

Reports of special assistant poor law commissioners on the employment of women and children in agriculture.

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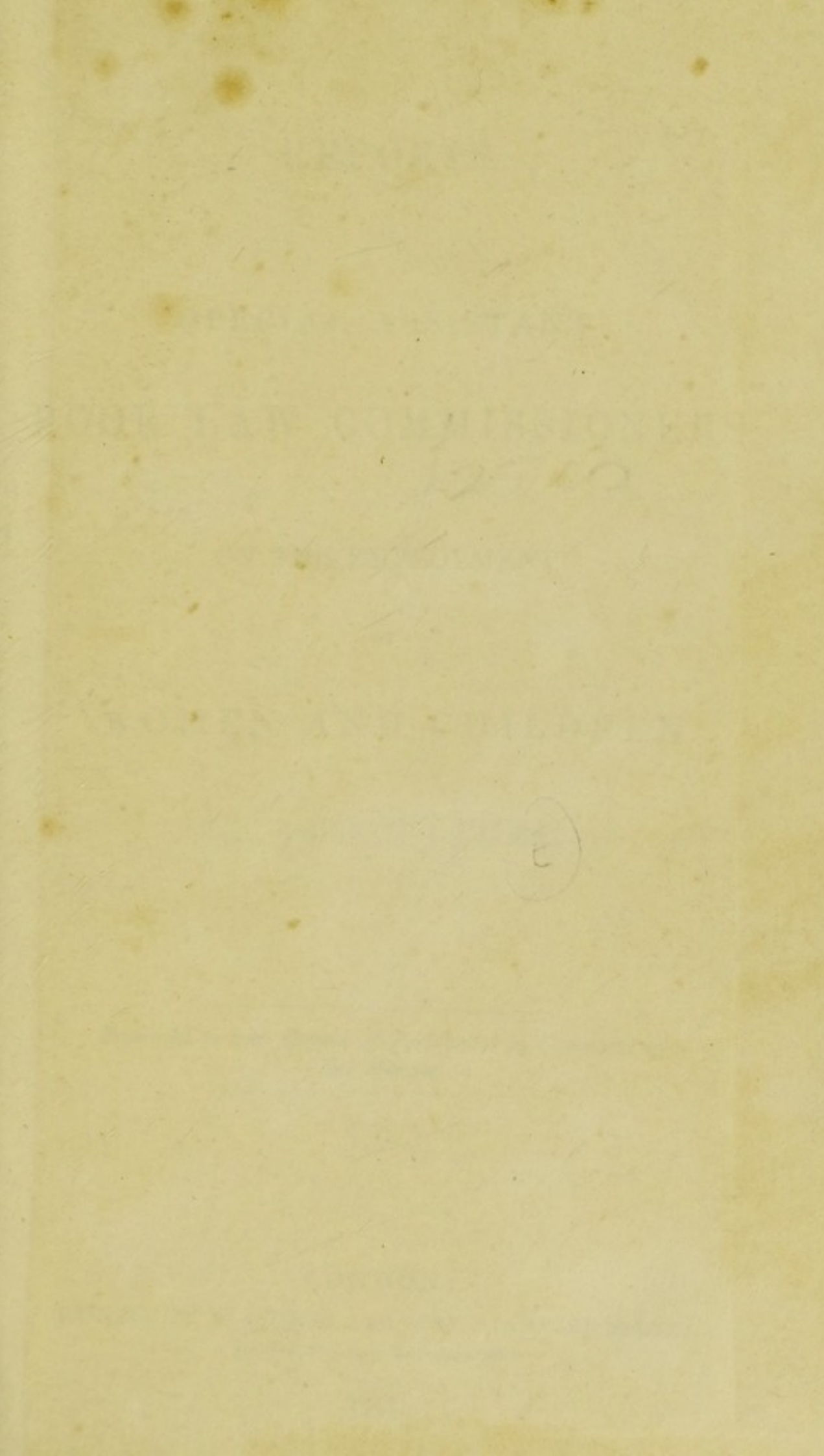


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GREAT BRITAIN,
National Assistance Board



REPORT

SPECIAL ASSISTANT

POOR LAW COMMISSIONERS

IN THE COUNTRY

HOMER AND CHILDREN

LONDON

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1861

REPORTS
OF
SPECIAL ASSISTANT
POOR LAW COMMISSIONERS
ON THE EMPLOYMENT
OF
WOMEN AND CHILDREN
IN AGRICULTURE.

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of
Her Majesty.*

LONDON:
PRINTED BY W. CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET,
For Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

1843.

REPORTS
OF THE SPECIAL ASSISTANT
TO THE COMMISSIONERS
OF THE EMPLOYMENT
OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN
IN AGRICULTURE



LONDON:
PRINTED BY W. CLAY AND SONS, STATIONER STREET,
FOR THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE LANCET.

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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR JAMES GRAHAM, BART.,

Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department.

*Poor Law Commission Office, Somerset House,
4th May, 1843.*

SIR,

NEAR the end of last year we received your instructions to appoint, under the power contained in the Poor Law Act of last session (5 & 6 Vict., c. 57), four Assistant Commissioners to make a special inquiry into the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture. In obedience to these instructions we appointed, with your consent and that of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury (as required by the terms of the Act), Mr. Alfred Austin, Mr. Vaughan, Mr. Stephen Denison, and Sir Francis Doyle, all barristers-at-law, to be special Assistant Commissioners for the purpose named; and we assigned to them respectively the following districts, viz.—to Mr. Alfred Austin, Wilts, Dorset, Devon, and Somerset; to Mr. Vaughan, Kent, Surrey, and Sussex; to Mr. Stephen Denison, Suffolk, Norfolk, and Lincolnshire; and to Sir Francis Doyle, Yorkshire and Northumberland. It appeared to us that these four districts, being almost exclusively agricultural, and distinguished from one another by marked peculiarities, would afford a field of inquiry sufficiently wide for the objects contemplated by her Majesty's Government.

The Assistant Commissioners were appointed in the month of December last; and prior to the commencement of their inquiries, we addressed to them a letter of instructions, a copy of which we subjoin.

We have since received the Reports of the Assistant Commissioners ; and in submitting them to you, we will only remark, that they appear to us to contain as complete a view of the material facts belonging to the subject, as a general inquiry, conducted within a limited period, can be expected to present.

We have the honour to be, Sir,

Your very faithful and obedient Servants,

GEORGE NICHOLLS,

GEORGE CORNEWALL LEWIS,

EDMUND WALKER HEAD.

*Poor Law Commission Office, Somerset House,
7th December, 1842.*

SIR,

THE Poor Law Commissioners have received the instruction of Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department to appoint four special Assistant Commissioners, under the power contained in the Act of the 5th and 6th years of Her Majesty's reign, cap. 57, for conducting a special Inquiry into the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture in different parts of England.

The Commissioners having appointed you as one of such special Assistant Commissioners, request that you will proceed at the time mentioned in your appointment to the Counties named in the margin; and that you will, in such parts of those Counties as may appear to you fitted for the purpose, inquire into the matters submitted to your investigation.

The subject of your inquiry being the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture, the Commissioners request that you will examine into the sorts of labour at which they are respectively employed, the wages which they receive, the hours of work, and any other similar facts which may tend to throw light upon their physical and moral condition. The Commissioners desire that your main attention should be directed to the employment of children; and that you will particularly inquire into the ages at which they begin to work, and the effects which their occupation in labour may produce upon their bodily health, as well as upon their opportunities for obtaining school instruction and moral and religious education.

The Commissioners likewise wish that you should inquire into the condition of the children of agricultural labourers who may have been apprenticed by the Parish Officers, in the parts of the country which you may examine.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,
(Signed) E. CHADWICK,
Secretary.

To

Assistant Poor Law Commissioner.

MR. ALFRED AUSTIN

ON THE COUNTIES OF

WILTS, DORSET, DEVON, AND SOMERSET.

To the Poor Law Commissioners.

GENTLEMEN,—Together with the Commission for inquiring into several matters connected with the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture, dated the 6th December last, and which I received from you on the following day, I also received from you certain instructions to prosecute such inquiry in Wiltshire, Dorsetshire, Devonshire, and Somersetshire. I now beg to inform you that, pursuant to your instructions, I visited those counties, but that I confined my inquiry to a small district in each county (except Devonshire, where I extended it to two districts), for the following reasons.

The Commission being limited to 30 days, two of which were taken up in going from and in returning to town, only seven days were allowed for each of the four counties, including the time spent in travelling from one to another. I was therefore unable to extend my visit to several districts in one county; and besides this, the nature of the information which it was my business to collect, rendered a stay of some days necessary at any place where I endeavoured to obtain it. A rapid journey would not have permitted me, in the majority of instances, to have applied to the authentic sources; for although to obtain information on most of the matters mentioned in your instructions did not require that any great number of persons should be seen, or that they should be examined at any extraordinary length, yet from the commencement of the inquiry I found the necessity of selecting with care the persons from whom I sought such information. This was owing partly to the imperfect knowledge possessed by all classes of people, labourers, farmers, and persons of a superior grade, upon the subjects of the inquiry, though of a very common description, and also partly to an inclination I not unfrequently observed, both in the case of the labourers and that of their employers, to mislead me as to many of the facts I wished to become acquainted with. I quickly found, therefore,

that without an opportunity of checking the statements made by one person by those made by another, or of ascertaining the degree of knowledge possessed by any person giving me information, or his position, interests, prejudices, or the like, I could not, as a general rule, attach much weight to the communications I received. But I could not make a selection of persons upon whose statements I could rely, without remaining in the same neighbourhood for some days at the least, during which time I might be enabled to test in various ways the value of their statements. Another reason which induced me to continue at one spot for several days, was, that it allowed me to see a greater number of persons, capable and desirous of furnishing me with correct information, than would have been the case had I attempted, during the same interval, to visit different parts of the same county. By remaining in one neighbourhood I could easily procure an introduction from one person to another; and I rarely found it necessary to address any one, whether farmer or labourer, without being able to give a reference to some other party as to the object of my visit. This was of the most essential service to me, as without an introduction, however slight it might be, I generally found that no communication of any kind could be obtained.

For these reasons I selected a single district in each county in which to prosecute the inquiry directed by the Commission, a plan which I adhered to, except in the case of Devonshire, where a particular question, that of apprenticeship, induced me to divide my time, spent in that county, between two districts at some little distance from each other.

The district which I chose in Wiltshire, was the neighbourhood of Calne; in Dorsetshire, the neighbourhood of Blandford; in Devonshire, the neighbourhood of St. Thomas's, Exeter, and that of Southmolton; and in Somersetshire, the neighbourhood of Bridgwater.

Although the circumstance of my inquiry having been thus confined to one district in each county (with the exception before mentioned) has prevented me from giving direct information respecting the employment of women and children in that county beyond such district, I think such disadvantage is more than compensated for by my having been thus enabled to collect information upon the matters contained in your instructions, of a more trustworthy kind than I could have done if constantly moving from place to place. I may also observe that the choice of the districts in which I prosecuted my inquiries under the Commission was not dictated by any consideration of the prosperous or depressed condition of the labouring population in such districts; and although I am unwilling to assert that the information I received in any one district of a county, would be found to be true of the whole county, yet as each field of inquiry was selected in the way I have mentioned, apart from all desire or intention to

furnish facts in support of, or against the employment of, women and children in agriculture, the information I received may perhaps be taken as evidence of the average state of things throughout the counties in question.

By my instructions I was directed to inquire into the following matters respecting women employed in agriculture:—

1. The kinds of labour they perform.
2. Their wages.
3. The hours during which they work.

And as to children employed in agriculture, I was directed to inquire respecting—

1. The kinds of labour they perform.
2. Their wages.
3. The hours during which they work.
4. The ages at which they begin to be employed.
5. The effects of their employment upon their health.
6. Its effects upon the opportunities they have for obtaining school instruction, as well as moral and religious instruction.
7. And respecting parish apprenticeship.

I was also directed to inquire into any facts, similar to those above enumerated, which may tend to throw light upon the physical and moral condition of women and children so employed.

WOMEN.

The practice of employing women in farm-labour exists in the several districts of the country I visited, and, I believe, prevails throughout the four counties mentioned in my instructions; but the number of women so employed, and the kinds of work which they perform, are not always the same. A difference is sometimes found in their occupations on two adjoining farms. The women of one village have always been accustomed to reap, whilst to those of another in the immediate neighbourhood the practice is unknown. Turnip hoeing is by no means an uncommon occupation for women, yet in many villages they never undertake it. The kinds of agricultural labour in which women are engaged appear to depend upon the habits of narrow localities; and though in a few respects perhaps their occupations may vary with the larger divisions of counties, it is nevertheless impossible to point out any very marked or essential difference between their employments in general in one county and in another. Thus working in the hay and corn harvests, or in the dairy; hoeing turnips; weeding and picking stones; planting and digging potatoes; pulling, digging, and hacking turnips; attending the threshing machine, and winnowing corn; beating manure; filling dung-carts; planting beans, &c., are common to all the counties, though by no means uni-

formly practised in every part of them; picking apples is confined to the cider counties; and leading horses at plough appears to be a practice of only a few and perhaps remote parts of Devonshire and Somersetshire.

But although the occupations of women do not materially differ with different counties, I have reason to believe, as far as my opportunities of inquiry permitted me to observe, that women are more regularly and constantly employed, although not in greater numbers, in Devonshire than in the other counties. In Wiltshire, Dorsetshire, and Somersetshire, some of the employments already enumerated, viz., those proper to the spring, summer, and earlier part of autumn, are much more followed than the others; but in Devonshire this is not so much the case; for in that county it would appear that the occupations belonging to the winter months are pursued with nearly the same regularity as those of the other parts of the year. In those districts where the women do not work through the winter, the work elsewhere performed by them is done by men or boys.

On arable and grazing farms women are chiefly employed in the hay and corn harvests, in hoeing turnips, weeding corn, picking stones, beating manure, in planting and digging potatoes, pulling and digging turnips, and occasionally in hacking them for cattle. They are also employed in winnowing corn, and occasionally about the threshing machine. In some few cases they are employed in leading horses at plough, filling dung-carts, &c.

Of the more common occupations above enumerated, the most laborious are represented by the women who pursue them to be hay-making, hoeing turnips, and digging potatoes; and when women reap, the work in the harvest-field must be classed amongst their most laborious occupations. Of these four kinds of work, hay-making would appear to be the most fatiguing, owing to the extent of ground walked over in the course of the day in addition to the work done with the arms. Nevertheless it appears to be the favourite employment of women. It is a time of enjoyment, though one of hard labour. With respect to these particular occupations it is also to be observed, that their laboriousness arises more from their being continued through a greater number of hours, than from their requiring a greater exertion of strength. On the other hand, the same kinds of work, except hay-making, being generally job-work, the reward is in direct proportion to the quantity of work done. Not one of the many women accustomed to work in the fields with whom I conversed on the subject of their labour, considered it as generally too severe; they spoke of working out of doors, even of the more fatiguing occupations, when they had become accustomed to it, as desirable for their health and spirits.

The severest labour performed by women, connected with agri-

culture, is in the dairy-farms. The work lasts during the principal part of the year, and for many months occupies the greater part of the day. Milking and making cheese twice a-day, and at the same time looking after the cheese already made, are described to be "work that is never finished." The work is not only continuous, but very fatiguing. Looking after, cleaning or wiping cheeses weighing frequently a quarter of a cwt., and which have to be turned and moved from place to place, is work that is occasionally followed by consequences to the health of women employed in it which show that it is too severe. Dr. Greenup, of Calne, states, that he is not unfrequently applied to for advice by women suffering from symptoms of over-work, generally attributable to their being employed in the dairy, and that such symptoms are—pains in the back and limbs, overpowering sense of fatigue most painful in the morning, want of appetite, feverishness, &c.

