary?—Yes, that I am willing to admit and stand by, but if Whitechapel pauperism, with their strict administration, is 4 per cent. in a given year and ours is 4.4, there is not much in it, you know, even from that point of view of administration.

(Mr. Grant.) Now on the charts again. We have had put in this morning a return from the Auditor which accounts for a very large part of our cost, but if you look at table C, page 15, and take 1901, you see there that the cost per head is £16.38?—When?

Q. The bottom of page 15, table C, in the Memorandum?—1901?

Q. In the first column the cost per head is £16.38?—Yes.

Q. In 1902 you see the cost per head is £18.23?—Yes.

Q. That is a jump of nearly £2 per head. But was it in October, 1901, that you adopted your new dietary which was more expensive?—That is so.

Q. And do these figures show exactly the jump that you would have expected to follow the adoption of the new dietary?—Not that I would have expected. I am bound to say none of us, as far as I know, discussed very much the new dietary. I mean there was the new dietary. We have agreed that it should come into force so as to put ourselves on a level with all the other districts, and I do not think the cost of it was discussed at all.

Q. No, but I mean you know the new dietary did increase your cost?—I know since I have seen the Auditor's reports.

Q. And you find that is shown by a jump of nearly £2 per head. Will you look at the columns as I am reading down. 1897, £14.43; 1898, £15.26; 1899, £15.77; 1900, £16.01; 1901, £16.38; 1902, £18.23—it is the biggest jump on that page—1903, £18.11; 1904, £17.36; 1905, £18.73. So, except for the dietary, you have not had such a considerable variation in the subsequent years?—No; and, of course, the last two years you have got to put Laidon and the new receiving house in too.

Q. Yes, but you see I am not dealing with quantities, only cost per head, and, therefore, this explains much. Now I think that is all I wanted to ask you. I do not know whether there is anything you want to add. You have a number of tables there. I don't know whether I have asked you on all of them. Just look through your papers?—That is all.

(The Inspector.) Have you anything to ask, Mr. Robb?

(Mr. Robb.) Yes. Mr. Lansbury, it is a fact, taking the other side of the case, that there has been a remarkable decrease in Poplar this year?—Yes.

Q. I think the decrease in the Poplar pauperism is about 40 per cent. since the beginning of the year, and in the rest of East London about 6 per cent., approximately?—Yes.

Q. Do you think improvement in trade accounts for it?—I think it accounts for a good part of it.

Q. Somebody told us the improvement in trade was not more than 5 per cent.?—I have no knowledge of that. One thing you should remember in dealing with these figures, you get quite a disproportionate number of women and children in our figures, because of these able-bodied men who have now gone off. It brings the percentage down tremendously.

Q. Did it occur each year?—No, it does not—because it is only in these two years we have been having a large number of able-bodied men having relief.

Q. And, of course, for the purposes of comparison it should also occur to the other unions?—Our contention, and I hope we have proved it, is that other unions do not have difficulties to the same extent we have.

Q. Now you spoke about the wages paid by the dock company?—Yes.

Q. You do not suggest the whole of these wages were paid to Poplar men?—Oh, no, but a proportion of them.

(Mr. Grant.) So it is not the whole of the wages for the docks?—The East and West India Docks.

Mr.
Lansbury
26 July.

Q. The whole in your borough?—Yes.

Q. Not the whole of the docks?—The whole of the East and West India Docks.

Q. And are the whole within the borough?—Yes.

(Mr. Robb.) You were only speaking of the portion of the docks in the borough?—The East and West India Docks.

Q. Of, course, you do not include the Albert Docks?—Oh, no.

Q. And, of course, a very large number of Poplar men go out to work in the Albert Docks?—Yes; but I don't think it is really worth our while to argue, because Mr. Brodbank most definitely stated that he looked upon it as wages in the main lost to Poplar, and I agree.

Q. But the point is this—the men who earn it don't all live in Poplar?—We cannot swear they do not live in Poplar.

Q. But, Mr. Lansbury, hundreds of them come every morning over the bridge from Canning Town?—And some of ours go there.

Q. Therefore, the value of these figures is rather remote?—Well, there is £30,000. There is a good margin to let go over the bridge.

Q. And then there is the gun factory. You do not suggest these 700 men are exclusively employed in Poplar?—A good proportion of them are.

Q. But living in Poplar?—Yes, a great proportion of them live in Bow.

Q. This gun factory is right on the edge of the union boundary?—It is where I live. I am living within two or three or four doors of it.

Q. Near Victoria Park?—You see it is Victoria Park in between us and Hackney board.

Q. I mean, a number of these men come from other districts?—Some of them. I do not want to labour it.

Q. Do I understand, in speaking of the distress, you said 1,504 men you helped, and 1,706 who were not helped?—Yes.

Q. What became of that 1,706?—Part of them came here.

Q. How many?—Well, I should think the total number relieved is anything from 700 to 800.

Q. What became of the residue?—Some of them came and got tickets for the Church Army, the Salvation Army helped some, Mr. Crooks and his wife, I believe, helped some with the help of others. It is wonderful how people get through. I don't know how they do it.

Q. That is what I was wondering. How do they get through?—They may have had more resources.

Q. What I am putting to you is this. It is curious. Here are a certain number of men applying, 1,504 are relieved by the distress committee, 700 or 800 by the guardians, leaving another 800 or 900 out of 1,706, who did not starve, who found some sort of resources?—Some men got relief each week on the one hand or the other, I do not suggest.

Q. That would cut both ways?—I do not suggest some of these men did not get casual work.

Q. No doubt you did the best you could, but I think you will agree, the system is very unsatisfactory?—I have said so this morning. I do not agree with it.

Q. And open to a good deal of abuse?—It is, yes; but I am bound to say I think we did our best in very difficult circumstances.

Q. Yes, of course. Have you arrived at the same conclusion Mr. Crooks did in June, 1905, that the policy was fatal?—I arrived at the conclusion in 1897 that any outdoor relief to able-bodied men is disastrous, and ought not to be adopted until the very last resort, and I believe our guardians had got to the very last pinch when we went down stairs to this meeting in November, 1904. That is my definite opinion, I can assure you. I no more like to give people something for nothing than you or anybody else. And mind you, I believe the bulk of the men did not like it. I never met any of them who liked to come up here and be made paupers.

Q. This figure of 28 per cent. amongst the applicants to the distress centre, were they all residents of Poplar?—The 28 per cent? No, they were not applicants to

the distress centre; that was a census taken right throughout the borough.

Q. In every house in a particular district?—In every house.

Q. In all roads?—In every road and street throughout the borough.

Q. And then, Mr. Lansbury, I just want to ask you a question I omitted to ask Mr. Crooks, about the tasks at the workhouse. Do you hold with Mr. Crooks that stone-breaking and so forth is degrading?—Yes.

Q. In what does the particular degradation of stone-breaking consist?—I think any useless work is degrading.

Q. But is not stone-breaking necessary?—Yes, but they do it very much better by machinery.

Q. You mean it is relatively useless?—I mean when you have done it you have got nothing. It is a matter I did not want to refer to, but I once had to do stone-breaking. I was an emigrant, you know, once, and although I had some money, and was a teetotaler and a sort of person supposed to have a character, I got no work for about ten weeks in Queensland, and the first job I got was breaking blue metal. I am pretty strong now and was very strong then, and did not know my strength, but it broke my heart. I shall never forget it, and on the first day I earned one whole shilling. That was enough to kill me.

Q. I do not want to flatter you, but, of course, the ordinary man sent to the workhouse is not the same type of man as yourself?—He is at the start. You and I must not argue that.

Q. What might break your heart might not break the heart of the casual?—As Mr. Crooks says, a chap who gets used to it does it on his head, and it is not a task; but the unhappy man who gets in the position I was and is driven to it—

Q. What is to prevent you increasing the task of a man who does it?—The Local Government Board steps in there, I believe.

Q. What is to prevent them increasing it?—I think then the magistrate would step in. The magistrate, you know, very often when we want convictions does not give us them.