But with respect to the dairy-farms, it is to be observed that where they are small, as is nearly universally the case in these counties, the most laborious part of the work is not performed by servants, but by the mistress herself. The prosperity of such a farm depends entirely on the quality of the cheese, or, in other words, upon the skill and attention bestowed on its making and subsequent management. The entire management of the dairy rests with the farmer's wife, and cannot be left to servants; and where the farmer is not married, he is obliged to keep a dairy-woman to conduct the dairy, upon whom is thrown the whole responsibility, and who consequently is a person of corresponding importance in his household. As on the wife or the dairy-woman is cast not only the responsibility but also the actual labour attending the dairy, more particularly that of attending to and cleaning the cheeses, she performs the most laborious part of the work. The servants kept in the house are not wholly employed in the dairy, where they only assist their mistress or the dairy-woman, but they also do the household work. And the bad effects from excessive labour, observed in women working in the dairies, are consequently observable only in the mistresses or dairy-women, and very rarely in the female servants, their work being by no means so hard as that of their mistresses.

In the districts I visited, there are no large dairy-farms, as in Cheshire, Gloucester, and Worcestershire, where the dairies, from their size, admit of more systematic management, and the work of each person employed is more moderate. I have inserted in the Appendix (No. 56.) a communication from a gentleman, the occupier of a moderate-sized but well-conducted dairy-farm in Worcestershire, from which it does not appear that the work of the women employed is excessive. In small dairy-farms in the counties I visited, in the management of which economy of labour is necessary, the mistress, and possibly her servants, may at times be over-worked.

The ages at which women are employed vary from 15 to 70, or even older. But there are few employed so early as 15, and they do not often work regularly in farm-labour till they have reached the age of 20: the desire of their parents to get them out to service prevents their being much employed before that age in agricultural labour. But I am inclined to believe, though it is difficult to procure any very decisive evidence upon such a point, that the majority of women who work in the fields are above the age of 30; and perhaps I may add, that they are generally married, and sometimes are widows with children.

The wages received by women do not vary in different counties more than in adjoining parishes: even in the same parish it occasionally happens that one woman is paid 1*d.* or 2*d.* a-day more than another. A woman situated, with regard to her family, so as to be always at liberty to go out to work when wanted by the farmer, and upon whose services he can always depend, gets higher wages than one who can only now and then manage to get out to work, on account of young children, or other circumstances. There is also a great difference in the strength and capacity of women for working in the fields; and a woman who is strong and active, and a good work-woman, is paid higher than one of inferior strength, or who is slow at her work. In piece-work, especially, this difference in the strength and capacity of women for work influences their earnings.

The wages of women also depend a great deal on the farmer himself, and the way in which he likes the work on his farm to be done. It is no uncommon thing to see one farmer paying 1*d.* or 2*d.* a-day more to women than his neighbour. The common explanation given by women, when questioned as to the cause of difference of wages, is, that "Mr. A. is a good master,—he always gives 10*d.*;" or, "Mr. B. is not like Mr. A.,—he never pays more than 8*d.* or 9*d.*" Upon further inquiry respecting this difference, however, I found that some farmers always select the best and most regular workers amongst the women, and pay them high wages; whilst the farmers who pay a low rate of wages are satisfied with the inferior workers. Occasionally, also, I found a feeling of kindness on the part of a farmer towards the women who worked for him regularly, prompting him to give a little more than the common rate of wages around him.

The average rate of wages or earnings of women may be seen in the following statements made to me by various persons conversant in the matter.

IN WILTSHIRE,

The rate of wages for women among the farmers at present (December), is 7*d.* a-day; after Lady-day it may be 8*d.* In hay-making time 10*d.* with beer, and sometimes 1*s.*

Rev. J. Guthrie.

At Bowood they (women) get 8*d.* in winter, and 10*d.* in summer, a-day. At Studley and Foxton they get 8*d.* a-day; that is the common amount of

their wages. At harvest-time they get more,—as much as 10*d.*, but they work more. *Mr. Phelps.*

I have had 8*d.* a-day in spring for weeding, turnip-hoeing, &c.; 10*d.* a-day for hay-making; and 1*s.* a-day for harvest work. *Mrs. Sumbler.*

I have earned as much as 2*s.* 6*d.* a-day at digging, but I was always considered as a very hard worker. *Mrs. Hunt.*

I have always been paid the same (wages). At hay-time and harvest, better than at other times. When a girl I got about 2*s.* a-week; afterwards 8*d.* a-day; at hay-time 1*s.* a-day; and in harvest by the lump, I have earned as much as 4*s.* a-day. *Mrs. Long.*

I have received 10*d.* a-day, but that is higher than wages of women in general; 8*d.* and 9*d.* is more common. *Mrs. Brittan.*

I have always had 5*s.* a-week in summer, and 4*s.* 6*d.* in the other months; these are the regular wages. I am a good reaper, as good as many men; and in harvest, when I have worked by the job, have earned 2*s.*, and sometimes 2*s.* 6*d.* a-day, but only for a short time. *Mrs. Haynes.*

I generally had 10*d.* a-day,—sometimes as much as 1*s.* a-day. *Mrs. Smart.*

IN DORSETSHIRE.

In harvest I have received 1*s.* a-day, and have had two quarts (cider). For hay-making I have had 8*d.* a-day, but it depends on the weather. At other times for couching (weeding) and the like I have had 7*d.* a-day. Wages for women, and also for men, have always been pretty much the same. *Susan Vacher.*

The women are much engaged in buttoning in this village (Whitechurch): it is with difficulty they can be got out at 4*s.* a-week. In harvest, when they are paid by the piece, they can earn 1*s.* a-day; in hay-making 8*d.* a-day. *Mr. Fowler.*

I have always had 6*d.* a-day in spring for couching, 8*d.* a-day for hay-making, and 1*s.* a-day for harvest. I don't think all the women get 1*s.* a-day at harvest, but I managed to work hard and earn it. *Mary Cox.*

Women will earn 8*d.* a-day in spring at weeding the ground or couching, sometimes perhaps not quite so much; in harvest they get from 10*d.* to 1*s.* a-day. *Mr. Tarver.*

Generally women get 8*d.* a-day; at harvest 1*s.*, with two quarts of ale or cider; sometimes, if they work at tut-work at harvest, they can earn 1*s.* 6*d.* a-day, besides drink; they also get 1*s.* 6*d.* a-day at turnip-hoeing, which is tut-work, but no liquor. Girls, when they work, begin about 15 or 16, and they get 6*d.* a-day, and soon 8*d.* a-day. *Mr. Burgess.*

The farmers generally give them 8*d.* a-day, other persons 10*d.* In hay-making they have at least three pints of liquor, either ale or cider. I think of late years wages have increased 2*d.* per day. *Mr. Fox.*

Women when employed in out-door work get about 8*d.* a-day: at the hay and harvest season, they get some food and drink, in addition to their daily pay. *Mr. King.*

IN DEVONSHIRE,

Women generally receive as wages 7*d.* to 9*d.*; those at 7*d.* get a pint of cider, those at 9*d.* none. *Mr. A. Smith.*

Women earn from 7*d.* to 8*d.* per day, with a quart of cider. *Mr. D. J. Matthews.*

I give 7*d.* a-day to women, with a basin of broth at their dinner, or one pint of cider, which makes it up to 8*d.* Other farmers round me give 8*d.* without anything besides. But in some of the parishes farther off Southmolton, such as Chittlehampton and Walkleigh, women get 7*d.* a-day, or 6*d.* with cider or broth, equal to 7*d.* a-day. There they are not so much wanted for manufacturing as here, where we are so much nearer to Southmolton.

Mr. Huxtable.

I pay them (women) half wages, (men's wages).

Mr. Troode.

Women's wages are for :—

Stone-picking 1*d.* a seam (two barrow-fulls), or 1*s.* a-day with cider.

Apple-picking 7*d.* a-day, with one quart of cider.

Potato-digging 1*s.* a-day, with one quart of cider.

Clover-picking 8*d.* a-day, with cider.

Hay-making 8*d.* a-day, with cider.

Harvest 10*d.* a-day, with cider.

Mrs. Cozens.

Women always get half men's wages ; they get in general 8*d.* a-day and cider.

George Moxey.

Their (women) wages I believe to be generally about 8*d.* to 1*s.* a-day.

Mr. Cutliffe.

Women's wages vary from 1*s.* to 7*d.* *per diem.* Potato-digging is the hardest work ; and, with a prospect of early frost, farmers are anxious for their crop. An able woman, so employed, receives in addition to the shilling her dinner, and in some cases her supper.

Rev. P. Benson.

IN SOMERSETSHIRE,

In the hay-harvest, women get 4*s.* a-week, and two or three pints of cider a-day.

Mr. Somers.

The wages (of women) average from 7*d.* to 9*d.*, with two pints of cider ; but sometimes they do task-work, and can then get from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 4*d.* in bean-planting, &c., per day.

Rev. J. S. Toogood.

Women generally get 7*d.* a-day ; but some farmers pay them better than others ; in summer a pint of cider is given in addition sometimes, but that also depends upon the farmer. Job-work is better paid, but it is difficult for a woman to earn more than 1*s.* a-day. The average, the whole year round, is not more than 8*d.* a-day, except in the case of some particular farms, perhaps. On the whole they earn about half what men earn, if at work every day of the week.

Mr. Richard King.

From April to November women are paid 6*d.* to 8*d.* a-day ; in some of the heavy soils they are employed a short time in February, planting beans, and earn perhaps one-fourth more than the ordinary wages.

Mr. Watts.

In the cider counties part of the wages of women is paid in cider ; this is also the case with the wages of men, and also of boys from the earliest age at which they begin to work. A man has three or four pints of cider a-day, a woman half that quantity. The man's cider is reckoned worth from 1*s.* 3*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a-week.

The cider which is sold to the labourer by his master, or which is given in lieu of wages, is of an inferior kind, not made for the market but for home consumption. It is represented as strong and rough, qualities prized by those accustomed to drink it. I could not ascertain the real value of this kind of cider in money ; I am, however, inclined to think that the estimated value between

master and labourer is too high. Every farm in the cider counties has an orchard, and cider is part of the regular annual produce. The best cider is sent to London or elsewhere, and the inferior cider is consumed by the farmer's family, and sold to his labourers as above mentioned. This petty truck takes place with the women and children working on the farm, as well as with the men, which is not the case with another species of truck in Dorsetshire and parts of Devonshire and Somersetshire, the *grist*. The cider received by the women in part of their wages is not commonly drunk by them; it is more frequently kept for their husbands, though there are cases where it is partly, or even wholly, consumed by the women themselves.

The hours during which women work are, in winter from eight o'clock in the morning till four o'clock in the afternoon; at other times, when engaged in weeding corn or stone-picking, or in other work for which they are not paid by the job, or at which they do not work at over-hours, they are generally engaged from eight o'clock in the morning till six in the evening, or from half-past seven till half-past five. But eight o'clock appears the common time for women beginning work, as it allows them to put their cottage into order after the breakfast of the family, and to make arrangements for themselves being absent all day.

In the hay-harvest the regular hours for women are generally considered to be from six in the morning till six in the evening, but these hours are often prolonged by the accident of weather, &c. In the corn-harvest the hours are irregular, the work generally being piece-work, and the object of the women employed is to get through it as quickly as possible. In some cases I heard of women working from four o'clock in the morning till eight at night; but these were exceptions to the ordinary practice, and by no means common.

In the middle of the day an hour is taken for dinner, and in the hay and corn harvest twice or thrice during the day some minutes are taken for rest or refreshment.

With respect to the physical condition of women employed in agriculture, my observations will be comprised under the heads of health, food, clothing, and lodging.

The first question as to their health relates to the effects produced upon it by the employment in question.

The effects of out-door farm-labour upon grown-up women appears on the whole to be beneficial. Women accustomed to it nearly without exception represent it as good for their health and spirits. I did not meet with an instance of a woman complaining of the effects of working in the fields upon her health. Sometimes such work, particularly in the hay and corn harvests, was represented by women who performed it as being laborious, as making them stiff at first, or even as straining them; but I did not find

that any woman, from her own statement, had become subject to any permanent disease or infirmity from the employment in question.

As far, therefore, as the testimony of the women themselves is concerned, and which is not to be disregarded, it appears that out-door labour is not injurious to their health. But the experience and testimony of medical men is nearly as uniform. The opinion of Dr. Greenup, of Calne, which was not given without mature consideration, and upon which much reliance may be placed, is to the effect that the employment in question is healthy. Mr. King, a surgeon and apothecary of the same place, and possessing great knowledge of the labouring poor, says that married women bear the labour in the fields extremely well; that he has never observed any other effects upon their general health than colds, from which they suffer occasionally, caught from wet and exposure to the weather; he was not sure that they were even peculiarly subject to colds; women in the family-way, or suckling children, are certainly not hurt. He does not think that their work is too hard for them, or injurious, even taking into account the fact of their generally having insufficient food. The out-door work is rather healthy than otherwise.

Mr. Henry King, of Blandford, in Dorsetshire, a surgeon, and for many years practising in an agricultural population, thinks that women ought not to be employed in agricultural labour in the winter, for they must be necessarily exposed to the vicissitudes of the weather, and, from the nature of their employment, must be very frequently wet about the feet and legs, which often proves very injurious to the general health. In the summer the work is of a different sort, and he does not consider that much (if any) mischief would result from it. He also adds, that women, when they are employed in out-door labour, do not often work on wet days, as the farmers well know that on those days they cannot get their *quid pro quo*.

Mr. Spooner, another surgeon of Blandford, is of opinion that if women avoid exposure to wet, especially at certain critical times, employment in agricultural labour of the light kind, performed in spring and at the harvest, is not injurious. He has found much more disease in women of sedentary habits of the same class, such as those employed in button making and household service. Where women have no out-door exercise, chlorosis, constipation, and indigestion occur, which are very uncommon with women who labour in the fields. Women who labour in the fields, like men, are, if exposed to too much wet and cold, subject to rheumatism and catarrhs. Women in particular should, especially at certain times, avoid such exposure. Exercise in the open air, under proper limitations, renders people less susceptible of the morbid effects of atmospheric changes.

Mr. Lyddon, of St. Thomas's, Exeter, a surgeon and general

practitioner, and attending the poor of a very large agricultural district, says—that women are not so much exposed to weather altogether as men; their work is not so various, and it requires finer weather. He has observed no ill effects from any of the kinds of labour he mentioned, either to girls or grown-up women; no ill effects to young women at the critical age of 15 or 16. He does not think that rheumatism is produced more by such work than by other occupations; he has seen quite as much of that complaint in women who never leave their cottages. Washerwomen are much more exposed to rheumatism than women working out of doors. Pregnant women work as well as others, and the work is not injurious to them. Sometimes an accident may happen to a woman in that state during her work, such as slipping or falling down, perhaps. He has known four or five such cases, which were followed by pains about the sides until labour took place, but without further ill consequences. He has also known women during certain critical periods going out to work in bad weather, insufficiently clad, who have been hurt more than if their work had been in-doors; but generally out-door employment is extremely conducive to regular habits of body in women; and from the want of such regularity, women in the same class of life in towns, or at service, and who do not work out of doors, suffer a great deal. He has not observed that women employed in out-door labour are at all more subject to colds, and in general he should say that such labour is healthy than otherwise.

Mr. Cutliffe, of Southmolton, Devonshire, surgeon and apothecary, and who has attended the poor of an extensive agricultural district for thirty years, says—that women are seldom employed in agricultural labour so as to injure their health; on the contrary, they are, generally speaking, the most robust and healthy females we meet with.

Mr. Tanner, of the same place, surgeon and apothecary, says that women do not suffer in their health from the employment in question.

Mr. Poole, of Bridgwater, surgeon and apothecary, has had no reason to suppose that the employment of women is injurious to their health. And Mr. Tilsey, of North Petherton, a village near Bridgwater, a surgeon and one of the medical officers of that Union, says—that on referring to his books he cannot find that there is any disease peculiar to (boys or) women engaged in agriculture, but on the contrary they (both) seem to be remarkably exempt from illness; for the most part they possess a ruddiness of countenance and a firmness of fibre which he believes to be wholly attributable to the exercise and the exposure consequent to their occupation.

But from the age of 14 or 15, that of puberty in women, to 18 or 20, when they are full grown, the employment out of doors would perhaps appear to be objectionable. Mr. King, of Calne

says he does not think that young girls should work in the fields from 12 to 17, or indeed under 20. It is not the severity of the labour that he thinks injurious to them, for it is by no means excessive; but the exposure to wet and cold, which, of course, is inevitable, has a tendency to engender affections of the chest. He was not able to recall any particular instance of such disease being distinctly the result of exposure to cold and wet in the way mentioned, but he thinks that much of the ill health amongst women in that class in after-life, especially consumption, arises from early exposure to weather.

Mr. Spooner says he thinks girls under the age of puberty ought not to be subjected to labour, and that they should not be exposed to cold and wet. Girls, before they arrive at the age in question, are much more liable to contract disease from the same causes than afterwards, when they are full grown and functionally perfect.

Mr. King, of Blandford, says, in regard to the employment of young females in out-door work, it is in his opinion improper that, at any rate during the winter season, they should be exposed to the vicissitudes of weather, and most probably just at the age of puberty, when the general health is of the greatest importance, the work during this season being hoeing of turnips, &c. &c., in which employment they must necessarily be much exposed to cold and wet.

Women employed in dairies as servants are not subject to any permanent complaints caused by their work, though they appear to suffer more from fatigue at certain seasons than women engaged in out-door labour. It would appear that the servants in dairies are perhaps sometimes over-worked, but, generally speaking, certainly not so as materially to damage their health. It is the mistresses or dairy-women who appear to suffer most in their health from the dairy-work, but even in their case no permanent ill effects are produced.

There is, however, a second question respecting the health of women employed in agriculture, and which relates to the effects arising from the physical circumstances in which they are placed, particularly as regards food, clothing, and lodging. It is clear that whilst farm-labour itself may be beneficial to their health, yet that their general condition may be unfavourable to it. How far this is the case will appear from the following observations.

Women employed in dairies are single women, and for the most part, if not entirely, live in the farm-house, and are lodged and fed in a manner not much inferior to that of their employers. Their wages are also amply sufficient to supply them with proper clothing. But with respect to the women who work in the fields, and otherwise about the farm, the case is widely different; their food, clothing, and lodging, being that of the agricultural labouring class in general. Of the women employed in such

labour, the greater number are married ; and those who are unmarried are sometimes grown-up daughters living with their parents. There are cases of widows, and rarer ones of single women, with or without children, living by themselves, and wholly or partly dependent on their own earnings for support. But generally speaking the wages of women must not be considered as earned for, or applied in, their own separate support, but as a part of the aggregate earnings of a family, and accordingly part of the common fund for its maintenance. The condition of a woman employed in agriculture, therefore, does not depend directly on the amount of her own earnings, but of those of the entire family. She is not well or badly off, well or badly fed, clothed, and lodged according to her earnings, except in the rare case of her being entirely independent of any other means of support than her own labour. The condition of women working at agricultural labour, therefore, depends upon the general means of living of the labourer ; and without an inquiry into this extensive and difficult subject, it is clear that their physical condition cannot be properly understood.

Although the limited duration of the Commission did not allow such inquiry to be satisfactorily made (highly desirable as it would be for many purposes), I nevertheless collected the best information circumstances would permit upon what may be considered the most important subject connected with the actual condition of the agricultural labourer, viz., the means of support of himself and family from wages and other sources.

It would appear that in the district of Wiltshire which I visited, the wages of the agricultural labourer are sometimes as low as 8*s.*, and at other times of the year as high as 10*s.* a-week, for work that is not paid for by the piece. During the winter months, when there is comparatively but little work to be done, according to the present system of farming, wages do not exceed 8*s.* a-week, but in the spring, and other seasons of the year, they are 9*s.* or even 10*s.* a-week, and in the hay and corn harvests (extending over a period of between two and three months) they are considerably more ; much of the work at such times being piece-work. On the average, perhaps, of the whole year, if the labourer is constantly employed, his wages may be taken at 9*s.* 6*d.* a-week. But it does not appear that he has any other advantages from his master in addition to his wages, as in some other counties, unless it be that occasionally he has beer, and sometimes straw for his pig, allowed him ; but these are accidental advantages, and are not to be taken as forming part of his regular wages. In Dorsetshire wages are higher than in Wiltshire. In the neighbourhood of Blandford the wages paid in money, taking the whole year round, average more than 11*s.* a-week, the practice of employing the labourer by the job being extremely common, even where he is constantly employed by the same master. In addition to his

wages, also, the labourer has many advantages derived directly from his master, which must be taken as part of his wages. He has his fuel carriage-free, and, in certain cases, at a reduced price. He sometimes has his cottage with a garden at a very low rent, and in large farms frequently rent-free. Many farmers give their regular labourers a potato-ground rent-free, where they have no allotments; and where the labourer hires an allotment, or where he has a potato-ground, he has, in most cases, his master's horses to plough it, and to draw the potatoes when dug. The master also commonly finds straw for the pig kept by the labourer. The carter and shepherd have also other advantages, in order to compensate them for their employment preventing their increasing their regular wages by piece-work. Although all these advantages are not enjoyed by every labourer in addition to his wages, it is not very common to find a labourer who has not some of them. Another alleged advantage, but one of questionable benefit, to which every regularly employed labourer appears entitled, is the *grist*, which is generally half a bushel of corn, or even more, in certain cases, a-week, at a reduced price. In some cases the grist is corn sold to the labourer at 6s. or even 5s. a bushel, whatever might be the market price. In other cases it is even sold 1s. a bushel under the market price. But most frequently it appeared to me that the grist is inferior corn (*tail-ends* or *tailings*), not marketable, in a common sense, and sold at a price quite equal to its real value. In Devonshire, in the neighbourhood of St. Thomas's, Exeter, wages appear to be about the same as in Dorsetshire, in some instances perhaps a trifle higher. The advantages are much the same as in Dorsetshire, with the addition of cider, said to be worth 1s., 1s. 3d., or even 1s. 6d. a-week. Mr. John Drew, of Powderham, Devonshire, and who acts as agent to many gentlemen of landed property in the neighbourhood, estimated that the labourer's wages and advantages of all kinds from his master, amount on the average in one six months of the year to 11s. 6d. a-week, and in the other six months to 13s. 6d.; giving an average of 12s. 6d. a-week all the year round. This calculation, however, comprised the profit attending the keeping a pig. But I am inclined to think that this is more than the general rate of wages in Devonshire, as it is certainly higher than they are at Southmolton; and on the left bank of the Exe, I understood wages on the average were 2s. lower than this calculation. In the part of Somersetshire I visited, the average wages during the whole year, paid in money, appear to be rather lower than in Wiltshire; but the labourer has an allowance of cider (three pints daily), considered by both master and labourer as worth about 1s. or 1s. 3d. a-week. But in this county generally I believe the labourer has very few or no advantages in addition to his wages; and probably, were the case accurately investigated, it would be found that in Somersetshire the labourer is worse off than in

Wiltshire, and considerably worse off than in Dorsetshire and Devonshire.

The wages paid in money to the labourer clearly do not show his real condition; nor do his wages and the advantages he derives from his master, as will be found upon further consideration. Besides these means, the labourer has generally some other source from which he receives something towards the support of himself and his family.

The letting of small allotments of a quarter, half, or three-quarters of an acre, and sometimes an entire acre, or even more, has been rapidly on the increase of late years in Wiltshire, Dorsetshire, and Devonshire, but has not been adopted in Somersetshire to any considerable extent. The rent is the same as that which is generally paid for land of the same quality in the same neighbourhood, when let in larger lots as farms. The average produce of an acre of ground, planted with potatoes, may be taken at about 300 bushels. Half an acre of allotment, therefore, will yield enough to give a family 160 lbs. of potatoes a-week during the whole year, or about 3 lbs. a-day each to a family of eight persons. The average rent of half an acre of ground varies from 15*s.* to 25*s.* a-year; and half an acre is not too large to allow of its being managed by the labourer, assisted by his wife and children, without prejudice to his ability to work properly for his employer. Generally speaking, perhaps, the allotments do not contain so much as half an acre. They are, however, granted commonly with reference to the number of the labourer's family, and in the majority of cases there may be about half an acre to six or seven persons. The ground, however, is not always entirely planted with potatoes, a portion of it being very commonly used for the growth of other vegetables, and frequently of a little corn.

In Devonshire, and particularly in Dorsetshire, where the labourer has no allotment, his master very commonly allows him a small piece of ground, a quarter of an acre, or even more, rent-free, called the potato-ground. In many cases this ground is dressed by the master, and the potatoes when dug are also carted home by him for the labourer, who has only to find seed, to plant it, to keep the ground in order, and to dig the potatoes at the proper season.

Where the cottage has a garden, which is most frequently the case, if the labourer does not reside in a town, as Calne or Blandford, the produce of the garden is by no means an unimportant addition to the means of subsistence to the family. Potatoes and other vegetables in considerable quantities are obtained from it.

Another source of the labourer's income, not derived directly from his employer, is the keeping a pig, a very usual practice in these counties. I believe that the allotment system, and also the common custom of allowing the labourer a potato-ground in certain districts, where he has no allotment, have very much

encouraged this practice, as the facilities for feeding and fattening the pig have been much increased. Straw for the pig is also very frequently given by the master, which is again of value as manure afterwards for the garden or allotment. It is generally reckoned that keeping a pig is worth 6*d.* a-week to the farm-labourer.

Another source of income to the agricultural labourer is the earnings of his wife and children. It would appear that there are but few families where the wife or one child or more are not employed in farm-labour. The employment of a child is much more common than that of the wife; and it is rare that a family of any size is found without some member of it, besides the husband, being employed. The lowest rate of earnings of a child is nearly, if not quite, enough to support it; whilst the earnings of the wife, where she is employed, are a very important addition to those of her husband.

The wife and children also generally make some addition to the means of subsistence of the family by gleaning. Three or four bushels of corn are by no means an uncommon result of the gleaning. Five-and-twenty or thirty shillings obtained in this way are an important item in the income of the family.

The earnings of the wife and children, from farm-labour, are common to all these counties; but in a considerable portion of Dorsetshire, and an equally large district of Devonshire, there are other occupations at which the wives and children of the farm-labourers gain as much or more than by being employed in agriculture. In the part of Dorsetshire in question, the shirt wire-button-making is followed by nearly all the labourers' wives and children, above six years old. The earnings of a family at button-making amount to 3*s.*, 4*s.*, 5*s.*, and sometimes 6*s.*, or even more, a-week. The importance of this employment to the family is perceptible in the unwillingness of the parents to let their children attend the schools where the work might be interrupted. In most of the schools the children are pretty constantly busied in button-making between their lessons, whilst in a few, and the best schools, the work is allowed only during one portion of the day. In the portion of Devonshire in question, lace-making occupies a great many of the daughters of the agricultural labourers from an early age, and their earnings are considerable.*

This statement of the several kinds of sources from which the agricultural labouring families obtain their means of support in these counties, will render intelligible the great diversity in their circumstances, and without an accurate conception of which their condition cannot be understood. There are families which are in the receipt of perhaps not less than 18*s.* a-week, all things taken

* It was not a part of my duty to make any inquiries into the employment of children not occupied in agriculture; but I had ample opportunities of observing certain ill effects on children, physical and moral, of their employment in button-making. The assistance it affords the families of the agricultural labourer is, however, frequently very great

into consideration, during a considerable portion of the year ; but there are also families with nothing beyond the bare money-wages of the husband, 8s., 9s., or 10s. a-week, according to the seasons, during the whole twelve months.

The income of the great majority of labouring families is between these extremes. The money-wages of the husband are the most certain and permanent portion of this income, but his wages are not the same in every case. They vary according to his strength and capacity for different kinds of labour, upon which the quantity of his task-work depends, which is also influenced by the district of the country he lives in. Whether the wife is employed, depends upon the state of her health, and the age and number of her children ; and her wages are regulated somewhat by her capacity for working, and also by the practice of the locality of more or less task-work being performed by the women, or their working a quarter or less portion of a year. The employment of children depends upon their age, but chiefly upon their strength ; and many, or indeed most, of the advantages I have mentioned as enjoyed by the labourer, in addition to his wages, also depend upon the regularity with which he works for the same master, and also more or less upon local customs. Further, the condition of the labourer is affected by the possibility of diminished employment at particular seasons of the year, for instance, the winter, when for many weeks at a time he may be entirely without work. And, finally, the number of individuals in the family to be supported out of its income is a most material consideration in estimating his condition.

But with this diversity of condition of the labouring families, it is clear that, though the earnings of the wife may be no inconsiderable part of the entire money-receipts of the family, yet that her condition must in the main depend on the gross amount of the means of support of the whole family, and not on her individual earnings, as will also be the case of a grown-up daughter continuing to form part of her father's family, and working in the fields. Thus, in the same district or same parish, there may be cases of women labouring in the fields who may not always have a sufficient quantity of food, whilst others may be well off in that respect.

This conclusion corresponds very closely with the fact. In conversing with women accustomed to work in the fields, I found, nearly generally, that there was no complaint of a deficiency of food ; in some cases the appearance of the cottages, of the women themselves, and of the children, proved that there could be no such deficiency. But there are women occupied in the same employment who cannot be said to have adequate food ; for there are maladies amongst them ascribed by medical men to that cause. Such instances, however, which are by no means common, occur principally in Wiltshire and Somersetshire, for I heard of

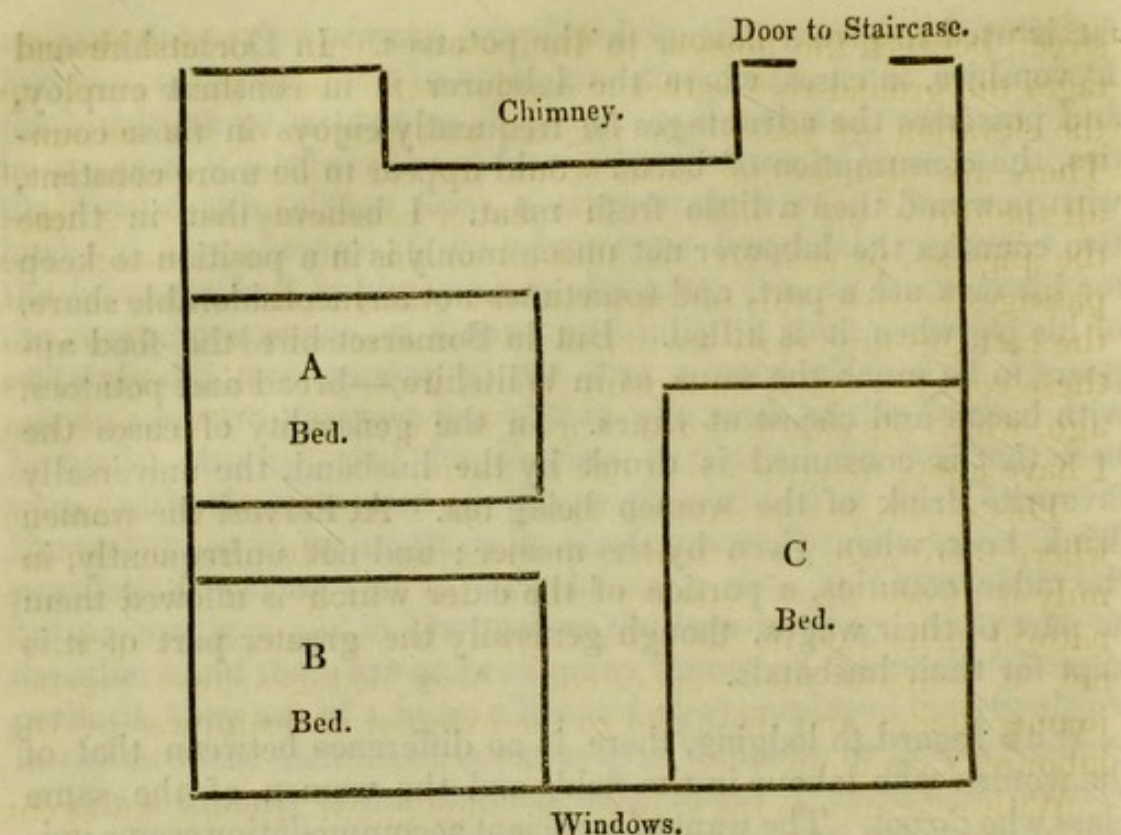
no complaints that women employed in the manner in question had not sufficient food in other counties; and I am inclined to think that where women so employed suffer from a want of food in any case, it is where the means of subsistence of the family is at the lowest ebb, either from a temporary want of work by the husband, the absence of the advantages frequently possessed by the labourer, bad habits, such as drinking, &c., or from, perhaps, the commonest cause, a numerous family of young children. It certainly did not appear to me that a want of food is by any means common amongst the women who work in the fields. But I should observe, that the districts in which I did not hear of it, were (with the exception of the neighbourhood of St. Thomas's, Exeter) those in which there is employment for the agricultural population besides that of farm-labour; viz., in Dorsetshire the button-making, and in Devonshire the lace-making; although on the other hand there are quite as many women on the whole (though, perhaps, they are of a more advanced age) employed in agriculture in the two last-mentioned counties as in Wiltshire or Somersetshire.