Q. You do not suggest these domestic tasks, as detailed in Mr. Walsh's report, are sufficient to keep the able-bodied men in the house employed?—Employed in a way, but I agree with Mr. Walsh they ought to have something better to do, and, as I said this morning, I hope we will get them out of that workhouse and make it a house for the aged and infirm.

Q. You agree it is undesirable that a number of able-bodied men should be loafing about cleaning up, but you say it has arisen from circumstances you could not control?—That is so.

Q. Do you think it was a wise thing in view of your very heavy expenses to suggest that additional relief office at North Bow, at an expense, I think, of £6,300. I know it was dropped, but do you think it was a wise suggestion?—That came up to the board and was really quashed straight off, but I believe the men who proposed it had given some weeks to the consideration of the question, and they brought up what they thought was a fair proposal, but most of us did not agree with it and simply chucked it out. It only came to the board to be thrown out.

Q. You are the chairman of the schools. I must ask you one or two questions about Shenfield. I will be very brief?

(Mr. Grant.) What has been the total cost so far of the Shenfield schools?—Now, look here, Mr. Robb, it will save time. I will read this quite quickly. This is my position with regard to the school. We are not going to put it in.

(Mr. Robb.) Would you give it to us shortly and then put it in?—Yes. What I say is this: Our original plan was made out on a basis of 800 children, but the Local Government Board would not consent to so large an establishment being under the control of one head, and they first of all proposed that we should have three establishments at Shenfield. This we would not do, and talked Mr. Long over, and then he said you must only have 600, and they must be two 300 units. We said, 'all right,' and came away, and made a mental resolution that we would build our elementary school and

Mr.
Lansbury.
—
26 July.
—

all the rest of it, to accommodate 800. When we move to Shenfield we have got to take 750 children with us; and, therefore, to work out the cost per head on the basis of 600 is quite a fallacy. If we go there we are bound to take these 750 children, and it is what I just want to point out to you. Therefore, to calculate properly the cost per head of the children who will be accommodated at Shenfield, the number instead of being taken as 600 should be taken in this way. If we deduct the cost of the school house at Hutton from the cost of the buildings now being erected we have £140,151. To bring our accommodation up to 800 we should have to erect two boys' houses at a total cost of £10,000. Then there is the girls' house at £15,200. Thus for the accommodation of 840 children the cost works out to £165,411—

Q. That is deducting the school house?—Certainly. I am going to compare these figures with some others to show we have been as economical as any other union—or a cost per head of £197. But if you object to that basis take it on your own basis—leaving out the extra accommodation. On the basis of 600 children, it works out to £233 per head less the school; Woolwich comes out to £241 per head, and Greenwich to £251 per head. I am going to hand that document to you, Mr. Davy. You may like to go into it.

Q. Mr. Lansbury, so on your basis it is about £233 per head?—Not on my basis; on your own basis.

Q. What do you put it on your basis?—I would not like to say.

Q. Our basis is £233 without the school; but if you take the school, and estimate it on that basis, it is about £300, I think?—Yes, the school will accommodate 900 children, and I do not think it is fair to take it out in that sort of way.

Q. But if it is only £197 per head per child, is not that an enormous average?—I am afraid it is; but when guardians and other public bodies start building, the ways of contractors and architects and people who have anything to do with it are past finding out. We always have to pay very much more. I have a very instructive table here, which Mr. Davy would recognise, about workhouses and infirmaries—a frightful cost per head.

Q. Your point is, although you may be bad, other unions are worse?—Exactly; you may put it that way if you like.

Q. I mean on your own figures, it is £197 capital cost per head?—Yes.

Q. Whereas an ordinary family of five or six people, in Poplar, a working-class family is living in a house of no greater capital cost than £100?—Oh, no; you are wrong there, Mr. Robb. I should say £200, £250, or £300. I do not think I can argue that.

Q. Well?—And I want to point out we have to supply light, stores, and everything else.

Q. I want to ask one or two questions about Laidon. Although this was admittedly only an experiment, you went into an expenditure on certain expensive things, the railway siding?—We negotiated about it.

Q. Was that consistent with it being only an experiment?—What I hoped, and am even hoping now, is that London will be made into one union. I am still dreaming of it, that London will be one union for dealing with all pauperism; and I thought Laidon would make a nice little place—and still think it would—for what are called the unemployable, the people we talked about this morning who won't work. They are not a big lot, and we could have dealt with them there in a different sort of way. It was an experiment as far as we were concerned, but I think sooner or later we are going to be driven to do these sort of things.

Q. Would you agree it is not wise to make these experiments too costly?—We have not, I think. You would not have dealt with that same number of men anywhere so cheap as at Laidon.

Q. As you have been so very fair, I think you will admit that motor wagon was not a success?—I will admit this. My faith in motor wagons was severely shaken since I had to do with that one, but we did not buy that specially for Laidon. It was not suitable for those side roads, although they had practically a guarantee it was the proper thing.

Q. How was it that was sent down without any application or recommendation by Mr. Clarke, the responsible manager?—I heard Mr. Clarke's evidence and do

not want to be hard on him, but we really did go into it with him and Mr. Goodchild. He really had forgotten. These officers really lost themselves when you got them. Clarke really did know; we had two or three meetings over it. There are estimates, I fancy, on record.

Q. You remember what he said: I will not go through it?—He said it was not, but he made a mistake.

Q. Do you think it was necessary to send these men up to join the unemployed processions and pay their fares?—We only paid the fares of six.

Q. I know, but as a matter of principle do you think it desirable?—These unemployed certainly thought it was.

Q. I mean, if they were unemployed, they were provided for?—Yes, I know they were provided for in a way distasteful to them and to us.

Q. Is it your view that they were unemployed at Laidon?—No, certainly not; but there is no disguising the fact that they carried a banner which said: "Unemployed, Laidon Colony."

Q. How do you account for Mr. Clarke's statement: "As long as the workhouse gates are open the men prefer 'that to Laidon'?"—Because the man that will prefer the workhouse is a slacker or waster—the man who does not want to work at all, the man who has no pluck in him at all.

Q. But I think Mr. Clarke's evidence went to show that most of them prefer the workhouse?—Yes, the pauper inmates, and I think that is a justification for Laidon.

Q. Do you think it is the absence of tasks or work at the workhouse that leads them to prefer that to Laidon, where there is a certain amount of work to do?—As I said just now, I remember the early days when they had tasks there, and I am bound to say my experience of the able-bodied men and the tasks, leads me to the conclusion that it was no task to them at all.

Q. And then, I think, you will agree, Mr. Lansbury, the pocket-money was a mistake?—Ought you to ask me that, considering I was responsible for paying it.

Q. Oh, I think so. You have been so very frank that I am sure you will deal with that in the same spirit?—Look here, I do not mind conceding this to you.

Q. Did it ever occur to you what these men would do with that money. What do you think they would do with it?—I had various hopes about it. I certainly hoped it would be a shilling or two when they came to London to have bought the youngsters something. I was a bit disappointed with some of them, but with the bulk of them I was not.

Q. You know instead of bringing it home, the wives had to send money down?—I only know of one case where that was done under coercion; but I think my friend, as a matter of fact, would find the money again, so I do not think he is convinced it ought not to have been done.

Q. It is rather like, in a way, bribing the men to go there?—Yes, well, as a matter of fact that was not in my mind at all. What was in my mind was that I wanted to encourage them, and I think what I ought to have done is to put the money away and give it to them at the end of the period.

Q. And I think, Mr. Lansbury, you also agree the original diet, with meat, counting German sausage as meat, three times was a little too extravagant?—Not after the Chicago revelations as to tinned meat.

Q. That was before the Chicago revelations?—I know, only I say in the light of the Chicago revelations, I quite agree, because we altered it.

(The Inspector.) Now, in the first place I want to clear up two things. When you heard Mrs. Carey make that statement to Mr. Arthur Balfour, had you any reason whatever to believe it was not true?—No, not at all.

Q. You are not acquainted with her?—When she was brought over to me with a pair of man's boots on, on Saturday night, she had every appearance of destitution.