The testimony of the medical men whom I consulted induces me to believe that the quality of the food of the agricultural labourers is not too low where the general state of their health is good; but that if there is a disposition to disease, or any deficiency in the quantity of the food, then the quality is found to be defective. Generally speaking the labouring population is healthy; but it appears that when grown-up women are attacked by diseases of certain descriptions, the low quality of their food is unfavourable to their recovery. It would appear, also, that when the quantity of food is sufficient, any effects from its quality are less felt by women accustomed to out-door labour than by those who keep at home. In Wiltshire the food of the labourer and his family is wheaten* bread, potatoes, a small quantity of beer, but only as a luxury, and a little butter and tea. To this may sometimes be added (but it is difficult to say how often or in what quantities), cheese, bacon, and in the neighbourhood of Calne, a portion of the entrails of the pig,—a considerable trade being carried on at Calne in curing bacon. I am inclined to think that the use of bacon and those parts of the pig only occurs where the earnings of the family are not limited to those of the husband; or, if his wages form their sole means of support, then it depends upon the number of his family. In more than one cottage, where the mother went out to work, or two of the boys were earning perhaps 3s. or 3s. 6d. a-week between them, I saw a side of bacon hanging against the wall; but nothing of the kind was visible when the only earnings were those of the husband, or the family was numerous and young. Where, from poverty, bacon cannot be obtained, a little

* Barley bread, universally eaten by the labourer at the close of last century, in the greater part of these counties, as I was told, has everywhere given place to wheaten bread.

fat is used to give a flavour to the potatoes. In Dorsetshire and Devonshire, in cases where the labourer is in constant employ, and possesses the advantages he frequently enjoys in those counties, the consumption of bacon would appear to be more constant, with now and then a little fresh meat. I believe that in these two counties the labourer not uncommonly is in a position to keep for his own use a part, and sometimes not an inconsiderable share, of his pig when it is killed. But in Somersetshire the food appears to be much the same as in Wiltshire,—bread and potatoes, with bacon and cheese at times. In the generality of cases the beer that is consumed is drunk by the husband, the universally favourite drink of the women being tea. At harvest the women drink beer, when given by the master; and not unfrequently, in the cider counties, a portion of the cider which is allowed them as part of their wages, though generally the greater part of it is kept for their husbands.

With regard to lodging, there is no difference between that of the women who labour in the fields and the women of the same class who do not. The want of sufficient accommodation seems universal. Cottages generally have only two bed-rooms (with very rare exceptions); a great many have only one. The consequence is, that it is very often extremely difficult, if not impossible, to divide a family so that grown-up persons of different sexes, brothers and sisters, fathers and daughters, do not sleep in the same room. Three or four persons not unfrequently sleep in the same bed. In a few instances I found that two families, neighbours, arranged so that the females of both families slept together in one cottage and the males in the other; but such an arrangement is very rare, and in the generality of cottages I believe that the only attempt that is or that can be made to separate beds, with occupants of different sexes, and necessarily placed close together from the smallness of the rooms, is an old shawl or some article of dress suspended as a curtain between them. At Stourpaine, a village near Blandford, I measured a bed-room in a cottage consisting of two rooms, the bed-room in question upstairs, and a room on the ground-floor in which the family lived during the day. There were eleven in the family: and the aggregate earnings in money were 16*s.* 6*d.* weekly (Dec. 1842), with certain advantages, the principal being the father's title to a grist of a bushel of corn a-week, at 1*s.* below the market price, his fuel carted for him, &c. They had also an allotment of a quarter of an acre, for which they paid a rent of 7*s.* 7*d.* a-year. The following diagram shows the shape of the room and the position of the three beds, A, B, C, it contained. The room was ten feet square, not reckoning the two small recesses by the sides of the chimney, about 18 inches deep. The roof was the thatch, the middle of the chamber being about seven feet high. Opposite the fire-place was a small window, about 15 inches square, the only one to the room.



Bed A was occupied by the father and mother, a little boy, Jeremiah, aged $1\frac{1}{2}$ year, and an infant aged 4 months.

Bed B was occupied by the three daughters,—the two eldest, Sarah and Elizabeth, twins, aged 20; and Mary, aged 7.

Bed C was occupied by the four sons,—Silas, aged 17; John, aged 15; James, aged 14; and Elias, aged 10.

There was no curtain, or any kind of separation between the beds.

This I was told was not an extraordinary case; but that, more or less, every bed-room in the village was crowded with inmates of both sexes, of various ages, and that such a state of things was caused by the want of cottages.

It is impossible not to be struck, in visiting the dwellings of the agricultural labourers, with the general want of new cottages, notwithstanding the universal increase of population. Everywhere the cottages are old, and frequently in a state of decay, and are consequently ill adapted for their increased number of inmates of late years. The floor of the room in which the family live during the day is always of stone in these counties, and wet or damp through the winter months, being frequently lower than the soil outside. The situation of the cottage is often extremely bad, no attention having been paid at the time of its building to facilities for draining. Cottages are frequently erected on a dead level, so that water cannot escape; and sometimes on spots lower than the surrounding ground. In the village of Stourpain, in Dorsetshire, there is a row of several labourers' cottages, mostly joining each other, and fronting the street, in the middle of which is an open gutter. There are two or three narrow passages leading from the

street, between the houses, to the back of them. Behind the cottages the ground rises rather abruptly; and about three yards up the elevation are placed the pigsties and privies of the cottages. There are also shallow excavations, the receptacles apparently of all the dirt of the families. The matter constantly escaping from the pigsties, privies, &c., is allowed to find its way through the passages between the cottages into the gutter in the street, so that the cottages are nearly surrounded by streams of filth. It was in these cottages that a malignant typhus broke out about two years ago, which afterwards spread through the village. The bed-room I have above described is in one of them.

This is perhaps an extreme case; but I hardly visited a cottage where there were any attempts at draining. The dirt of the family is thrown down before or behind the cottage; if there is any natural inclination in the ground from the cottage, it escapes; if not, it remains till evaporated. Most cottages have pigsties joining them; and these add to the external uncleanness of the labourer's dwelling.

With reference to the subject of lodging, Mr. Phelps, an agent of the Marquis of Lansdowne, says—

I was engaged in taking the late census in Bremhill parish, and in one case in Studley I found 29 people living under one roof; amongst them were married men and women, and young people of nearly all ages. In Studley it is not at all uncommon for a whole family to sleep in the same room. The number of bastards in that place is very great; the number of unmarried women is greater than that in the neighbouring places. I don't think this state of things is attributable to the women working in the fields, but more to the want of proper accommodation in the cottages.

The Hon. and Rev. *S. Godolphin Osborne*, rector of Bryanston, near Blandford, in Dorsetshire, says—

To say nothing of the physical injury done to himself (the labourer) and family from the want, in most instances, of anything like proper drainage without his dwelling, and the foul air which they are compelled to breathe from the too confined space of the dwelling within, from infancy to puberty his children for the most part sleep in the same room with his wife and himself; and whatever attempts at decency may be made (and I have seen many most ingenious and praiseworthy attempts), still there is the fact of the old and young, married and unmarried, of both sexes, all herded together in one and the same sleeping apartment. Within this last year I saw, in a room about 13 feet square, three beds: on the first lay the mother, a widow, dying of consumption; on the second two unmarried daughters, one 18 years of age, the other 12; on the third a young married couple, whom I myself had married two days before. A married woman of thorough good character told me, a few weeks ago, that on her confinement, so crowded with children is her one room, they are obliged to put her on the floor in the middle of the room, that they may pay her the requisite attention: she spoke of this as to her the most painful part of that her hour of trial. I do not choose to put on paper the disgusting scenes that I have known to occur from this promiscuous crowding of the sexes together. Seeing, however, to what the mind of the young female is exposed from her very childhood, I have long ceased to wonder at the otherwise seeming precocious licentiousness of conversation which may be heard in every field where many of the young are at work together.

Early robbed by circumstances of much of that purity which is her honour's safest guard, field-work lends a finish to the mischief.

Mr. *Spooner*, of Blandford, surgeon, says—

Generally the cottages are too small for the families living in them, and tend to produce and aggravate disease, from the inmates living so closely together. Two years ago typhus fever occurred in a neighbouring parish, which I attend; there was one cottage I attended which consisted of one room on the ground-floor, and two small bed-rooms upstairs. In this cottage lived an old man, with his wife, his two daughters, middle-aged women, and his son and wife, with three children,—in all ten individuals. The whole family had the fever, some of them very severely. The son's wife, with two of her children, were on a bed in an out-house; in the out-house was a well, and a large tub containing pigs' victuals, and was the general receptacle for everything. The floor was earthen, with no ceiling but the thatch of the roof. In the same village there were more than forty cases of typhus, and the spread of the disease must be attributed to the people living so densely packed together.

The clothing of women employed in field-labour would appear to be inadequate for their work, but the deficiency is not complained of by them. A change of clothes seems to be out of the question, although necessary not only for cleanliness but for convenience and saving of time. The upper parts of the under-clothes of women at work, even their stays, quickly become wet through with perspiration, whilst the lower parts cannot escape getting equally wet in nearly every kind of work they are engaged in, except in the driest weather. It not unfrequently happens that a woman, on returning home from work, is obliged to go to bed for an hour or two to allow her clothes to be dried. It is also by no means uncommon for her, if she does not do this, to put them on again the next morning nearly as wet as when she took them off. It does not appear that any ill consequences to the health have been observed by medical men to arise from this cause, unless rheumatism be partly attributable to it. The want of a change of working clothes, however, does not prevent the generality of working women having a better gown and other articles of dress for Sundays or holidays.

With reference to the question of clothing and linen for the family generally, a great change has been effected for the benefit of the labouring classes within these few years by the clothing clubs, which are excellently contrived for aiding the poor, and at the same time making such assistance depend upon their own exertions and good conduct, and for avoiding all the mischiefs of indiscriminate charity. I had an opportunity of examining the clothing club at Blandford, in Dorsetshire, and its arrangements and working appeared equally excellent. Any labouring family of good conduct was allowed to belong to it, subscribing 1*d.*, 2*d.*, or 3*d.* a-week, according to its size and other circumstances. At the end of the year, Christmas, these subscriptions are doubled by the donations of persons in a better position of life living in the

neighbourhood. The subscribers are then entitled to purchase of the tradesman appointed to supply the club, to the amount of their respective shares of the funds, any plain articles of dress or of household linen. The tradesman of the club, in consideration of the large sum of money thus laid out, and promptly paid at his shop, which in the Blandford club exceeded 2000*l.* last Christmas, supplies the best articles of the description wanted at a price rather lower than he could afford to sell them to the labourer dealing with him in the ordinary way. It is also an imperative rule of the club, that if any subscriber purchases with club-money any article of dress or linen not of a plain and useful description, he ceases to be a member, as he also does upon any ill conduct. The effect of these clubs has been very great in increasing the linen and clothes of the labourers' families since their establishment.

The general conclusion as to the physical condition of women engaged in agriculture is, that it is better generally than those of the same class not so employed. The reason is evident; the means of the family are increased by her earnings; she has more food, if she be not better clothed and lodged. Her health is also better. I am now speaking of her own physical condition; the effects of her working at farm-labour upon her domestic economy, her husband and children, will be considered presently.

There are no very apparent effects upon the morality of women from their working in the fields; very frequently they are active, energetic, and well-disposed women, working from the sole desire of increasing the means of subsistence of the family, and personally undergoing the labour of their employment for that object. Their motive, being thus meritorious, is hardly consistent with any great degree of immorality. Instances of a want of chastity on the part of married as well as single women thus employed occur, but not more frequently, as far as I could ascertain, amongst them than amongst women of the same class who do not work at the same labour.

There is no doubt that the mixed employment of men and women in hay-making, and perhaps in the corn-harvest, tends to immorality. Hay-making is a season of comparative license; hard work is expected by the master; but if it is performed, he overlooks conduct on the part of the work-people which he might not suffer to pass unnoticed at other times. Drink, and frequently food, is plentifully supplied to stimulate to work, and gaiety is promoted by every means. The topics of conversation and the language that is used amongst men and women, young and old, is described as coarse and filthy. That breaches of morality occur cannot be doubted; indeed there is plenty of evidence that they actually take place.

But one-half of the women and girls employed in the hay-field are never engaged in any other kind of farm-work, and the licen-

tiousness of that season, as far as the women are concerned, would appear rather to proceed from those occasionally employed. Women who work the whole or the greater part of the year are too much accustomed to work in the company of men, and moreover are too much inclined to look upon their work in the serious light of an important part of their means of subsistence, to conduct themselves in a reckless manner at any particular season; and generally the testimony in favour of such women's good conduct is abundant. At other times of the year than the hay and corn harvests, no extraordinary licentiousness is generally imputed to women employed in farm-labour.

But there is a great difference of opinion upon the question of the conduct of women thus employed: I have adopted the opinion expressed by the greater number of persons with whom I conversed upon the subject. On the other hand, the clearly-expressed opinion of the Hon. and Rev. S. G. Osborne, whose experience is not confined to one district, and who, moreover, has devoted many years to understand and alleviate the condition of the agricultural poor, speaks strongly as to the immoral effects upon women of their working in the fields.

Their morality, however, appears to me to be that of the women in general of the agricultural labouring class, and which cannot be considered as high. This is owing to their poverty, and to the habits they are accustomed to from their infancy, and to the want of proper education, to raise them above their sad condition. The morality of the agricultural labourer is a subject to which my inquiry did not extend, nor had I sufficient opportunities of making any satisfactory inquiry respecting it; but certain things forced themselves upon my attention, and amongst others the consequences of the want of accommodation in their dwellings for sleeping. The sleeping of boys and girls, young men and young women, in the same room, in beds almost touching one another, must have the effect of breaking down the great barriers between the sexes,—the sense of modesty and decency on the part of women, and respect for the other sex on the part of the men. The consequences of the want of proper accommodation for sleeping in the cottages are seen in the early licentiousness of the rural districts,—licentiousness which has not always respected the family relationship. It appeared to me that generally the accommodation for sleeping is such as necessarily to create an early and illicit familiarity between the sexes; for universally in the villages where the cottages are the most crowded, there are the greatest number of illegitimate children, and also the greatest depravity of manners generally. On one considerable estate in Wiltshire, no family is allowed by the owner to occupy a cottage containing fewer than two bed-rooms. The morality and general good conduct of the labourers upon that estate are much superior to that above described. The want of proper accommodation for sleeping

exists in the villages, rather than in detached cottages on the farms; and I believe that the more immoral of the women employed in agriculture, particularly the women only occasionally employed, as in hay-making and at harvest, are from neighbouring villages; and that the steady and better, and also the largest portion of the women regularly employed in the fields, are from the detached cottages, rather than the villages.

With the exception of the women employed in dairies, who necessarily are engaged during a part of the Sunday, the opportunities for women employed in agriculture, for attending a place of worship, are very much the same as women not so employed. Occasionally when a woman has been engaged during the whole of the previous week in out-door labour, she may have more to do on the Sunday in her household affairs than a woman who has been at home during the same time. But the cottager's wife with a family has always something to do. Their attendance at church—for there are very few Dissenters, unless those belonging to the Ranters may be classed with Dissenters—depends very much upon the clergyman of the parish, and at the chapel upon the dissenting minister of the neighbourhood. Where attention is paid by the clergyman to the labouring classes, as is now nearly always the case, their attendance at church once in the day is tolerably constant, and their religious duties are pretty regularly performed. There is the most satisfactory evidence of a great change in this respect having taken place of late years, which is to be ascribed to the activity of the clergy in the discharge of their duty to their poor parishioners. In the rural districts I visited, I nearly everywhere found the clergy taking a part in attempting to improve the condition of the labouring population. They are nearly always the main supporters, and frequently the managers of the clothing clubs, coal clubs, &c.; they are commonly the promoters of education, and of improvements in the schools; whilst their wives not unfrequently devote much of their time to visiting the cottages, and advising and helping the women in their difficulties.

A great many women accustomed to work in the fields, like other women of the same class, are unable to read and write, or if to do either, it is very imperfectly. This is more particularly the case with the women above 30; but generally, even where they have been taught to read and write, the women of the agricultural labouring class are in a state of ignorance affecting the daily welfare and comforts of their families. Ignorance of the commonest things, needle-work, cooking, and other matters of domestic economy, is described as nearly universally prevalent; and when any knowledge of such things is possessed by the wife of a labourer, it is generally to be traced to the circumstance of her having, before marriage, lived as a servant in a farmhouse, or elsewhere. A girl brought up in a cottage until she marries is generally ignorant of nearly everything she ought to be

acquainted with for the comfortable and economical management of a cottage. The effects of such ignorance are seen in many ways, but in no one more striking than its hindering girls from getting out to service, as they are not capable of doing anything that is required in a family of a better description. The further effect of this is, that not being able to find a place, a young woman goes into the fields to labour, with which ends all chance of improving her position; she marries, and brings up her daughters in the same ignorance, and their lives are a repetition of her own.

There are other consequences, however, resulting from the women working in the fields, besides those affecting their own physical or moral condition, and these consist in certain disadvantages to her family.

When the mother of young children is absent from home the whole or the greater part of the day, the mischief to them is very great. They are neglected in every way, morally and physically. Under the most favourable circumstances, they may be left in the care of a grandmother or aunt; but the more common way is to leave them in the custody of the eldest boy or girl, of 8 or 9 years old, or in that of a girl of the same age, or a little older, hired for the purpose. Sometimes, however, her children are locked up in the cottage, without anybody to take charge of them at all. Where a girl is hired to take care of children, she is paid about 9*d.* a-week, and has her food besides, which is a serious deduction from the wages of the woman at work.

When children are locked up by themselves, sometimes the most fatal accidents happen, those from fire amongst others. One woman, accustomed all her life to work in the fields, and a most excellent specimen of her class, industrious, careful, and thriving, and having moreover a large family, told me—"I have always left my children to themselves, and, God be praised! nothing has ever happened to them, though I have thought it dangerous. I have many a time come home and have thought it a mercy to find nothing has happened to them."

In addition to the dangers of leaving children to themselves, there is the further evil, that they are not taken care of as young children should be. They are left without any control over their conduct the whole day, and without instruction or example of any kind. When left in the care of a child older than themselves, the case is hardly better. No child of 8 or 10 years can feel the responsibility of such a charge, or be able to attend to children, as far as forming their minds, or keeping them from indulging in mischievous propensities. In more than one case it was represented to me, by women working out of doors, that leaving their children without anybody to attend properly to them was the worst part of their employment: the children, they said, were always in a state of dirt; they destroyed more victuals than they ate; they tore their clothes; and there were no means of their learning anything.

When the child is old enough, and it can be afforded, it is sent to school for the day, which is a great relief to the mother ; but this cannot be the case with very young children. Sometimes, a mother will take her children, who are strong enough to walk so far, with her to her work, and they are kept in her sight all day long, but this is very rarely the case.

To a certain extent, also, the husband is a sufferer from his wife's absence from home. There is not the same order in the cottage, nor the same attention paid to his comforts as when his wife remains at home all day. On returning from her labour she has to look after her children, and her husband may have to wait for his supper. He may come home tired and wet ; he finds his wife has arrived just before him ; she must give her attention to the children ; there is no fire, no supper, no comfort, and he goes to the beer-shop.

When a woman is much employed out of doors, many things in the domestic economy are neglected ; particularly such things as require frequent attention. Her own clothes, and those of her husband and family, are rarely in such cases properly attended to.

The number of women employed in agriculture, either absolutely or compared with that of men so employed, must be to a great extent matter of mere conjecture, until a more minute and accurate inquiry than I had the means of executing, be made. From the information which I was inclined to pay attention to, and from the looser statements of the farmers and other persons with whom I conversed, it would appear perhaps that in the hay-harvest about as many women and girls are employed as men and boys, and that at other times of the year during which women are employed their number does not exceed one-third or one-fourth that of the men, except at the corn-harvest, when their number may be nearly equal.

With a slight exception, the work performed by women in farm-labour is not the kind of work which it would answer to employ men upon ; the employment of women, therefore, has not superseded that of men in any degree that I could discover. During the war, women were employed in greater numbers than at present in some districts, but they made way for men immediately at the peace. The strength required for the work performed by men effectually prevents women from being employed in it ; and the lower rate of wages for which they work has not had any tendency, therefore, to make them more generally employed.

Employment in field-labour is beneficial to the physical condition of women ; and when it is regular and tolerably constant, I do not think it is materially injurious to their moral character. The immorality observable amongst women so employed is not a consequence of their occupation, but is the necessary result of the ignorance and poverty of the agricultural labouring population generally. I believe it would be much better for their

husbands and children, if women were not engaged in such employment, in certain respects; but the observation repeatedly made to me on the other hand was, that their earnings are a benefit to their families which cannot be dispensed with without creating a great deal of suffering. And, upon the fullest consideration, I believe that the earnings of a woman employed in the fields are an advantage which, in the present state of the agricultural population, outweighs any of the mischiefs arising from such employment. All direct interference in the employment of women in agriculture must be deprecated at present. The evils that attend it can only be relieved by generally bettering the position of the agricultural labouring class; but before any step towards effecting such an object is attempted, the real condition of that class should be accurately ascertained.

II. EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN—GIRLS.

The employment of female children, or girls under the age of puberty, in farm-labour, is very rare in these counties. They are sometimes occupied as early as the age of 12, or even younger, in the hay-harvest, and planting or picking potatoes, but seldom at any other times. Their strength is not sufficient generally to support any bodily fatigue before the age of 14 or 15, when, on other accounts, they are not employed for a season. Young girls, however, frequently work in their father's allotment or potato-ground, assisting him or their mother in its cultivation, and they also help their mother in gleaning; but this is not hired labour.

Formerly, however, it was the practice for young girls to work in the fields, when the system of apprenticeship existed without the great modifications introduced during the last 25 or 30 years. It appears to have been a common practice, where apprenticeship prevailed, before these changes, to send the girls into the fields with boys to work, no difference being made in their occupations; but is this no longer the case; and when female apprentices now work out of doors (by no means a common practice), it is only occasionally in the hay or corn harvest, and then generally after they have reached an age when such work perhaps is not ill adapted for them.

BOYS.

Boys begin to be regularly employed in farm-work as early as 7 in some few instances, but generally at 9 or 10, and sometimes as late as 11 or 12. This difference of age at which they first go out to work, arises from various accidental causes. A farmer, who has a hard-working, well-behaved labourer, will perhaps endeavour to attach such labourer to him by taking one of his boys as soon as the child can be of any service; or sometimes, where a labourer has a large family, a farmer will be induced to take a child at the earliest possible age to relieve the father, and prevent his being driven to the poor-house. Sometimes farmers

think they are consulting their own interest in taking children at an early age, whom they may want in a few years as labourers, in order that they may be better trained. When a parish is overstocked with boys, they do not go out to work till later, and until they can be of some real service. Sometimes the existence of a good school in the parish induces the parents of a child to make every endeavour to keep him as long as they possibly can before he goes out to work. The age at which boys begin to work depends also to a great degree upon local customs. These, and other reasons, operate to produce the difference that is found, even in adjoining parishes, in the ages at which boys are put to work.

The following are various statements which I received upon this subject :—

IN WILTSHIRE,

- The boys begin to work about 12 years old. *Dr. Greenup.*
 I generally take them (boys) at about 7 years old. *Mr. Bowman.*
 Boys begin to work at about 8 years old. *Mr. Phelps.*
 My eldest boy was taken from school when he was not 10 years old in order to work. *Mrs. Sumbler.*
 My eldest boy went out when he was about 7 or 8 ; all my boys worked at that age. *Jane Long.*

IN DORSETSHIRE,

- Boys are employed from 10 years, and under that age, in keeping birds from newly sown corn. *Mr. Fox.*
 They (boys) are generally sent out to work at the ages of eight or nine, and some as young as seven years of age. *Mr. King.*
 I have two grown-up sons ; they went out to work when they were boys, one at seven years old, the other at nine. *Susan Riches.*
 I should say it is a rare instance in this parish for boys to be employed under at least 10 or 11 years of age, and even then in general they have only occasional employment. *Rev. H. Austen.*
 I don't like to take boys under 12 years of age ; I like them to have some education first. *Mr. Tarver.*
 The age at which boys are employed depends on their size a great deal ; perhaps I may say they begin generally about 11, when they are set to scare birds. *Mr. Burgess.*

IN DEVONSHIRE,

- Children begin to work about 10 or 11 years of age. *Mr. A. Smith.*
 Boys are employed from nine upwards in driving horses at plough, leading cattle, and driving them to and from their pastures. *Mr. Matthews.*
 Boys are employed as soon as they can hold anything in their hands ; at seven or eight years old ; they are generally engaged at that age. *Mr. Lyddon.*
 Several I have known in place at seven years of age ; the greatest number exceed the age of nine, being of little use before that time. *Rev. P. Benson.*

I take boys as servants ; I take them generally about ten years old.

Mr. Huxtable.

My eldest boy is 10 ; he lives in a farm-house ; he lives for his meat, drink, and clothes.

Charles Medway.

Boys not apprenticed go to farm-labour between seven and eight years old.

Mrs. Cozens.

IN SOMERSETSHIRE,

I went out to work when I was nine years old.

Geo. Small.

They (boys) are generally employed at nine years old.

Mr. Somers.

I don't think anything like half the boys at the age of nine, of this neighbourhood, are employed.

Mr. R. King.

Boys are generally taken from school when about 10 years old, if they can obtain employment from the farmers.

Mr. Ward.

The above statements show the ages at which boys go out permanently to work. But when they do not do so till they are 10 or 12 years old, they are, before that age, nearly all occasionally employed for one, two, or more seasons, at hay-making, potato-planting and digging, &c. ; in these occupations boys are useful, and they nearly all find profitable employment. Boys who remain at school after they are 9 or 10 years old, are frequently taken away from school, for a fortnight or three weeks at a time, for such work. Boys, also, from the earliest ages, assist their father and mother in the cultivation of the allotment or potato-ground. And before a boy is regularly hired by the farmer, he frequently at an early age accompanies his father to his work, not to labour, but to wait upon him, as it were, in different ways.

Where boys are put out as young as 7, 8, or 9, their chief occupation for some time is bird-keeping, taking care of poultry, or watching cattle in the fields, getting in wood for the house, &c. At the age of 10 or 11 the strength of children is extremely different ; but a strong boy at that age begins to lead horses at plough ; he is also occupied in the hay-field and harvest-field, and at other times in the numerous little jobs about the farm and farm-yard for which his strength is suitable. As he gets to 13, 14, or 15, and his strength increases, he begins to hold the plough, and also to attend to the stable ; at this age he also begins to help the carter, and he is allowed to drive the team. After that time he begins mowing, reaping, hedging, and ditching, and the more laborious and difficult operations to be performed by the farm-labourer.

Until a boy begins to be employed in the regular work of a labourer, his occupations are numerous, varying with the seasons, the kind of farm he works on, its soil, and particularly with his own strength. The principal occupations are keeping birds, watching cattle in the fields, getting in wood for the house, gathering turnips for cattle, driving horses or oxen at plough, harvest-work, helping in the stable to get in hay, and potato and bean

planting, &c., going upon errands, and any occasional job for which his strength is sufficient; but there is no work that is at all laborious, although it may be irksome—bird-keeping, perhaps, being the most so from its monotony; but this occupation is not without its amusements.

If the leading or driving horses and oxen at plough be excepted, not one of the occupations above enumerated can be considered as hard work. There is no great exertion required, and the employment given to a boy is nearly always according to his age and strength. It is found that, practically, there is no use in attempting to give a boy a job to do for which his strength is insufficient; and I scarcely heard any instances of boys being overworked, unless it were by accident. There certainly is no reason to suppose that generally the occupations of boys are too laborious.

With respect, however, to leading or driving horses or oxen at plough, it is admitted on all hands that the work is hard, though not too hard. Strong lads are always necessarily selected for it; and though the labour of walking some miles a day over newly-turned ground, especially in the clayey soils, where the boy is more commonly wanted to drive the plough, is great, it is not excessive. Whatever the food they live on, whether that of the cottage or that of the farm-house (as in parts of Devonshire), their health, if they are strong, is not affected by the work in question. Over-exertion sometimes takes place when the occupation requires much walking, and, according to the opinion of Mr Spooner, a surgeon of Blandford, sufficiently often to render it necessary that care should be taken in working boys.

The hours during which boys are occupied during the day are generally the same as those of men, when the latter are not paid by piece-work, or employed over-hours. In the winter such hours are from eight in the morning till four in the afternoon; during the greater part of the rest of the year, from six in the morning till six in the evening. When a boy is employed in driving or leading the horses at plough, his hours are from seven till four generally. At the hay-harvest and corn-harvest their hours are later, and depend on the weather and other accidents. Where boys are lodged in the house, as in parts of Devonshire, they have also to feed cattle sometimes before going to bed.

The wages of boys, upon their first going out to work, are generally 1*s.* 6*d.* a-week. There is no fixed age at which that sum is increased. Their wages, after the first year or two, depend more upon their strength and activity, and also their willingness to work, than upon their age. A slow, dull boy will go on for years without any material alteration in his wages; lads of 18 will sometimes not receive more than 3*s.* 6*d.* a-week, whilst others of the same age will be receiving perhaps the full wages of men. Wages depend, therefore, more on the strength and capacity of the

boy than upon his age. The following statements respecting the wages of boys will confirm this view of the subject.

IN WILTSHIRE,

I begin by paying him (the boy at 7 or 8 years old) 1*s.* 6*d.* a-week his wages go on increasing, till at 12 years old I give him 2*s.* 6*d.* a-week.

Mr. Bowman.

At first they (boys) have but little wages; they can soon earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a-week, and by the time they are 15 and 16 will earn 6*s.* a-week.

Mr. Phelps.

Eldest son, under 10, had 3*d.* a-day for two seasons; then 2*s.* 6*d.* a-week for two or three years; then 6*d.* a-day; now 4*s.* a-week. Second son, about 15 years old, has 3*s.* a-week.

Mrs. Sumbler.

Three boys, 14, 16, 18 years old, get 3*s.*, 3*s.* 6*d.*, and 4*s.* 6*d.* a-week.

Mrs. Long.

IN DORSETSHIRE,

I have now two boys; they are 14 and 15 years old. I pay them 4*s.* a-week, each of them.

Mr. Tarver.

At first I give (boys) 1*s.* 6*d.* a-week, then 2*s.* 6*d.*, and when I give 3*s.* a-week they begin to be of some service. I let them have a pint of ale a-day with the men.

Mr. Burgess.

On their first going out to keep birds, from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* weekly, rising gradually to about 4*s.*

Mr. Fox.

The average pay of these children is, as nearly as I can find, as follows:—from 8 to 12 years 1*s.* and 1*s.* 6*d.* a-week; after 12, and to 14 or 15 years, from 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. King.

IN DEVONSHIRE,

Children from 4*d.* to 6*d.*, increasing as their labour becomes more valuable; they also generally get cider in small quantities.

Mr. A. Smith.

Boys from nine to sixteen earn from 3*d.* to 9*d.* per day.

Mr. M. S. Matthews.

I also hire boys as servants. In this case I take them generally about 10 years old. They don't get much at first. I take them entirely into the house, lodge and feed them, and they clothe themselves. I pay them at first 6*d.* a-week, and that goes on increasing till they get up to be men and capable of doing men's work. I have now a boy 16 years old; he has 1*s.* 6*d.* a-week.

Mr. Huxtable.

They (boys) hire in farm houses, and are found in living, but find their own clothes—get 6*d.* a-week at first.

Mrs. Cozens.