Q. What have you to say about Mr. Madeley's pension?—I told him he could not have a pension, so far as I was concerned.

Q. When did the knowledge of his misdoings first come to you?—Last October.

Mr.
Lansbury.
26 July

Q. And you took some steps?—Mr. Madeley came over to me, and after he had gone I wrote him a very long letter, in which I tried to point out to him what I considered was the moral suicide he was committing. He saw me the next morning, and, I believe, the same day Mr. Crooks saw him, and I think within three days we had sufficient documentary evidence that the woman had gone out of England.

Q. I see you were much influenced by sympathy with Mrs. Madeley?—What I had in my mind was the absolute ruin of the two people. You know the position. I want to say too, Mrs. Madeley implored both me and, I believe, Mr. Crooks, to try all we could to get Madeley to throw this woman up, and, apparently, he did.

Q. I suppose now you would agree it would have been better to report the circumstances to the Board at the time and not send in this medical certificate?—The first proposal was to report it to the board, as far as we were concerned, but in the interval Madeley got the certificate and I agreed to him giving it to the board, because I had the opinion he would not get a pension.

Q. Now, with regard to another matter, and that is the gratuity voted to him. Do you agree with Mr. Crooks that it would be earned; it was for work done?—Yes, as far as I know, it was for work done.

Q. Mr. Crooks voted against it?—Yes. I do not know whether I voted for it.

Q. Now, I want to ask you a few general questions, taking you over much the same ground as I took Mr. Crooks. Now, the guardians here have a settled policy in favour of out-relief, and they have been elected on that principle for a good many years?—Yes, and I believe if Mr. Robb's friends were to stand they would have to stand for tackling out-relief just the same as us.

Q. And if elected Mr. Crooks said they would have to toe the line?—Quite so.

Q. You and Mr. Crooks and your party have been practically masters of the policy of the Poplar board for some years, have you not; certainly, from the year 1892?—We have not, numerically. The other people have been stronger than us any time.

(Mr. Grant.) Except in argument?—I mean stronger numerically than we all the time. There are only ten of us.

(The Inspector.) Anyway, Mr. Crooks and yourself practically directed the policy. Never mind how you did it?—We overawed the other persons by our sweet reasonableness.

Q. I put it to you that, generally, up to the year 1891 the pauperism of Poplar was lower than the pauperism of London?—Yes.

Q. Since that time the ratio of pauperism in Poplar has continually got larger than that in London. For instance, in 1891, just about the time you took over?—

(Mr. Grant.) They took charge in March, 1893.

(The Inspector.) 1892, I think?

(Mr. Grant.) No, 1893.

(The Inspector.) Well, we will take the year at that time. It was 24 both in London and Poplar. The next year was 24 in Poplar and 23 in London. The next year it was 27 in Poplar, 24 in London, and so it goes from year to year, until at last, in 1904, it was 46 in Poplar and 26 in London. I leave out the exceptional years of 1894 and 1895. Now, is that a satisfactory result of your policy, do you think, or is it entirely due to your policy?—I think it is partly policy and partly circumstances. During all that period the centre of London has been cleared. I mean no one goes about London, and there were enormous clearances in Whitechapel and Bethnal Green.

Q. You have got poorer?—That is so. Then as to the point of the policy. Our policy has been absolutely adequate relief for the aged people to be kept outside the workhouse, and naturally more people would come for relief. We are bound to stand for that part of the increase.

Q. And I suppose your policy has been to treat the inmates very well?—I do not think very well.

Q. One is rather struck, Mr. Lansbury, on reading your specification that "best" is a word that occurs very often?—Then again what can you put in? You cannot advertise for the middling or the worst. You must advertise for the best.

Q. Well, now come to the practical question, what about the future: Do you think this process of increase in pauperism will go on indefinitely?—No, I think the present Government will give us old age pensions.

Q. But quite apart from that, which might not happen?—Well, then, I think certainly in a district like Poplar pauperism is bound to grow. I do not think there is any doubt about it unless you could leave a portion of the population out.

Q. I think you yourself, judging by some of your speeches, would agree that the guardians have anticipated the policy of old age pensions to some extent in this union?—Yes.

Q. What sort of grant would you give a respectable and decent old woman or old man?—Under present circumstances, do you mean?

Q. Yes?—The persons who come for relief must have their rent covered, and then it is according to their age whether they get 3s. 6d., 4s. 6d., or 5s.

Q. But they must have sufficient money to cover their rent?—Yes.

Q. Well, now, Poplar is getting poorer, and we have been told that dock labour is getting less—very interesting evidence we have had as to that—do you think there is any permanent remedy for it in the way of migration or emigration?—You see, if we discuss permanent remedies, you and I would be landed in a discussion on Socialism, because I think that is the real permanent remedy. The temporary remedy is to get a big proportion of the, not first class but second or third class, able-bodied men in this district out of it. If you carry out your policy—I mean if the Department was able to reorganise labour at the docks—

Q. Supposing we could do that?—You have got left on your hands a large mass of people less capable, because the dock company will want the most capable under their improved system, so you will have on your hands an increased number of men for whom we have got no room at all, and who I therefore want to be got out.

Q. Now, in the present condition of industry at the docks, casual labour must more or less depend upon out-relief?—That is my point of view. I am not sure whether it is the view of all my colleagues. I strongly hold that we are subsidising casual labour wherever it is, whether one form or another, not specifically at the docks.

Q. I have in my hand a newspaper report of a lecture you delivered at the *Daily News* Sweated Industries Exhibition. In it this sentence occurs:—"I have numbers of men and women, the majority of whom do not earn more than 5s. or 6s. per week. In the case of illness, or if a slight accident happens, what is to become of them? When people are casually employed they are naturally compelled to supplement their wages out of the rates." Would not that seem to imply the rates were a condition to the existence of that system?—It is an open question. My own view is the system produces the rates. I strongly hold that it is the system which produces the out-relief.

Q. Then you are obliged to give out-relief, because people are in casual work?—Especially when it comes to medical relief.

Q. Having got the relief you give them, they go on the labour market to be drawn on as casual labourers?—That is so. The theory is if you do not give it to them at all they would go out of here somewhere else, but to get out of here to somewhere else is a very difficult matter to deal with.

Q. Do not you think that system tends to lower wages?—The giving of relief? Yes, it tends to keep wages down.

Q. I suppose it cannot be said all casual home labour is bad. A woman might have time in which she might earn a shilling or two?—Personally, I would abolish home-work.

Q. Altogether?—Yes.

Q. I know there are different opinions about that, and you are for abolition?—I am for abolition pure and simple.

Q. Do you think it is possible to abolish it if you continue to give out-relief?—If we continue to give out-relief, I do not see why it should not be.

Q. I put to one of the witnesses this possibility, that, although the large employers who employ casual labour,

Mr.
Lansbury.
26 July.

suffer on account of the high rates, yet they get something back from the cheap labour market?—I think they do, especially down here. Our labour is very cheap.

Q. Now, for instance, you would have many cases of women who have very low wages indeed, and who will tell you they do not know on one day what they are going to get the next?—That is so. I am going to hand you a list—because it is too much to read, and is only bearing out what you want to know—of some investigations I have made. I am not putting it on the notes because there are names, and so on here.

Q. You are giving it to me privately?—That is so.

(The Inspector.) I am very much obliged to you, because I am interested.

(Mr. Grant.) You have got a summary. You may as well have two.

(The Inspector.) It is only for my personal convenience. Now, do you share Mr. Crooks' views as to the increase of the rates, and as to what Mr. Balfour says about curtailment of autonomy?—What I really want is for the county council to have a fresh member added to it, and the Poor Law managed by a committee of the county council or a new *ad hoc* Poor Law authority to take over the Metropolitan Asylums Board and the whole of the Poor Law work; and then I think that this central board must determine principles, and that the local people who are administering to-day by committees should have official assessors to see they do it properly. That is my proposal. I do not at all think you could have any more money from the richest parishes without more control.

Q. And your voting conditions in this union are rather exceptional?—I do not think so.

Q. I mean, I put this to you—?

(Mr. Grant.) Mr. Lansbury, have you a very large number of compounders?—Oh, yes, we have.

(The Inspector.) You have got in the union, out of the total number of voters, 80 per cent. compounding. That is from the London County Council statistics?—Yes.

Q. You have seen this classification. It appears that the rateable value of docks, railway companies, and other public companies, Government property, municipal offices and factories, amounts to about £410,000—that is to say, half the total rateable value?—Yes.

Q. None of these have any votes at all?—My answer to that is no, except managers and foremen, and the like.

Q. There are three docks in Poplar?—Yes, and there are a lot of factories. What Poplar is suffering from is absentee landlordism. I mean just like in Ireland, if these people live here they create a public opinion, a civic spirit and all the rest of it. One man could do no end of good if he will live here.

Q. There is a figure in this table which is rather remarkable. The rateable value of the houses rated under £20 is £260,000?—Yes.

Q. That added to the £410,000 makes £670,000 rateable value in respect of those either not voting or not paying rates directly?—Yes, that is it.

Q. And then the balance consists of licensed houses, £46,000, and houses rated over £20, £105,000, the residents in which both vote and pay their own rates?—Yes.

Q. That is a condition of things which is, I imagine, hardly paralleled in London?—I do not know.

Q. Might we not say that that condition of things puts a special obligation on the guardians to exercise economy as trustees?—Yes, I agree. I think we do want economy. My complaint is, people come here and manage businesses, make a good deal of money out of the place, and then clear off and spend it somewhere

else. That is bad—I am speaking in the ordinary sense—bad for the workpeople, bad for the social life of the district, bad altogether.

Q. In municipal affairs it puts a great burden on a few men who have time or brains to run the show?—That is so; it is quite unfair, I think, in Poplar.

Q. Do you think that if any of these magnates, as Mr. Martley called them, were to stand an election here, they would have a dog's chance of getting elected?—I think so, especially if they came and lived here.

Q. You think they would?—I think so.

Q. Not as non-residents?—Personally, I do not think they should run as non-residents. If it is good enough for them to make money out of the place they ought to live here.

(Mr. Robb.) On that principle, a shipowner ought never to go to sea?—He might go occasionally.

(The Inspector.) Do you suppose any large proportion of the people who get able-bodied relief are on the voters' list?—No.

Q. You think they should be, anyway?—Yes; I am against disfranchisement.

Q. Do you think, as a matter of fact, any considerable proportion are on the list?—I cannot say they are, but I quite agree with what you are going to say about that.

Q. I only want to get the facts. Do you think agricultural labour alone is sufficient in a labour colony?—No.

Q. You think it might be supplemented by some other industry or occupation which would keep the man in that part?—Yes.

Q. But that has not, I think, been sufficiently recognised by some of the folk who advocate these colonies?—No, because I judge that they have got the idea into their heads you can always get on on the land.

Q. A practical farmer would have seen the mistake at once?—Yes.

Q. Now, as I understand, what you propose is a place for workhouse inmates alone?—Yes, not exactly. Personally, I did mention that my experience at Laidon convinced me that is so. There is just one thing—my lad, who is watching his father, thinks I have not made myself clear about the meat three times a day. What I really meant was—Mr. Robb, it was in answer to you—the committee really did intend to knock that meat off, the German meat, as soon as we could use the vegetables growing there. That is really what happened. And then I am asked to hand in this table in reference to stores, &c.

Q. I want to ask a few questions about the motor wagon. Whether you were right or wrong, you had the approval of the Local Government Board for it?—Yes, the motor wagon was one of my pet things. I do not want either my colleagues or the Local Government Board to be blamed too much for it.

Q. We don't want to blame anybody?—I do not think anybody should be blamed; we did our best.

Q. It was put to you by Mr. Robb as to able-bodied men in the prime of life; have you any large number of able-bodied men in the prime of life?—No. "Able-bodied men" means—

Q. It simply means men under 60?—Yes; he may be blind, or partially blind, paralytic, and one thing or another.

Q. I think you said distinctly at the Charity Organisation Society Committee investigation that your board were dead against giving out-door relief to able-bodied men?—Yes, I did.

Q. And that was before you were forced by circumstances to do so?—That is so.

(Mr. Grant.) Before you rise, sir, I should like to raise one point which I think I am justified in putting. This has been an Inquiry before you, but it has also been a trial by newspaper. In an issue of the *Daily Mirror* there appeared a cartoon in which Mr. Crooks was represented sitting at the head of a table attended by footmen in livery. The table was loaded with luxuries, and Mr. Crooks was smoking a cigar, and saying, "Gentlemen, take whatever you like; the rate-payers have to pay for it." Some time afterwards a cartoon appeared in *Punch*—the *Daily Mirror* one does

not mind very much—but *Punch* is a journal of reputation and position, and goes all over the world—and in *Punch* there was a similar cartoon representing the guardians entertaining themselves at the expense of the ratepayers, I want to ask you—

(Mr. Robb.) That is not so with regard to *Punch*.

(Mr. Grant.) I want to ask you, with regard to those cartoons, whether anything has come out in the course of evidence which justifies—

(Mr. Robb.) I object, sir, before you issue your report, to your giving any opinion.

(Mr. Grant.) My point is this, that nobody has charged—not even Mr. Robb, in his most excited moments, has ever charged—Mr. Crooks with drinking champagne or smoking cigars at the expense of the ratepayers.

(Mr. Robb.) I never imputed anything against the honesty of Mr. Crooks or Mr. Lansbury. If I had not been perfectly satisfied before the Inquiry that their motives, however much I consider them mistaken, were perfectly good, I should have been by reason of what I have heard and seen at this Inquiry. And I do say I never made, and never intended to make, any imputation on the honesty or goodness of purpose of either Mr. Crooks or Mr. Lansbury.

(Mr. Grant.) I may point out that, apart from this public repudiation, Mr. Crooks' only other remedy is an action for libel, and for a man to undertake that who has public work to do, and has his time already sufficiently filled—I think I am fairly entitled to ask you (we have had trial by newspaper all through) whether you have heard anything in the proceedings which justifies such reflections on either of the two guardians.

(The Inspector.) Perhaps I am not a good judge of newspapers. Except the *Times* and the *Sportsman*, I seldom read one. I should think that the wiser course was to take absolutely no notice of a cartoon, which, I suppose, was meant to be funny, but could not possibly throw an imputation on Mr. Crooks—

(Mr. Crooks.) I do know that the original cartoon is being enlarged—this size to be put all over the borough at a given moment.

(Mr. Grant.) I think, whatever you may consider your judgment in this case, and whatever your desire is to sum up the whole of the proceedings, which, of course, is your business and not ours now—but we do think, at the conclusion of an Inquiry like this a public statement might go forth. You may say we should put up with it. If, on the other hand, you think our action is perfectly *bonâ fide*, I think the public are entitled to know, after you have sat here all this time and heard every word, what your opinion is so far as our conduct is concerned.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Grant asks me to make a statement in reference to two specific—

(Mr. Grant.) I do not ask you to go further than to say that you have not heard anything to show that Mr. Crooks or Mr. Lansbury indulged in revels of this character in the workhouse or elsewhere.

(Mr. Robb.) And I hope the Inspector will do me the justice to say I never suggested it.

(The Inspector.) Mr. Robb never suggested it, and repudiated anything of the kind.

(Mr. Robb.) With regard to Mr. Crooks's apprehension about the poster, we know nothing about it, and there is nothing we should repudiate more strongly than any attempt of the kind.

(The Inspector.) It is quite clear that the publication of such a poster would be highly reprehensible.

(Mr. Crooks.) I have seen the proprietors of the paper, and called their attention to it. I am not thin-skinned, but there are limits to human endurance—as Mr. Balfour said.

(Mr. Robb.) The things, I suppose, were meant as skits, but to attempt to publish them would be disgraceful.

(The Inspector.) (to Mr. Lansbury.) I am much obliged to you for the fairness with which you gave your evidence.

(Mr. Ford.) Before you rise, sir, I want to apologise to you if there was anything offensive in what I said to you on the last occasion.

(The Inspector.) Oh, no, we have forgotten all about that.

(Mr. Ford.) I did not intend to be offensive; but I want you to realise that there are 22 other members of the board independent of Mr. Crooks and Mr. Lansbury. I do not want you at this moment to whitewash anybody, but I ask you, out of respect for the other guardians, to let us have your report as soon as you possibly can.