They commence, probably, with bargaining for meat and clothes, and their wages are raised according to what they can earn.

Rev. P. Benson.

Boys are employed after nine years of age (by me and some others), at 1*s.* 6*d.* a-week, with a quart of cider per day; their wages increase as they grow in years, and according to their conduct.

Mr. Gould.

IN SOMERSETSHIRE,

I went to work when I was nine years old. I had 1*s.* a-week and three cups of cider a-day.

George Small.

At first they (boys) are paid 3*d.* a-day and a pint of cider; then 8*d.* a-day, with three half-pints of cider a-day; and then the regular wages of men. Between these periods the wages go on increasing pretty regularly, but it depends on the boy, and sometimes the master. A younger boy is sometimes worth more than an older.

Mr. Somers.

They (boys) generally receive about 1*s.* a-week, with a pint of cider; after that 2*s.* 6*d.* a-week, and so on increasing; but it depends on the size and strength of the boy more than his age.

Mr. R. King.

Boys are generally taken from school when about ten years old, if they can obtain employment from the farmers, and earn about 2*d.* per day till they are 12 years old, 3*d.* per day from 12 to 14, and 4*d.* per day for the two following years.

Mr. Watts.

A little advance of this age (seven), boys get from 3*d.* to 6*d.* a-day; in hay-making and harvest they get an allowance of food.

Mr. Tilsey.

Their (boys) wages are from 2*d.* per day to men's wages, as they grow older and stronger.

Rev. J. S. Toogood.

The result of my inquiries was, that the effects of the work performed by boys in agriculture, on their health, is generally beneficial. If they are weak or sickly, the exposure to wet and cold weather is prejudicial to them, when such exposure is excessive, particularly when they are scrofulous. But where a boy is healthy, his working in farm-labour appears to be decidedly beneficial. I received the following statements on this subject.

WILTSHIRE.

I cannot trace any disease to their (boys) employments, in lads of average strength. Weakly lads suffer, but not more than in any other employment.

Dr. Greenup.

The work which boys perform seems to agree with them perfectly: I have never seen any ill effects to their health from their working in farm-labour. The employment for young lads is decidedly healthy.

Mr. King.

Their (boys) work is not hard generally, and I should say very healthy.

Mr. Phelps.

I do not apprehend that any injurious effect to the health of either (children or women) is produced.

Rev. J. Guthrie.

When my eldest boy was 14, he had the yellow jaundice from catching cold; the next year he was covered with boils, from a violent cold; and the following year he was laid up for six weeks, without being able to do anything, owing to his being exposed to wet and cold. He was not an unhealthy boy when he was young. My second son had the jaundice with the other.

Mrs. Sumbler.

DORSETSHIRE.

I am of opinion that, generally speaking, boys above 12 years of age are those taken for employment in agricultural labour; it tends to develope their persons and strength. Generally they are strong and hearty, and better in health from the employment. I have known, however, cases of boys having inflammation of the knee-joint, periostitis, and rheumatism, from being over-fatigued, and working exposed to cold and wet in the open air. I have at the present time under my care a boy with knee inflamed, from being too

much on his legs all day, from over-walking at an early age. It is like over-working a young horse, which produces diseases known by the name of splents and spavins, and joint lamenesses. These things happen sufficiently often to make it necessary that care should be taken in working boys. Sometimes their work is very hard,—too fatiguing for their years. Scrofula is frequently developed by exposure to cold and wet, it appearing in such cases in the form of consumption, glandular enlargements, and diseases of the bones and joints. Boys of a scrofulous habit are occasionally exposed to a degree of wet and cold, injurious to them, which would not produce any ill consequences in a healthy boy. *Mr. Spooner.*

I cannot say that in my experience I have ever known any of those stages of schooling in out-door employment (the occupations of boys at different ages) to tax too heavily the physical power of the age at which it is entered on, except in cases where, from the parents' neglect or poverty, the constitution has not been dealt fairly with in the way of food.

I have seen the effects of lace-making, straw-plaiting, and button-making, and I have no hesitation in saying that there are many diseases directly proceeding from the confinement of young persons in crowded rooms, the keeping the body constantly in an unnatural position, and the incessant call upon the utmost power of the eye, which these trades require. Thousands of children of agricultural labourers are employed at these species of work. However much I am opposed to field-labour for females, I must add that, in my opinion, there is infinitely less physical injury to be feared from it than from employments of the nature spoken of above.

Hon. and Rev. J. G. Osborne.

I have never perceived that the work the boys do is at all injurious to their health; on the contrary, it is beneficial. *Mr. Tarver.*

I think much labour does, in children so young (seven, eight, or nine years old), produce severe chills and colds, &c., which occasionally terminate in other diseases, which prove more injurious in after-life. I have known such instances. They are, during the most severe weather, constantly exposed to its vicissitudes. *Mr. King.*

Boys are much better employed young; it is a good thing for their health. *Mr Burgess.*

DEVONSHIRE.

Their (boys) work, however, is favourable to their health; it seems to have the effect of establishing it. Chilblains appear to be the only things boys suffer from, which might be avoided if the farmer would take care and provide proper things for them; but the spring always cures them. I have never observed flat feet amongst the agricultural labourers, produced by their walking too much when driving horses at the plough. *Mr. Lyddon.*

I know of no perceptible effect (on the health of boys from their work), unless it be that in beginning to work too early they are stunted in growth. *Rev. P. Benson.*

I have not observed that their (boys) health is at all impaired from such employment. *Mr. Cutliffe.*

I have not observed that their (boys) health is at all impaired from such employment. *Mr. Tanner.*

As regards boys, it is of very rare occurrence that their employment proves injurious to health; generally speaking, they are well fed and clothed in this locality. *Mr. Flaxman.*

They (boys) are generally remarkably healthy. *Mr. A. Smith.*

I do not think their health is injured by work, in cases where they have sufficient food. *Mr. Matthews.*

SOMERSETSHIRE.

At first their (boys) work is always light, not at all calculate to do them any hurt.

Mr. Somers.

On referring to my books, I cannot find that there is any disease peculiar to boys or women engaged in agriculture, but on the contrary they both seem to be remarkably exempt from illness; for the most part they possess a rudeness of countenance and a firmness of fibre which I believe to be wholly attributable to the exercise and the exposure consequent to their occupation.

Mr. Tilly.

Work has a good effect, but sometimes they (boys) suffer from the wet weather when keeping birds.

Rev. J. S. Toogood.

The food of boys, except when they live in the farm-house, as in parts of Devonshire, is that of the labourer's family in general, which has been already described. There is one observation, however, to be made with respect to the labourer's children, that there are no appearances of their suffering from a want of food, except in certain extreme cases; nor is the low quality of the food of the labourer's cottage so injurious, or so perceptible, in the case of children, as in that of their parents. When families are pinched for food, I believe that the parents (at any rate the mothers) undergo more than their share of privation, rather than let their children suffer. And, moreover, as soon as a boy goes out to work, the means of the family are increased, and consequently the quantity of the food is greater, and generally its quality improved. Generally, therefore, boys out at work are not underfed.

In Somersetshire, and, I believe, in some parts of Devonshire also, the practice prevails of paying boys' wages partly in cider, from their first going out to work. From seven, eight, or nine years old, a child is accustomed to drink two or three cups (a pint, or pint and a half) of strong rough cider a-day. I have already alluded to the cider truck, when speaking of women; but in the case of boys there is a mischief beyond the ordinary evils of this species of truck. The boy is taught to love drink from his earliest age; and a few years so confirms him in the taste that he rarely, if ever, gets rid of it in after-life. The greatest and commonest vice of the agricultural labourers is drinking, to which may be ascribed much of the extreme poverty and wretchedness that is met with amongst them. Were it not for the money spent in drink, I believe that the majority of them could command more commodious dwellings, and more animal food for themselves and families, than they have at present. The effect of the habit of drinking is to counteract any benefits from increased earnings. The labourer, whose family has the most limited means of subsistence, does not drink, he cannot afford it; but the frequenters of the beer-shops are the labourers, the aggregate earnings of whose families, if properly spent, would not only secure them against want, but even place within their reach many comforts now nearly unknown to the labourer's cottage. Drunkenness practically renders higher wages of no avail; for the

surplus of wages, above what is absolutely required for the lowest state of subsistence of the family, is spent at the beer-shop. The ordinary pretence in support of this petty truck in cider is, that the labourer cannot work without drinking several pints a-day. I doubt the truth of this assertion from the statements I frequently heard in opposition to it. Upon this subject, the testimony of Mr. Somers, the Vice-Chairman of the Bridgwater Board of Guardians, and two of his labourers, is instructive. (App. Nos. 50, 53, 54).

The outward clothing of a boy appears to be generally good and proper for his work. He has generally a better suit for Sunday; for which he is mainly indebted to the establishment of clothing clubs. The deficiency in his clothing is in linen; but in this respect he is much better off than some years ago.

The lodging of boys is that already described of the agricultural labouring class, except when living in the farm-house, which is the case only in parts of Devonshire.

Effects of the Employment of Children in Agriculture on their opportunities for obtaining School Education, and also Religious and Moral Instruction.

Judging from the parts of the country I visited, I should say that, in the greater number of agricultural parishes, there are day-schools, which a considerable number of the children of both sexes of the labouring class attend. Children go to these schools at the age of five, six, or seven years; the boys, if not taken away, remain until they are twelve, or even older, and the girls sometimes until they are fifteen or sixteen. Reading and writing, and sometimes a little arithmetic, are taught; to which, occasionally, some other occupation is added; the boys not unfrequently learn some slight mechanical business, such as making nets, &c.; and the girls needle-work. In some parts of Dorsetshire the making of wire shirt-buttons is taught to boys and girls, the work occupying nearly all their spare time. The books that are used for teaching the children to read contain lessons of morality and religion. In a few schools singing is encouraged, particularly when the master or mistress has a taste for music. There is also, with few exceptions, a Sunday school in every parish, at which reading is taught, and sometimes writing; but the principal object of these schools, generally, is the instruction of the children in their religious duties. The children who attend the day school nearly always belong to the Sunday school.

Of the utility of both sorts of schools, even as at present conducted, and frequently with means too limited for affording a desirable degree of instruction to the children attending them, there can be no doubt. Everywhere, I met with evidence of good effects produced by them. But the most convincing proof of their

beneficial effects is, perhaps, the universal feeling in favour of both day schools and Sunday schools amongst the labouring population. My object, however, was not to inquire into the benefits arising from the education actually within reach of the children of that class, but to ascertain whether the employment of such children in agriculture in any way affects their opportunities of participating in those benefits.

I found that in 34 schools in agricultural parishes the average age of the youngest children in the first class of the school was nine years and three-quarters; and that the average age of the eldest children in such class was twelve years and one-quarter. The instruction of children who have not reached the first class rarely includes writing.

The age at which boys first go out to farm-labour varies from seven to twelve, the ordinary age, where they go to school, being between ten and eleven. Many are taken from school to go to work before they reach the best class, and the majority of them soon after they have reached it. Boys taken from school to be put out to farm-labour can generally read, sometimes correctly; but they cannot often write with sufficient ease for useful purposes.

But boys, though taken from day school to work in farm-labour, generally attend the Sunday school, which serves to keep up, and in many cases to improve, their reading, though very rarely to improve their writing. There are cases, however, particularly in dairy or grazing farms, where boys are prevented from going to the Sunday school by having to attend to the cows or cattle; and what they have learned at the day school is, in such instances, after a time nearly forgotten.

It also generally happens, when boys remain at the day school later than the age of seven or eight, that, until they are finally taken away, they go out to work in the fields at particular seasons of the year. Their work is useful to the farmer at these seasons, although it may not be so all the year round. But this occasional employment does not prevent a boy from attending the Sunday school. Girls are also sometimes, but much more rarely than boys, taken from the day school to work in the hay-harvest. Girls are also frequently kept from school, at certain times of the year, in order to attend to their younger brothers and sisters whilst their mothers are employed in the fields. Boys and girls are also kept from school to help their mothers in gleaning.

The effect of these interruptions in the attendance of children at school is frequently mischievous, as far as their progress is concerned. A child not only loses a certain quantity of instruction, but on its return to school after working in the fields, it appears less desirous, and even less capable, of profiting by school instruction. The following statements I received from different schools, with reference to this subject.

Both boys and girls are taken away, principally during the summer

months; upon their return to the school, it is found that they seldom read so well, and have forgotten much of what they had learned before.

Cherill, Wilts.

Children of both sexes are taken from the school, at particular seasons of the year, to be employed in agricultural labour, to the amount of almost half of both sexes, after the age of eight years. This interferes to such an extent with their instruction, that in some instances the child's progress is scarcely perceptible; and forms a lamentable barrier to that progress which the children would otherwise make, as well as to the general good order of the school.

Foxton Bremhill, Wilts.

Some if the children are taken away from school for agricultural labour during the spring and autumn; the proportion of the children thus taken away is about a third, from the age of seven and upwards. Those who are thus taken away soon forget what they had previously learned.

Highway, near Calne, Wilts.

In the spring, when potatoes are being planted, a great many (say 20 or 30) of the elder boys leave school to assist their parents. In harvest there is a month's vacation given. In September, when the potatoes are dug, the elder boys are again absent. Their being taken from school certainly interferes with their education, but they learn habits of industry.

Calne, Wilts.

Boys are occasionally employed in the season of planting and taking up the potato crops for their parents who have allotments of land. The girls in the school are not employed in the fields. The children are absent so seldom that we do not find any material difference.

Pimperne, Dorset.

At harvest-time there is a month's vacation to enable the children to assist their mothers in gleaning; and at Michaelmas the majority of the boys and girls are employed for about a month in getting up potatoes. Their being thus occasionally taken away from school, in my opinion, very considerably interferes with their learning.

Stourpaine, Dorset.

Some few of the boys are taken away in summer, but none of the girls. It certainly does interfere with their learning, but, if kept strictly to the Sunday school, not in any great degree.

Tarrant Rushton, Dorset.

Their (boys) being occasionally taken away from school, so much interferes with their learning, that they seldom or never attain to the rank of first or second class in the school, the continual interruptions to their progress preventing their advancement equally with others of the same age.

Winterbourne, Houghton, Dorset.

Children are occasionally taken from school, but chiefly to assist their parents; for instance, in putting in and getting up potatoes, and picking up corn in harvest. This very materially interferes with their learning.

Whitechurch, Dorset.

About one-eighth of the boys (the stoutest) are generally absent a fortnight in the spring of the year, planting potatoes; and a week in the autumn, taking them up. The girls are rarely absent from the same cause. There is a visible difference between the attainments of the child who attends school regularly, and one of the same age who frequently absents himself, not only keeping himself in the background, but impeding the progress of the class.

Ashcombe, Devon.

Labourers' children are seldom employed until they are apprenticed, which does not take place till they are nine years old. When they are, they are thrown back in proportion to the time they are absent; but those whose breasts burn with emulation soon attain the station in the class which they had before they left.

Dunsford, Devon.

During the period of potato-planting, hay and corn harvest, and gathering in the produce of potatoes at the end of the year, the proportion of children taken from the school is about two-thirds, leaving the youngest children only at school; the ages of those so employed vary from seven to twelve. The extent of their occasional absence from school at these periods interferes most materially with their learning, it being impossible to form a class of equal proficiency in learning, children that have been regular in their attendance being always found in advance of those taken away for the purpose of agriculture.

Kenton, Devon.

About one-quarter of the boys are generally absent, but not at particular seasons more than at others. Some employed in driving at plough, others in scaring rooks from the corn-fields, &c. About the same proportion of girls are generally absent, but they are chiefly employed in taking care of their younger brothers and sisters while their mothers are at work. This interferes with their learning to a great extent.

Broadclist, Devon.

Boys (about one-fourth) from nine to ten years old are taken from school for the hay and corn harvests; girls (more than a third) from six to nine to glean. I find them very much deficient both in reading and writing, and giving answers to questions asked them.

Ide, Devon.

About one-fifth or one-sixth of the boys in the summer and autumn; no girls from eight to thirteen years of age. Their progress is checked.

Heavitree, Devon.

All are taken that are able to do work, and can get it, at every season of the year. Their being occasionally taken from school interferes with their instruction to a very great extent.

Whitestone, Devon.