(The Inspector.) It now only remains for me to thank you Mr. Grant and Mr. Robb for the assistance you have given me at this Inquiry, and to express appreciation of the very kindly and friendly help which I have received from Mr. Lough and his clerks. He has carried out to the full the promise of the guardians that I should receive every assistance in holding this Inquiry.

APPENDIX.

(Paper handed in by Mr. Martley.)

Minutes of Evidence given by Mr. Martley on 20 October, 1905, before a Special Committee of the Charity Organisation Society on Unskilled Labour.

Present—SIR E. W. BRABROOK, C.B. (in the Chair.)

MR. CECIL M. CHAPMAN,
MR. JOHN CURRIE,
MR. J. PARSONS,
MR. H. R. MAYNARD,

MR. D. M. WATSON,
MR. E. AVES,
MR. C. S. LOCH,
MR. W. H. BEVERIDGE, } Secretaries

Mr. W. G. MARTLEY: Examined.

1. (The Chairman.) You are Secretary of the Poplar Committee of the Charity Organisation Society, are you not?—Yes.

2. You are also a member of the committee which has been locally formed for carrying out the provisions of the new Act?—Yes.

3. You are, accordingly, well acquainted with the proportion of unskilled to skilled labour in that district?—Yes.

4. Perhaps you will kindly give evidence upon it?—Shall I read my statement?

5. I think that that would be convenient?—"The proportion of unskilled to skilled labour is high in Poplar. If we take the census groups VI. and XXII. ('conveyance' and 'undefined') as an index we obtain the following figures for the riverside boroughs:—

"In Lambeth 21,982 of the employed males out of 93,504, or 23 per cent., belong to these groups.

"Southwark ...	21,455	out of 68,202 = 31 per cent.
"Deptford ...	10,316	" 34,006 = 33 "
"Stepney ...	32,284	" 96,650 = 33 "
"Poplar ...	20,941	" 53,615 = 38 "
"Bermondsey ...	16,918	" 41,623 = 40 "

6. What do you infer from that?—I infer that the proportion of unskilled labour is high in Poplar.

7. Not quite so high as in Bermondsey, but higher than in other districts?—Yes.

8. Do you consider that the borough of Poplar is getting poorer as a whole?—"I do not consider that the borough as a whole is getting poorer, though certain parts of it may be. There are patches of poverty in Poplar—Sophia Street, Union Street, and Orchard Place; in Bromley—the Fenian barracks; in Bow—St. Paul's and part of Hackney Wick. There is a certain ebb and flow of population. The more highly paid men move into the new suburbs, but the wage-earning power of those who remain is increasing.

"The movement of the labourers to and from Poplar may be summarised thus:—

"Canning Town: Considerable. The very poor drift out.

"Homerton and Bethnal Green: Considerable. The very poor drift in.

"Mile End and Limehouse: A small inward drift of workless poor.

"The high wages paid by the borough council and the lavish relief given by the guardians should induce immigration, but I cannot find that they do to any marked extent. They do, however, undoubtedly check emigration. I do not believe that there is now any serious drift to the docks, but dock labourers move from dock to dock and compete where there is work. The crowd competing in Poplar is often partly made

"up of non-Poplar men. Of course, the Poplar men in turn compete elsewhere."

9. What is your opinion as to the condition of the market for dock labour, taking London generally?—"The market for dock labour has been decreasing in London (not in Poplar only) for years, and the men who look only to the docks for their living are a diminishing class. The market for factory labour is more difficult to estimate. The large shipbuilding yards of the past are gone, and all trades connected with shipping have dwindled down; but on the other hand, an immense number of factories of different kinds has arisen. The Isle of Dogs is a ring of factories, there are several important ones in Bromley; and in North Bow new ones are still springing up. On the whole, I believe that the market for casual labour has steadily improved and (allowing for bad years, &c.) is still improving. I may put it shortly by saying that, whereas in the past Poplar has been principally a port, it is now mainly an industrial town.

10. I think that it would be convenient if you will kindly go on with your statement without interruption?—"The casual labourer is of two kinds: (a) The man who is more in work than out; (b) the man who is more often out of work than in. The wives of both types earn, but it may be described as the special note of the second type that their wives always earn. The poorest work at home as matchbox makers, &c. Now, so far as my observation goes, the importance of the wife's earnings is decreasing, and men of the first type are tending to replace men of the second. I am quite sure that the unemployable class is decreasing. The figures of outdoor relief may be quoted against me, but I do not find them conclusive. The fact is, that in Poplar Poor Law relief has been extended to men who would not receive it elsewhere. It is given to men of the (a) type as well as to men of the (b) type. The great mass of the casual labourers are real workmen (of a poor and unskilled kind, no doubt), but their work is worth something. The casual labourer of to-day compares favourably with his predecessor of fifteen years ago. He has been to school, can mostly read and write, and one can reason with him. He is not a degraded man, although type (b) tends to become so. The degraded class is very small. As regards morality and drink, he compares favourably with the regular workmen. The chief employers of casual labour in the borough are: (1) The dock companies; (2) the railway companies; (3) the cartage contractors and wharfingers; (4) certain factories. The casual dock labourer usually has a B ticket, but too many of these are issued. At the best of times the B ticket man's chances are poor, and in bad times there is practically no work for him. These men tend to pass from type (a) to type (b). There is also much unfairness on the part of the foremen. Men without tickets get taken on sometimes. The

"larger railway companies all have depôts in Poplar, and all employ casual labourers—(a) on the bank and in the goods shed; (b) as carmen. On the whole the sections of casual labour remain distinct. There is a dock section, a railway section, &c. The tally clerks form a noticeable group. Here there still is a drift of men, who have failed in the city, often from faults of character. I exclude from this survey the builders' labourers and gas workers, because their work is rather seasonal than casual. The physique of the casual labourer is fair, though he is more often wiry than strong. The men who live in Bromley and work on and about Limehouse Cut are below the average. The builder's labourer and the gasworker are superior in type to the B men of the docks or the casual men of the railway and cartage depôts. The borough council staff of labourers is recruited from all these, and also contains a percentage of type (b) men. The casual labourers have little or no organisation. In the docks it is true that they form gangs and take small contracts. Where the men composing a gang are above the average they can generally get plenty of work. Gangs below the average fail to get work and in time break up. Over-time is a great evil in the docks. Men are encouraged and paid to work it. A system of shifts is much needed. Many accidents are due to overtime. Again, the foremen have too much power. Many of them are thoroughly bad, and insist on being treated by the men. Sometimes they accept bribes. But probably the foremen in the docks are no worse than others. There is no rigid line between the casual man and the regular man. Many once casual are now regular and many once regular are now casual. Probably as many go up as come down. The policy of the employers is to keep a portion of their work for casual men. In this way they have a reserve of labour to draw on in case difficulties arise with the regular staff. A firm (not in Poplar) thought of moving to the garden city, but decided not to on the ground that there they would be at the mercy of their men. In trade crises the unemployed regular man is sometimes worse off than the unemployed casual man. He is less used to competing for work, and regular work is harder to obtain than casual. In bad times the regular man may fail to get work altogether, but the casual will probably find a certain amount. Three years ago, as hon. secretary of the West Ward Distress Committee, I saw the poorest class in the ward. The ward immediately adjoins the West India Docks. The percentage of type (b) was much less than I expected to find it. In fact, I often found type (a) when I should have said beforehand I should only find type (b). That casual work is demoralising is a truism. I think what Mrs. Sydney Webb wrote in 1889 in 'Life and Labour' 1st series, vol. 1, pp. 198-9, second edition, is substantially true."

I have a table here of the people who were relieved by the guardians in Poplar during the first quarter of the present year. I do not know whether you would like to hear it. It shows their usual occupations. There were 3,351 applicants, and they have been tabulated as follows:—

Building trade	296
Tailoring, shoemaking, and clothing ...	205
Printing, bookbinding, and other paper trades	59
Furnishing and wood-working	125
Engineering, shipbuilding, and metal ...	280
Food, drink, and tobacco	93
Carmen	136
Seamen, watermen, lightermen, and stevedores	60
Match factory hands	81
Commercial occupations	19
Professional occupations	7
Domestic service	206
General or casual labour	1,676
Persons without known occupations ...	108

Of those 3,351 persons, 2,290 attributed their distress solely to want of work.

11. The proportion which would come within your definition of "casual labour" is not so very large, is it?—"Casual labour" is put down as 1,676 out of 3,351, but I do not rely on the figures.

12. (Mr. H. R. Maynard.) In drawing deductions from those out-of-work figures, such, for instance, as you draw here when you say that the poor law relief has been extended to men who would not receive it elsewhere, do you think that it is necessary to make allowance for the fact that the borough council have

adopted a different system of employment?—You mean allowance for the fact that they have given up employing men casually on the roads, and that sort of thing?

13. Yes?—The fact that the circumstances were exceptional last winter may have had something to do with the policy of the guardians.

14. Would you consider it true to say that you ought to add the two together in comparing this year with another year or that district with another district?—I think that it is very difficult to compare one year with another, because the arrangements are so different year by year. I cannot speak for other districts.

15. In these "patches of poverty" of which you speak, is the poverty increasing?—I should say that it may be in the Hackney Wick patch, and it may be in Bromley, but in the other patches probably not.

16. Are the poor in those parts composed of class (b), the lower casual, or of the unemployable?—You would find type (a) and type (b) side by side.

17. When you distinguish between type (a) and type (b) does type (b) exclude the unemployable? Would that be class (c)?—No; I should include them in type (b). I should take type (b) as mainly being the unemployable. I have not made my classification quite clear. I say that these people are not degraded, but they shade off into a degraded class. I mean that sometimes a degraded man stands much higher in the industrial order.

18. When you say that the market for casual labour has steadily improved, do you mean that the demand has increased or become less casual?—I should say that the demand for casual labour has increased in Poplar, and that in a good year a casual man can get more employment than previously. I cannot understand in any other way the decrease in the unemployable class. The men seem actually to belong more to type (a), therefore they must be getting more work.

19. Do you associate that with the factories?—Yes; with the growth of the factories.

20. Would the demand for casual labour take place in the factories or in subsidiary industries?—I think that there is a good deal of casual labour employed in the factories.

21. You speak of factories of different kinds. Would you give instances?—The local food factories employ large numbers, and, indeed, I should think that probably two-thirds of the factories employ, at any rate, a section of casual labour.

22. Would the new factories fall into different classes, representing definite trades?—A good many different trades are represented.

23. Can you give one or two of the main classes?—The iron trade is the staple trade of Poplar.

24. Do these factories employ boy labour to any extent, and discharge the boys as they grow up?—Yes, some do.

25. Do those boys become class (a) or class (b)?—That partly depends on themselves. They recruit both classes.

26. What is the position with regard to your classification of the (a) man? You say, "Many once casual are now regular, and many once regular are now casual." Does a man acquire an A ticket in the case of the docks?—It would mean that, or it would mean that, being an efficient man, he gets an engagement outside the docks. I might explain that connected with the docks there are many private employers. If a man is good as a dock labourer and if he is intelligent he may see his way to getting into one of these private firms.

27. Could you give any further description of the system of gangs taking small contracts?—I am afraid that I cannot, but it is a very widespread system, and it is one of very long standing.

28. (Mr. D. M. Watson.) I suppose that in that case a leading hand takes the contract?—Yes, that is what is done.

29. He negotiates?—Yes.

30. (Mr. E. Aves.) In the earlier part of your statement you state it as your belief that the unemployable class is decreasing. Are you quite sure on that point? I have been wondering on what evidence you chiefly rely?—Mainly on my fifteen years' experience of the district. I see fewer unemployable men. The unemployable man, proper, is a scarcer man than he used to be. Three years ago, when I was hon. secretary of

the West Ward Committee, that committee gave doles of soup, grocery tickets, and bread tickets—the very things that the soul of the casual man (b) delights in. They all come out of their little fastnesses and the darkest corners of a district which has some dark corners, and I was surprised to find how much better they were than I expected them to be, how much more of the workman they showed than I had expected.

31. You think that they are not kept away at all by a change of administration. I mean by knowing that it would be no good if they came?—I think that certainly we do not see the unemployable class in the C.O.S. office, but this Winter Distress Committee undoubtedly saw the very poorest class in that ward. They all flocked to us.

32. That means that the flux of the very poor, who go further east, is not counterbalanced by the very poor who come from further west. The two movements are going on?—Yes, the two movements are going on.

33. Those who come are not quite so poor as those who go?—No. I ought to add that I know the southern part of the borough much better than I know the northern part. My evidence with regard to the northern part of the borough is not so good as it is with regard to the southern part. I cannot be so positive about what is happening in the northern part of the borough.

34. The northern part is nearer Bethnal Green, for instance, that you have mentioned as sending in its recruits?—Yes.

35. With regard to what you say of the market for casual labour having improved, is that accentuating the question of industrial training in the district?—If it is easy for a casual man to get labour as a casual man, a demand for industrial training is not likely to arise. Nor is the importance of it recognised.

36. No, but on the other hand, I was thinking of children growing up, and I was wondering how it would affect families as families in the future, not in the immediate present. Mr. Maynard mentioned the point of the engagement of the young and their dismissal when they reached early manhood. I have heard that that is very commonly happening in that part of London and elsewhere, and I was wondering whether it was a problem of increasing seriousness from your point of view?—I am afraid that I cannot form an opinion as to whether it is increasing or not. There is a good deal of it.

37. (Mr. H. R. Maynard.) You refer to builders' labourers and gas workers, excluding them from your survey because their work is rather seasonal than casual. Are they to any extent, or to any considerable extent, interchangeable?—Yes, to some extent, because the gasworker generally has some alternate trade. Sometimes he makes bricks. The gasworker ranks high in the scale of casual labour.

38. You speak of the borough council's staff as being recruited from all these, and as also containing a percentage of the type (b) man. Do I understand from that they have on their staff of permanent men, men that you describe as being more often out of work than in?—They certainly have men who have been recruited from the (b) class.

39. Men who have been recruited from it, I understand. They would cease to belong to that class when they got that employment?—Yes, when they became permanent.

40. In the statement you refer several times to these two classes (a) and (b), and you also state that there is no rigid line between the casual man and the regular man going up and down. Would that apply to class (a) and class (b)?—Yes, to some extent; but if a man once gets into class (b) the odds are rather against his getting back into class (a).

41. There is not the same movement up and down?—Not between (a) and (b).

42. (Mr. D. M. Watson.) With regard to the statement that the market for casual labour has steadily improved, I must say that I was rather surprised to find that. I should have expected that owing to the introduction of machinery so largely the percentage of people in the casual market out of work would have been larger, due to that cause. May I put it in this way? Are these percentages which you give us with regard to Lambeth, Southwark, Deptford, Poplar, &c., larger now or smaller than they would have been five or six years ago?—At this moment the percentages are

larger, no doubt, because we have had three bad years, but I question if they are permanently larger.

43. What you mean is that there is a greater demand for casual labour, probably?—I think that there is a greater demand for casual labour in Poplar in a normal year.

44. There will also be, will there not, a greater demand for machine labour ("skilled labour," I may call it), on account of the introduction of machines?—Yes, very likely.

45. Machinery, we know, is coming into many trades now where it was not used previously. Take, for instance, gasworks. Instead of having a man for stoker they have a mechanical stoker now?—True; at the same time, in some trades that does not mean an increase of skilled labour, but an increase of machine minders, who are not very skilled men.

46. (Mr. C. S. Loch.) You infer that the increase in the number of industries in Poplar has, in spite of the fact that there is more machinery, given more opening for the casual man?—Yes.

47. (Mr. J. Parsons.) It seems to me that the statistics in paragraph 1 have no relevance to casualty, but to the type of occupation. I presume that a carter, for instance, would be an unskilled man within the meaning of paragraph 1, and might or might not be casual within the meaning of paragraph 3, and so on throughout. There is no relevance between the two, is there?—With regard to the tables in paragraph 1, I took the two groups, because they contain, of all the groups, the largest element of casual labour. The group "Conveyance" contains dock labour and casual railway labour. The group "Undefined" contains a great deal of casual labour. I use them as an indication. I do not for a moment pretend that those percentages are the percentages of casual labour.