The business of the school is interrupted at the seasons of potato-digging and apple-picking very considerably, and also at wheat and barley sowing: boys are more employed than the girls. It interferes with their instruction according to the length of time they are so engaged.

North Petherton, Somerset.

Twenty boys and girls, aged from twelve to fifteen, are taken from school during the summer months to be employed in agricultural labour. This interferes with their instruction very materially.

Chedzoy, Bridgwater.

Boys and girls are frequently taken from the school, the boys to keep birds off the corn, follow the pigs in acorn season, &c.; the girls to take charge of their younger brothers and sisters whilst the mother is employed in hay-making, bean-planting, &c. A larger proportion of boys than of girls is subject to these interruptions in their education. It interferes materially with their instruction, and if the absence from school extends to a month or six weeks, which is frequently the case in bird-keeping, &c., the child on returning to school sinks to a lower class.

Enmore, Somerset.

Two-thirds of the children are taken from the school during most of the summer months. It must interfere in proportion to the time of their absence.

Over Stowey, Somerset.

Both boys and girls are much less regular in their attendance during the seasons of potato-planting and digging, and of corn-harvest, in which kinds of labour they are employed, or keep the little children whilst their parents are at labour. The irregularity of the attendance of children at the above seasons interferes considerably with their improvement, and that of the whole school.

Meshaw, Somerset.

Children are taken away from school in harvest and potato seasons. It interferes greatly in their instruction, as they often forget nearly as much in the two months they are absent as they have acquired in the year previous.

Burrington, Devon.

Children are taken away from school during harvest, and the planting and digging of potatoes. It interferes with their instruction to a very great extent.

Chalmleigh, Devon.

One of the great evils is, that children are taken from school at all seasons, for periods varying from a day to a week, to assist their parents in agricultural labour; those from eight years of age and upwards being selected, being a proportion of a third of the whole number, although so many are never absent at any one time.

Chittlehampton, Devon.

During the summer months the school is much diminished in numbers. More than half are employed in the fields. It interferes much with their learning, so that it is but a very limited knowledge which most of them obtain before they are finally taken away from school.

Northmolton, Devon.

Children apprenticed by the parish never attend a day school after they are bound. Apprenticeship begins at the age of nine; and before it begins the children may have the advantages of attending a day school, but they cannot receive the same amount of instruction as is given to the children of the best class in the day schools. It would appear that, although apprentices generally attend a Sunday school, this is not always the case, for sometimes they are deprived of that advantage by the neglect of their masters. It appears that in some instances their reading and even writing is attended to by their master or some member of the family, as also their religious and moral instruction; but such cases are rare. I shall recur to this subject, when speaking of the condition of apprentices.

Upon the whole, there can be no doubt that the employment of children in agriculture deprives them of opportunities of instruction both moral and religious, as well as of ordinary school education; but that their attendance at Sunday schools is, comparatively speaking, rarely prevented by such employment, and therefore that children so employed suffer more from the loss of ordinary school instruction, than from the loss of religious instruction, the giving of which is the object of the Sunday schools.

But, although boys are taken from school younger than is desirable, as far as their education is concerned, in order to be employed in farm-labour, there is one circumstance connected with the commencement of such employment at an early age, that must be taken into consideration. It appears to be the common opinion of all persons practically acquainted with the agricultural labouring class, that, unless a boy begin to work in the fields when young, he never thoroughly learns his business. To make a good farm-labourer, an early familiarity with everything connected with the various kinds of work required on a farm is necessary. The age at which a boy should begin is fixed by some persons at seven, by others at eight or nine, and by others at ten or eleven; but it is generally agreed that after eleven or twelve a boy cannot learn the business of a farm-labourer so well as a boy who begins earlier. The Rev. Henry Austen, of Pimperne, in Dorsetshire,

thinks that eleven is the proper age for boys to begin farm-work. I lay the greatest stress on Mr. Austen's opinion, from the circumstance of his having lived in the midst of an agricultural population for more than twenty years, during which time he has had the improvement of the labouring population of his parish at heart. I have no doubt of the correctness of his opinion respecting the age at which a boy's attendance at the day school should cease to interfere with his acquiring a due knowledge of the business of his life; and Mr. Austen adds, that, after a boy has quitted school at the age in question, his religious and moral improvement will not be impeded, if he punctually attends a Sunday and an evening school. It appeared to me, however, that generally, when the earlier age for a boy to begin farm-labour was recommended, it was by persons who considered his thorough knowledge of agricultural labour of more importance than intellectual improvement.

If the age of eleven is the earliest at which a boy may be put out to farm-labour, without interfering with the instruction he may obtain at school, it follows that the greater number of boys are employed at an age which deprives them, on the average, of nearly two years' instruction, and at an age when they would belong to the best class of the day school.

But Mr. Austen's opinion is, that eleven is the proper age for a boy to begin work, which he may do without its obstructing his religious or moral improvement, if he punctually attend the Sunday and evening schools, both of which he may readily avail himself of, after his employment commences. The evening school Mr. Austen alludes to is one which he established a few years ago in his parish—

for boys and young men, whose time during the day was taken up by their work, and I have much reason to be satisfied with the result. They formerly paid 4*d.* a-week. I am happy to say, I am now enabled to let them come free—the expenses being made up subscriptions. I observe that the young lads who were inattentive as children at the day school now attend the evening school, and are most anxious for instruction. The school is open from six till eight; and the young people who come home tired at five o'clock from their work, take their meal and hasten to their school with manifest pleasure. This evening school is open for the four winter months, beginning in November; and I feel it has a most important advantage in one respect—it keeps the young man out of the beer-shop, and other mischief, and finds him a rational and instructive pursuit. * * * It is held in the national school-room; and the scholars have the use of the books, desks, &c., supplied to the day school, the master of which superintends for a little additional gratuity. They are divided into classes, according to their proficiency in reading; they read some chapters from the Scriptures, and other books of religious instruction, write, and those who have been at the day-school resume their arithmetic. The number of scholars of course varies; sometimes we have had between 40 and 50; another year not more than 30. Their ages from 11 to 20.

If a punctual attendance at this school be necessary, in addition to that at the Sunday school, to prevent a boy's religious and moral improvement being obstructed by his quitting school at

eleven years old, his leaving school at an earlier age, and where no such evening school exists, must be injurious to him.

But against this positive mischief, arising from the employment of children at the age of nine, or even earlier, the very important fact must be taken into consideration, that from the time they begin to work, however young they may be, they very nearly, if not wholly, support themselves. The relief to the parents, particularly when the family is large, from the employment of their children, is very great. Any plan of education, that tended to retard the age at which boys begin to work in agriculture, would seriously affect the physical condition of the labouring families.

It would appear that the system of education pursued with respect to children of the agricultural districts has been much improved of late years. I heard from many farmers that boys are as well instructed now at the age of eight as they were formerly at twelve. Those children, therefore, who are fortunate enough to remain beyond the age of eight, are now better educated than any children of the same class formerly were.

Although there have been certain beneficial results to the labouring classes from education, it does not appear that the instruction they have hitherto had an opportunity of obtaining has made any essential difference in their general condition. But this affords no argument against education, for the labourer to whom we at present look for the results of education was brought up under the old system of tuition, and the more improved schools have not yet had a proper trial, for the children brought up in them are hardly grown up. And, again, the early age at which boys commonly quit school, and the frequent interruptions to their instruction where they are permitted to stay until the age of eleven or twelve, materially interferes with the practical working of the systems of instruction hitherto in force. We must not therefore be disappointed, if no very striking improvement in the condition of the labouring population has been produced.

However perfect the system of school education may be, if a child, after quitting school, have no better instructors than his parents (looking at the actual state of the labouring classes), and no better examples than those afforded by the inmates of the cottage, the influence of the instruction he received at school is quickly lost: his morality rapidly sinks to the level of that of the persons with whom he habitually associates. The most dangerous years for the morality of a boy, those during which he is most liable to be affected by the external circumstances in which he is placed, are between the age at which he must leave school, and that at which he may be considered as grown up. One of the most important questions, connected with the education of the children of the agricultural labourers, is the practicability of continuing their education after they quit the day school, so as to coun-

teract the worse influences of their position. Evening schools seem a fit means for this purpose, in which, with school instruction, could be combined intellectual pursuits sufficiently attractive to wean boys and young men from their present habits, and of a description to elevate their moral character. Mr. Austen's evening school shows the alacrity with which, after the day's labour, they seek instruction, and the ease with which they can be kept from the beer-shop and other vicious pursuits.

Compulsory Parish Apprenticeship.

A few years ago compulsory or parish apprenticeship prevailed in the whole of Devonshire, and also in parts of the adjacent counties of Dorset and Somerset. The practice, however, has been for some time gradually falling into disuse, many parishes having discontinued it. In the extensive Union of St. Thomas's, Exeter, the system has been abandoned altogether from the time of the publication of the general order of the Poor Law Commissioners against out-door relief, owing to the construction put upon that order by the Guardians.

Before the stat. of 56 Geo. III., c. 139, for regulating the binding of parish apprentices, the relation of master and apprentice appears to have been attended with serious evils. On the side of the master, except in comparatively few cases, there was either direct cruelty towards the apprentice, or neglect with respect to his food, clothing, and lodging, which made the larger portion of his servitude a time of suffering and privation. Towards the master and his family, on the other hand, there was habitual ill conduct on the part of the apprentice, provoked by the injustice practised towards him, if not instigated by original bad feeling. Apprenticeship was equally galling to the master and the apprentice, and there was no relief but by getting rid of the indentures, which was not unfrequently accomplished by acts of gross immorality on the part of the apprentice, not always without the concurrence or the connivance of the master. Instances are not unknown of opportunities of improper intercourse having been purposely given by the master to apprentices of different sexes, in order that he might afterwards have a pretext for getting rid of the indentures of one or both. The system appears to have led directly to cruelty, immorality, and suffering, although in some cases, exceptions to the general rule, apprenticeship was not unproductive of certain beneficial results to both master and apprentice.

For the present object, it is not necessary to dwell upon what was formerly the condition of the master or apprentice, the question being, what that condition now is. It is clear that the effects of the statute in question, and of other enactments, aided however most materially by the general improvement in manners, have been, as far as the agricultural districts are concerned (beyond which I made no inquiries), highly beneficial. Unquestionably,

the cases in which the apprentice is ill treated, either by personal ill usage or from not being supplied with sufficient food, clothing, or lodging, are now very rare: the adversaries of the apprenticeship system everywhere concede this, and they further admit, that the conduct of the apprentice is no longer marked by the grosser immoralities or criminal attempts which formerly were too frequent.

According to the present practice, few children but those of parents who receive relief are apprenticed.* A child, to be apprenticed, must have attained the age of nine years, and it cannot be bound more than forty miles from its place of settlement. Before the apprenticeship takes place, two justices of the peace of the district must make certain inquiries respecting the propriety of the apprenticeship to the proposed master. In practice in the agricultural districts, where apprenticeship still exists, the occupiers of tenements of the annual value of 10*l.* or upwards take the apprentices in rotation. When there are several children to be apprenticed at the same time, they are distributed by lot amongst the occupiers whose turn it is to take apprentices. The common custom on such occasions is, for the occupiers and children to attend before the magistrates, when the names of the children, on separate pieces of paper, are put into a hat, each occupier drawing one name. The children are apprenticed from the age of nine till they are twenty-one; or, if girls, till they are married. And the master and apprentice may summon each other before the magistrates for any breach of the common obligation. Of late years, this resort to the magistrates has become extremely easy, they themselves having shown a proper readiness to interfere, whenever there has been misconduct, either on the part of the master or apprentice.

It is singular that this system, which I believe is practised in many parts of England, has never attracted public attention, though it involves a practical evil of great magnitude. At the age of nine, children, when apprenticed, are taken away from their parents by the parish officers, not to be restored to them again during childhood. Neither parents nor children are consulted; they are separated by an act of law, against which there is no appeal. The parents may be examined, if the magistrates think fit, with respect to their child being bound to the particular master proposed; but they cannot object to its being apprenticed altogether. During the apprenticeship, the parents may, if not prevented by distance, see their child; but the opportunities of their doing so depend practically on the master. All other connexion between them and the child is broken off. They have no control over it; they cannot

* The practice is in this respect milder than the strict letter of the law. It is not necessary that the parents should actually receive relief to authorize the overseers to apprentice their children. The overseers may apprentice a child whose parents they may think are unable to maintain it. See the stat. 43 Eliz., c. 2, secs. 1 and 5, which must be read together; the case of *Rex v. St. George, Exeter*, 3 Ad. and Ell. 373; and the preambles of 51 Geo. III., c. 80; and 54 Geo. III., c. 107.

object to the way in which it is brought up, nor can they interfere, unless it be to claim protection from positive ill treatment. I must state, however, that no objection of this kind was urged upon me during my inquiry. I attribute this to the practice having become familiar to all classes by long continuance. If so, it affords no argument in favour of the system.

One effect of apprenticeship, which, however, has been perceived only since the commencement of the attempts to educate the labouring classes, is, that it deprives apprenticed children of the means of instruction possessed by children not apprenticed. This mischief will go on increasing in proportion as education is extended to those classes.

In 27 day schools in agricultural parishes, I found that the average lowest age, at which children were finally taken from school to work in the fields, was ten years and twenty-three weeks, and the average highest age, twelve years and one week. In 34 day schools in similar districts, I found that the average lowest age of children admitted to the first class, or amongst the scholars who had made the most progress, was nine years and three-quarters, and that the average highest age of the children in such class was twelve years and one-quarter. The legal age of apprenticeship, and when it in practice takes place, is nine. Generally speaking, therefore, although a child may have the advantage of school education before it is bound, it cannot ever receive the degree of instruction given to children in the best class of the school.

I did not hear of a single apprentice attending a day school, and not of many attending Sunday schools, the great majority of them not doing so. I heard, also, that apprentices do not always attend a place of worship; for although they are sufficiently clothed for their work, they sometimes have no better kind of clothing for the Sunday; and their masters are ashamed to let them appear at church in their ordinary dress of the week. As soon, therefore, as a child is apprenticed, the instruction which it might otherwise obtain is almost entirely withheld from it; and its religious education, and even the exercise of its religious duties, are not properly attended to. It is averred, however, on the other side, that the apprentice receives a certain portion of instruction in reading and writing in the farm-house from the mistress or one of the family, on the Sunday evening, at which time also he repeats the church catechism and joins in the family prayers. I believe, however, that this is not the rule; and that it certainly is not the case except where the master lives in the old-fashioned way, in the kitchen, in the midst of his servants. And when that is the case, and there happens to exist a desire on the part of the master or mistress to instruct the apprentice in reading and writing, and in the important subject of religion, the capacity for doing it must be extremely limited, as well as the time devoted to the task. It is

impossible that the loss of the advantages of the day school, generally conducted under the observation of the clergyman of the parish, and of the Sunday school, where the influence of the clergyman in the instruction of the children in morality and religion is still more direct, can be compensated for by a short hour bestowed on the Sunday evening by persons ill versed in the difficult art of instruction, even if they do not entertain the common prejudice of their class against it. I think the impediment offered by apprenticeship to the religious and moral instruction of the apprentice, and also to his attainment of even elementary school learning, is a weighty objection to the system.

Apprenticeship also operates prejudicially upon the industrious well-behaved labourer. It is clear, from experience, that a young lad, as soon as he is sufficiently strong to be useful on a farm, is much more serviceable to the master, if hired at wages as a servant, than as an apprentice. As a hired servant, he has powerful motives to work; whilst as an apprentice he has comparatively none, his work, in fact, being ordinarily performed in a slovenly and unsatisfactory manner. On a farm where boys are wanted, the farmer would naturally employ the children of his best labourers, were it not for the apprentices; but a farmer, burthened with the expense of maintaining apprentices, cannot afford to hire other lads to perform his work. Generally speaking, the labourers who do not receive parish relief, and whose children, consequently, are not apprenticed, are more industrious, better behaved, and better workmen than those who accept relief. This is not always, but is generally so. It is not always the labourer with the largest family who is obliged to seek parish relief; it is quite as frequently the labourer who, from unsteadiness, drunkenness, or ill conduct, which the industrious labourer avoids, cannot find means to support his family. The consequence of apprenticeship, therefore, is, that the children of the more undeserving labourer are provided for, whilst those of the more meritorious are not only not provided for, but are actually prevented from obtaining the employment they ought to have, and which the farmer, if permitted, would willingly give them. The ultimate effects are, that the industrious labourer is obliged to work under the greatest of disadvantages, a family of growing up children unprovided for; the children, kept out of employment, are brought up in idleness; and the less deserving labourer is the person who profits by the system.