48. (Mr. D. M. Watson.) You say that tally clerks form a noticeable group. Do railway and dock companies trust that sort of work to casual labour?—Yes, to supplement their regular men.

49. It surprises me very much?—My experience of casual tally clerks is that more often than not they are people who are rather shaky.

50. That is why it is extraordinary to find that they are trusted. With regard to your remarks about foremen, I would like to ask whether it is your opinion that generally foremen abuse their power, and demand either payment from, or to be treated by, the men? Is that done in the factories in the East End?—I cannot give you first-hand knowledge, but it is a statement very frequently made by people who seem to be credible.

51. I have heard it myself on more than one occasion, and I was interested to find it here. It is very difficult to stamp out?—Yes.

52. With regard to boy labour, do you think that it directly tends to swell casual labour? Would women's labour, where possible, improve matters, do you think? Would it be better to employ women who would work up to the marriageable age and then be absorbed by marriage than to have these boys who are turned adrift at 18 or 19?—Practically all the possible wage-earning women in Poplar are absorbed by the market already.

53. There is no surplus of women labour?—I think that there is no surplus in a normal year.

54. (Mr. J. Parsons.) I think that any evidence that could be brought of a definite character in support of the opinion that the unemployable class is decreasing would be of great value. We have it as your impression, derived from experience, not only as a C.O.S. secretary, but also as engaged for more than a year on work in regard to the unemployed. Would it be possible to fortify your opinion by anything more telling?—I suppose that it would be quite possible to collect definite evidence, but it would take time. But broadly it comes to this—that if you take, one by one as they come before you, the very poorest class of people living in Poplar you find that they are doing more work than you gave them credit for doing. Take, for instance, a class of family which is referred to us by the Invalid Children's Aid Association—sometimes people of a very poor type indeed. The men seem to be doing more work than antecedently we should have given them credit for doing.

55. (Mr. W. H. Beveridge.) You mean that the market for casual labour has increased, and has thus absorbed men who formerly could get no work at all, practically?—Who became type (b)?

56. Yes?—Practically that.

57. That is the way in which you would connect it?—My argument is that I cannot find type (b), and, therefore, from the absence of type (b), I infer that there must be a greater demand for labour, or else what has become of type (b)?

58. You mean for casual labour?—Yes. Type (b) is here still, but in much smaller numbers than it was.

59. (Mr. J. Parsons.) Would increased facilities for the work of women and young people make a difference? It would not eliminate type (b). It might help the family to get on better, but Mr. B. would be there still?—True.

60. You would find Mr. B. less frequently?—You would find him less frequently.

61. (Mr. H. R. Maynard.) Are you speaking quite apart from the question of the present depression of trade? Are you allowing for that?—I am taking a normal year. Of course, just now there is a good deal of abnormal distress.

62. For the last three years there has been?—Yes.

63. The improvement which you speak of is before the last three years?—I am talking of the normal situation with regard to many men one sees now. Some of them have had very little work, or have been out of work during the last two years. Going a little further back you find that they have a very fair industrial record—a better industrial record than one would expect them to have.

64. The improvement, then, was taking place some years ago. When are you comparing it with?—I am taking my general experience—over fifteen years. There is room for great improvement still.

65. (Mr. Cecil Chapman.) Broadly speaking, might it be said that the numbers as regards general labour have remained about the same, but the proportion of labour, which hitherto has been casual, has been absorbed by more regular employment in these factories. Is that a proper conclusion?—Yes. The population of the borough is stationary, and the opportunities of employment, I believe, are increasing.

66. And there are not more men coming from the outside. Do you say that there is no drift in, no immigration?—Not more than I have allowed for. It is difficult to give a quantitative estimate. One only knows that the population remains stationary.

67. You say, "The fact is that in Poplar poor law relief has been extended to men who would not receive it elsewhere." How far has that affected the question? How far has it influenced this question of casual labour? Has it done so to any great extent?—I should be disposed to say that at the moment it has not, because there is, and has been in the last two years, an undoubted surplus of casual labour. If the policy were continued in a good time it might very seriously influence it.

68. With regard to saying that overtime is a great evil in the docks and that men are encouraged and paid to work it; from what point of view are you saying that?—If a large ship comes in, it is in the interest of the owners that she should be cleared in the shortest possible time, and men sometimes work for eighteen to twenty hours straight on.

69. You mean that it is an evil to those individual men?—A great evil.

70. Or do you mean to labour as a whole—that those individual men are doing too much labour, and that it should be spread among more by the shifts that you suggest?—I am sure that it is bad for the individual men.

71. (Mr. D. M. Watson.) But they like it, I suppose?—Yes; they like it.

72. (Mr. Cecil Chapman.) In suggesting a system of shifts you rather mean, do you not, that it would to some extent relieve the position—that men should not be employed on the overtime work who are employed on the general work, but that it should be another class of labour?—My view is, that it is wrong to employ men for these long hours. Whether it has a good effect on the labour market or not, I think it wrong to employ men for twenty hours at a stretch.

73. (Mr. W. H. Beveridge.) To have shifts would add to the expense, would it not?—Yes; quite so.

74. Because the men would not know the run of the work, and that, I suppose, is a serious consideration from the point of view of expense?—I really cannot answer that, I am afraid.

75. But have you heard it stated by employers?—No.

76. (Mr. C. S. Loch.) Is it your view that this improvement that you have described is persistent, although at the present moment there is trouble owing to these two or three bad years?—I think that the conditions are improving, but that the two or three bad years, of course, have set things back.

77. There is a kind of industrialisation of Poplar going on, which, in your opinion, is practically improving the whole local position?—It seems to me that opportunities for employment are increasing.

78. You have made these minor suggestions, if I may so call them, but is there no major suggestion governing the whole of the relations of these casual men to the large firms which you could make?—I was asked to give evidence as to the actual facts of casual labour, and not to give evidence as to recommendations.

79. True; but I do not think there was any wish, if you have any statement, to preclude that, because you have known the place intimately all these years, and your experience, whether the committee adopt it or not, is of value?—I think that I would rather not give evidence on that side now.

80. (Mr. W. H. Beveridge.) You distinguish the builders' labourer from the casual labourer. Is it not your experience that the builders' labourer and the general labourer and the dock labourer are very largely interchangeable in the lower ranks of each. I mean, you have people sometimes builders' labouring, sometimes wharf labouring, and sometimes casual labouring otherwise?—Yes, you have some men who go round in that way. The analysis of cases which I made for you shows that the men move from one kind of labour to another pretty frequently. At the same time, a large number of men do not.

81. But have you any figures as to the proportion of low-skilled or unskilled casual labourers among the distressed unemployed applicants, either to a Poplar committee or generally. What proportion of the unemployed problem as it is presented to a relief committee is contributed by casual labourers?—A very large proportion, I should say. The guardians have 50 per cent. here.

82. Not more?—May I say that all these returns from unemployed committees as to occupation seem to me to be extremely untrustworthy. My experience of the applicant for relief anywhere is that he always begins by saying that he is a labourer, and if his statement is taken down by someone who does not want to trouble much about it that is accepted and he is written down "labourer" at once. If he comes to a C.O.S. office he tells us still that he is a labourer, but we talk to him about it and we get a much more definite statement from him as to exactly what he is, and very often he turns out not to be a labourer.

83. Do you mean to say that if he has a trade he does not take the trouble to say that he has?—I think that very often when applying for any form of relief he prefers to call himself a labourer.

84. You speak of the growth of the casual labour market. That means, I suppose, that some of the unemployables have passed over into casual labourers?—I should hope so.

85. Is that a good thing or a bad thing?—It is a good thing. It is a step up. It means that a man who previously did no work is now doing work.

86. But the man you might have put under compulsory detention as an unemployable is now a casual labourer, which is not a high state of life?—No, but surely it is an immense advance on his previous state.

87. Yes, but does it not leave a permanent state of poverty which you cannot get rid of by any interference?—I should not like to say so. Of course, if casual labour were gaining on regular labour, that would be an evil, but I do not think that it is.

88. These casual men are wanted by the work of the district—I mean they are not a surplus exactly?—Not in a normal year.

89. They are necessary to the work of the district. Is there much poverty among these casual men, the people who are necessary to the work of the district?

in a normal year?—Yes, I should say that there was. Even in a normal year their wives will be at work.

90. Have you any evidence as to the settling of women's industries in dock districts? That is a general statement that one hears of. Would you say that there is much women's work in Poplar?—Yes.

91. Do you think that women's work tends to settle in Poplar and similar districts because of the supply of men's labour?—I think that women's home labour and men's casual labour certainly seem to go together.

92. You say that the employers find it necessary to keep a reserve of labour. Since when do you think that policy has been adopted? Has it any connection with the time of the strike?—My experience does not go back beyond the strike. I think that it has always been true of Poplar since I have known Poplar.

93. Do you think that the employers generally have a deliberate policy, or that any of them have a deliberate policy of keeping a reserve of labour?—Yes; I think that they believe in that.

94. In order to be sure of keeping the price of labour within limits?—I suppose that they themselves might give another reason, and say that they must be prepared for sudden expansions of trade.

95. I wondered upon what you were basing the view that they deliberately kept a reserve?—On both considerations.

96. (Mr. D. M. Watson.) Do you know whether the dock companies pay a man for attending at the dock gates on any occasion?—Whether they give him a retaining fee, do you mean?

97. Yes?—No.

98. Do you know whether in any trade that is done?—No.

99. (Mr. W. H. Beveridge.) Do you mean with regard to keeping a reserve of labour that they do it by means of giving the work out in rotation?—I mean that if they have a certain volume of work to be done they allot three-quarters of that work to the permanent staff. The remaining quarter they might equally allot to the permanent staff, but they prefer to allot it to three times the number of men they would require as a permanent staff, employing them in rotation. That is a rough illustration.

100. (Mr. H. R. Maynard.) Do you think that any of the improvement in the demand for casual labour is due to the adoption of that policy on a larger scale?—I doubt if the policy is being extended. It has necessary limits. But as regular employment increases irregular increases along with it.

101. In speaking of the movement of labour in relation to this increased demand for casual labour, you speak of a general upward movement amongst the casual labourers in Poplar and at the same time of a drifting out to West Ham. I am thinking of the conditions of Poplar industrially. Do you think that it means an improvement of the conditions of Poplar, the old conditions really moving to somewhere else?—I should think that the conditions of West Ham are much worse than in Poplar.

102. Are they like the conditions of Poplar fifteen years ago?—I should think that they were much worse.

103. The problem which you had in Poplar fifteen years ago is not relieved by this improvement, but it is really shifted?—The problem in West Ham is largely independent of that in Poplar. Distress would have arisen there in any case. It now affects a larger percentage there than ever suffered from it in Poplar.

104. If the demand is increasing in Poplar for casual labour, why do the poor move out to West Ham? Does a better class get the Poplar work?—That, I am afraid, I cannot answer.

105. You say in one place that in regard to morality and drink the casual labourer compares favourably with the regular workman. You say in another place "That casual work is demoralising is a truism." How do you reconcile the statements?—I was thinking of two quite different things. In saying that casual work is demoralising, I mean that a man gets out of the way of doing work and gets into the way of leaning against lamp-posts, losing the habit of industry. When I speak of drink and morality, I am thinking of distinct vice.

106. (The Chairman.) You are thinking more of the French sense of the word *morale* in the second case?—Yes.

107. (Mr. W. H. Beveridge.) But does not leaning against lamp-posts come to leaning against public-houses? Does not the demoralising of the workman through casual labour very generally imply drink, or is it not likely to?—On the whole I should say not. The type (b) man leans much more against the outside of the public-house than inside. He has not money to spend inside. It is the highly-paid workman who, like Jeshurun, waxes fat and kicks. He gives way to vice and drinks very heavily if he is that way disposed.

108. This last winter you saw a great deal of what is meant by a time of exceptional distress. How large a proportion of those people exceptionally distressed would have regular incomes, even in ordinary times, and comfortable homes? Do you come across many people who have come right down from regular life to being quite unemployed?—It is very difficult to give percentages. I should say that there was a section of men who had been quite regular who have been thrown out by years of bad trade and brought down very low after being in employment for many years. This is especially the case where the introduction of new machinery is made in times of depression. There would also be, of course, many who had always been casual, and with them it means that they descend from a condition of comparative comfort to a condition of want, but the descent is not so great.

109. Is it not the fact that the great bulk of the people whom you have to deal with as unemployed applicants at a time of exceptional distress are people who, in ordinary times, are living very much from hand to mouth, and are really in chronic poverty or just on the point of chronic poverty, and that they get distressed by the extra pinch?—That is true of many, of course. It is true of the casual labourer.

110. That is why I wanted to get the proportion of casual labourers?—My experience in my own borough is that the great bulk of those in distress in bad times is of that type. But men who have been regular suffer also. I have a table here of the longest recorded jobs of seventy men. Of these seventy, twenty say that they have never had anything but casual work—that they cannot remember any regular job. Eight can remember no job longer than a year; four can remember jobs between one year and two years; eight can remember jobs between two years and three years; seven can remember jobs between three years and five years; eleven can remember jobs between five years and ten; and twelve can remember jobs over ten years.

111. (Mr. D. M. Watson.) To what trades do those figures refer?—It is a miscellaneous collection of people who were applying last year mainly with regard to emigration.

112. (Mr. W. H. Beveridge.) The jobs which some of them can remember may be their apprenticeship jobs, and, perhaps, they have never done anything but casual labour since?—It may be so.

113. You do not know how far back the longer jobs go. These figures do not show what they have been doing in the last three or four years?—No. In nearly all the cases there are particular jobs. It may be some years, it is true, since they lost their places. But my point is that of the people who apply in exceptional years, you will find that a percentage at some time or other have had very good jobs, and very regular jobs. Here we have twenty-three men who at some time or other have had regular jobs exceeding five years in duration. I am rather surprised at that result. I should not have supposed that one would have got so many.

114. (Mr. H. R. Maynard.) Were they seventy casual applicants, or were they a party selected in any way?—We did not select them. I think that they selected themselves, because they had sufficient confidence in themselves to think that they might be chosen for emigration. They were not the average of applicants.

115. The Poplar Unemployed Committee would not find that proportion?—No.

116. Would you in the men selected by the Poplar Unemployed Committee?—One might.

117. (Mr. W. H. Beveridge.) Can you get the figures from the Poplar Unemployed Committee?—They are sorting out the 900 cases, and they say that we shall have them when they are ready.

118. We can have those later if necessary?—Yes.

119. With regard to the borough council casual work, is it your experience that it is always a bad thing about

a man if he has been employed casually by the borough council? Would you say that it dis-commended a man considerably?—Do you mean would it make other employers less ready to employ him?

120. Have you the experience that there are a good many very low class casual labourers who get occasional jobs on borough council work, in many cases through the influence of individual borough councillors?—When we had the three day rotation system in Poplar—

121. That is the ordinary borough council unemployed relief work?—I cannot say much about the casual men employed in the ordinary way. There is not a very large margin employed casually in Poplar.

122. There is not?—No. The establishment is large—some people think unduly large.

123. Then it is rather different there. In some boroughs they have a very large casual class?—Yes.

124. (*Mr. E. Aves.*) Has the Blackwall tunnel had any effect on Poplar, either by bringing fresh people in for Poplar employment that may offer or by opening up fresh fields of employment for those living in

Poplar?—Very few of the men in Poplar that I have come across seem to work south of the river. A small number seem to come north from Greenwich. On the whole, the passage from one side of the river to the other is very small.

125. (*The Chairman.*) There is one point which I should like to understand a little better with regard to what you say about the overtime work. When men are employed for more than the normal day, is the rate of pay per hour the same, or is it more for the overtime?—I believe that it is greater. It is a temptation.

126. That explains one reason why the overtime is so great a temptation?—Yes.

127. And to a certain extent, I suppose, it would diminish the difference in the expense, having regard to a system of relays, because the relays would be paid according to the normal rate?—Hardly, because night-work is paid better than day-work.

128. The payment would be according to the pay for night-work?—Yes.