Apprenticeship also deprives the farmer of the privilege of selecting the boys and girls whom he may have occasion to employ about his farm or house. An apprentice, from the feeling that he cannot be dismissed, but must be lodged, fed, and clothed, whether his work be well or indifferently performed, has no motive to exert himself beyond the point at which he shall escape the censures of the magistrate. A boy who is hired, and is liable to be dismissed at a week's notice, is placed in a position exactly the reverse.

This observation applies still more strongly to the case of the older apprentices. It appears that as apprentices get older, and find their work to be profitable, they generally become desirous of turning it to their own account, and less inclined to work for their master, who, they conceive, has no just title to their services. The apprentice usually behaves worse during the three or four last years of his indentures; but in the case of the hired labourer, a lad of 18 or 19 is just at the age when he has the strongest motives to please his employer: it is the age when he begins to touch, for the first time, wages that make him independent, and he works with earnestness and good will. The operation of apprenticeship, in forcing the farmer to put up with apprentices, and in depriving him of the services of the more active young independent labourer, is much complained of.

The mischievous operation of apprenticeship is also felt in the case of female apprentices. The forced intrusion of young girls under the master's roof concerns the comfort of his whole family; for the girls are much more intimately connected with the household than boys. A girl of the worst parents, and brought up in bad habits, may be forced upon a farmer's family, possibly of young children: the farmer has no voice in selecting her, for she falls to his lot by chance.

An objection to apprenticeship, which was very much urged upon me, is, that it has the twofold effect of causing the labourer, where the system has deadened his feelings towards his family, to look to the parish to relieve him of his children; and also of causing the children to acquire the habit of looking to the parish, instead of to their own exertions, for support. The effect of this state of things is described as being extremely demoralizing. The parents are not only relieved from the expense of maintaining their children, but they are also released from all parental obligations towards them. They cease to consider their children, when once apprenticed, as part of their family; and the relief afforded to the parents in the removal of the children is regarded by them as an advantage. I more than once heard in cottages the decline of apprenticeship complained of as a great hardship to the labourer, since he has now to bring up his children himself, which formerly others did for him; although, generally speaking, I found a stronger feeling against, than in favour of, apprenticeship, amongst the labourers.

The apprentice, without any merit of his own, is placed in a situation where he lives better than the other children of his own class; he knows that the parish has placed him in that position, and that his remaining in it does not depend upon his exerting himself to the necessary degree for supporting himself. Twelve years thus spent frequently inure him to the idea of subsisting at the expense of other people, and habituate him to the demoralizing practice of living on the parish. All feelings of independence are

frequently rooted out before his apprenticeship expires, and without shame or hesitation at subsequent periods of his life he looks to the parish for support.

It was also proved to me that the apprentice lies under a great disadvantage, in the ignorance in which he is kept with respect to those things which are necessary for him to know for his getting on in the world when out of his time. Everything being found for him by others, food, clothing, and lodging, without his taking any part in it, he is utterly ignorant of the means of providing for himself at the termination of his apprenticeship. He is treated like a child in all things until he is 21, and then is suddenly thrown upon the world to shift for himself; whilst the young free labourer has been for years accustomed to manage his money and other concerns, and to learn to accommodate himself to his position in life, the apprentice is habituated to live better than when he has to depend upon his own exertions. He is brought up wholly ignorant of the kind of life he is to pursue. I was told of cases where a master, to obviate this effect upon the apprentice, gave him a small potato-ground to cultivate for his own profit, in order that he might learn by times the use of money.

Although, as I before mentioned, the graver evils of apprenticeship which formerly existed have nearly disappeared, there still are mischiefs attending the close and forced connexion of master and apprentice. The ready access to the magistrate, in the case of ill treatment of the apprentice, prevents the more aggravated forms of cruelty, and also any extraordinary degree of neglect with respect to his food, lodging, and clothing; but the magistrate's authority is insufficient to secure him against many kinds of injurious usage. Practically, the magistrate cannot prevent harshness of manner on the part of the master, if unaccompanied by violence; nor can he prevent the apprentice being taxed to the utmost of his strength in the performance of his work, unless serious consequences should ensue. Abuse, insults, and threats may be, and are in many instances, lavished on the apprentice, and his spirit becomes broken or depraved, without there being any tangible ground for the interference of the magistrate; and, on the other hand, ill conduct in various ways on the part of the apprentice, also, is not the subject of such interference, and the master is perpetually harassed by behaviour against which he has no remedy.

It was also made a matter of complaint to me, that the interference of the magistrate, when the occasion was slight, was sometimes productive of mischief, even if it did not defeat its own ends. It is alleged that apprentices cannot always be managed without the occasional infliction of some corporal chastisement. It is a mode of correction I not unfrequently heard of as being used by the farmer towards young lads in his employ, whether apprenticed or not; and I did not find that it was disapproved of by

their parents (except in the case of apprentices), who, for the most part, regard it as the natural means of enforcing the obedience and good behaviour of the children. Many parents whom I saw, and whose boys were hired by the farmer, by no means objected to their being corrected by the master in the manner in question; but when the boys were apprenticed, the feeling of the parents in this respect was exactly the reverse. The prevalent idea appeared to be, that a child is apprenticed to be supported, and for the relief of his parents; and the master is not looked upon in the same light as the master of a hired servant: but the sentiment is strong amongst the greater number of masters in favour of personal correction of apprentices. When it occurs, however, the magistrate may immediately interpose his authority. It is alleged, and instances were cited to me, that magistrates, when complaints of chastisement are made before them, either from necessity, imperfect information of the circumstances, or from a desire to take the popular view of the case, decide in a manner calculated to weaken the authority of the master with the apprentice. It is alleged that the particular act of chastisement may be provoked by a long course of irritating conduct on the part of the apprentice, whilst the magistrate will not, or cannot, look beyond the proximate occasion, which, taken alone, might not justify the conduct of the master. Although there may be abundant provocation for the master's conduct, it is impossible to put the magistrate in possession of it, the tribunal being unfit to investigate such cases. Where violence is proved, the master is fined; and frequently, when his conduct ought not, it is said, to be the subject of comment, he is held up to the public as guilty of cruelty to his apprentices. This is a triumph to the apprentice, and a temptation to him to repeat his ill conduct towards his master with increased confidence. The consequence, however, of this state of things is, that there is a rapidly growing dislike by the farmers to apprenticeship, to which its decline may be partly ascribed.

The same objection applies to the interference of the magistrate against an apprentice who may have been betrayed into some sudden breach of duty by a course of exasperating behaviour on the part of his master. Practically, the magistrate can only look at flagrant acts of misconduct on either side, whilst the causes, however adequate, can hardly be sufficiently understood when they are of the nature alluded to; and therefore, although it is not denied that the increased facility of access to the magistrate, in case of breach of duty by the master or apprentice, prevents the more signal acts of ill treatment or misconduct, yet it does not prevent each party annoying and harassing the other to a most injurious degree; and further, the interference of the magistrate, when invoked, is at times productive of considerable mischief.

It frequently happens, also, that the interference of the magistrate, when it takes place at the instigation of the master against the apprentice, is productive of an evil which makes the master averse ever afterwards to resort to the same remedy, except in the cases of misconduct of the apprentice which cannot be overlooked. For behaviour which merits some punishment, the magistrate sends the apprentice to prison, and sometimes to the treadmill: he can inflict no other correction. This punishment has always the effect of destroying the morality of the apprentice; he never forgives his master, and his sense of right and wrong is essentially weakened: the master, therefore, will frequently put up with a considerable degree of misconduct, before he takes what he esteems to be the extreme step, of applying to a magistrate.

Apprenticeship is also open to the objection, that it not unfrequently forces on a farmer more boys or girls than he can find employment for in his farm or in his house. In the case of boys it is followed by this consequence. Having to support them, the master tries to force them to do work which is not fit for them, in order to spare other labour. I do not believe that this often happens, but it was pointed out to me as a probable occurrence. In the case of girls, it operates to drive those into the fields which are not wanted in the house. That apprenticed girls work in the fields, I have evidence; and I believe owing in most instances to this reason.

These appear to be some of the principal objections to apprenticeship, and are those which were the most pressed upon my attention. But the system is not without its apologists; and it would be strange if it were, as it is not one of unmixed evil; occasionally its good effects display themselves, unaccompanied by many of its worst mischiefs.

It is said in favour of apprenticeship, that apprentices generally are clothed as well as children not apprenticed, and that they are lodged and fed better. It is also stated that the medical attention they receive is better than that of children not apprenticed, who have only the medical advice and treatment afforded by the guardians, whilst apprentices have that of the family in which they are placed.

As far as mere sufficiency of clothing is concerned, it may be true that apprentices are clothed as well as children not apprenticed. But I do not believe that they are clothed so well in all respects; for, with a few exceptions, I believe that they have no second or better suit for Sundays, which is the case with most of the children not apprenticed, and whose parents' earnings are not reduced to the lowest amount. It frequently happens that apprentices do not go to church, owing to the want of decent clothing; which, however, is not inconsistent with their being sufficiently clothed for health.

There can be no doubt that, of late years, the food of appren-

tices has exceeded that of children not apprenticed in quality, if not in quantity. I apprehend that there are very few apprentices now, who do not eat animal food once every day. The lodging of apprentices is also superior to that of children not apprenticed. In farm houses, where primitive manners prevail, the boys frequently sleep in the same room with their master's sons, and the girls in the same room with his daughters. But at all events the apprentices of different sexes no longer sleep in the same bed-room, though formerly the contrary practice was not unfrequent. The magistrates of late years have laid strict injunctions on masters and mistresses to avoid such a practice. The attention paid to the lodging of apprentices, in this respect, places them in a far better position than that of the youthful portion of a family living in a cottage. With respect to medical attendance, it is possible that an apprentice may in particular instances be better off than the child of a labourer living at home. Such may be the case when the master is humane, and possesses the means of obtaining extraordinary medical advice for his family. But ordinarily, the labourer, since the new Poor Law Act has been in operation, has been able to procure the advice and attention of the professional men who generally are consulted by the farmer.

There are also other advantages claimed for apprenticeship, which, however, in my opinion, cannot be attributed to it. These advantages are insisted on by persons who appear to me to have paid but little attention to the general working of the system, and who have formed their ideas of it either from a particular instance, or from a superficial consideration of the relation of master and apprentice. The advantages contended for are the moral and other effects alleged to be produced upon the apprentice by the restraints and examples of the farm-house. It is stated by those who regard apprenticeship favourably, that the position of boys or girls growing up in a farm-house, having examples of good conduct constantly before them in their master's family, and acquiring the orderly habits of the house, is much better than if they were living at home with their parents; that they are better placed, both for their moral improvement, and also for their instruction in everything necessary for them to acquire a knowledge of in their position in life, than at home; that during the best years of their youth, whilst the character and tastes are formed from opportunities of observing, apprentices are accustomed to live in the midst of order, regularity, cleanliness, and economy; that none of the sordid habits necessarily practised in the cottage in the midst of poverty can be contracted in the farm-house; and that at the end of their servitude, when they return to the position of their parents, they conduct themselves with corresponding propriety.

I was fortunate enough to see one farm-house, belonging to Mrs. Tuckett, the economy of which, as far as concerned the appren

tices, bears out the statement in question. Nothing can be better than the way in which her apprentices have always been treated; and I must not omit to state that they have all turned out most satisfactorily to their mistress, with a single and slight exception. But I believe that Mrs. Tuckett, whose intelligence and worth compel me to speak of her with the greatest respect, is an exception to the general rule in her treatment of her apprentices; and that the condition of the parish children placed with her by no means illustrates the general working of the system. I understand, however, that Mrs. Tuckett's behaviour towards her apprentices is pursued in a few farm-houses in the neighbourhood. But the superior treatment of the apprentices in every one of these instances is much to be attributed to the example, if not the injunction, of the landlord of the immediate district, the influence of whose character and conduct for more than half a century has most materially mitigated the condition of the apprentices of his tenants; and Mrs. Tuckett's description of the management of her apprentices (Appendix, No. 31.) must be considered as an account of apprenticeship under the most favourable circumstances, and widely differing from what it is in the great majority of cases.

As a matter of fact, I have but little hesitation in saying, that as far as my opportunities of obtaining information on the subject extended, the apprentices placed in situations at all favourable to their moral improvement, or to their contracting superior habits or knowledge, compared with those who are debarred from these advantages, are very few. Were it otherwise, the labouring population of the districts where the system prevails would not be in its present condition, which is in no respects superior to that of the same class in parts of Dorsetshire, for example, where apprenticeship never was, or has long ceased to be practised. And, moreover, if I may be allowed to adduce arguments against the advantages attributed to apprenticeship, and inferred chiefly from an erroneous estimate of the relative position of master and apprentice, I should say that such advantages must necessarily be confined to rare instances. The apprentice does not live under his master's roof in virtue of any contract freely entered into, by which each party is to profit, though in a different way; but he is forced upon an unwilling master, to whom he is generally a burthen and expense during the period of servitude. He is in an essentially degraded position; he is looked down upon even by the hired servants; and he is treated by everybody in a manner corresponding with his situation. Were he even dependent on his master, a sentiment of generosity might induce the latter to treat him with forbearance; but the master is obliged to support him; and the inevitable burthen generally inspires feelings of dislike. The apprentice in this position is certainly not happily placed for the economy of the house to make any favourable impression on

him. He perceives none of the advantages of the order and regularity (where they exist) in a farm-house; they are only a part of the system to which he is subject. The examples afforded by the conduct of the family (where good conduct prevails) are not appreciated by him. He has nothing in common with the family; he is not in their position in life; and generally the greatest part of their behaviour, which falls under his observation, is their rigorous treatment of himself. The restraints of the farm-house, cited as the securities for the morality of the apprentices, are deprived of much of their efficacy from their being imposed in their harshest form. Restraints placed upon children by their parents may produce the desired result, when their irksomeness is relieved by a display of affection; but in the case of the apprentice the restraints in question are laid upon him in a repulsive form; and though he may be hindered by mere arbitrary domestic arrangements from following the bent of his inclinations, his morality is not materially or permanently improved. I was frequently assured that apprentices often turned out as well as children not apprenticed, but I in vain inquired for proof that they generally turned out better. In their after-life there is no superior merit to be attributed generally to the agricultural labourers (including women) who began life as apprentices. All the good effects which might be expected to arise from a child of the labouring class being brought up in the farm-house, are counteracted by the relation in which it stands as apprentice towards its master, a relation rendering the latter unnaturally severe, and the apprentice degraded.

A distinction must be taken between boys and girls, whilst considering the alleged advantages of apprenticeship. If there be, as I am disposed to think, no particular advantage to the boy's morality from living in the farm-house, the only benefit he derives from it is better food and lodging; for it is not pretended that he learns the business of a farm-labourer better than a boy not apprenticed. The enjoyment of this advantage by the apprentice must be conceded, but not without a very important consideration. In Devonshire, where apprenticeship prevails most extensively, the custom also exists in many parts of the county of farmers taking into their houses the boys they hire at wages, and who live in all respects like the apprentices, except that they are not subject to the harder conditions under which the latter are placed. It is probable that, if apprenticeship were abolished, the places of the apprentices would be nearly everywhere filled up by lads of the same age, as hired servants, for it does not appear that generally there are more apprentices than there are wanted young lads on farms. If this were so, and I see no reason to doubt it, the alleged advantages to boys from apprenticeship disappear nearly altogether.

In the case of girls, the advantages claimed for apprenticeship are somewhat greater than in the case of boys. It is said they

acquire the knowledge which enables them to go out to service, or fits them for wives and mothers of families. This must be conceded: but the advantage must not be attributed to compulsory apprenticeship. Were there no apprenticeship, girls would and must be employed in farm-houses, and probably in the same numbers as at present, although perhaps not at so early an age as nine, which would be an advantage to them. Although in farm-houses in some parishes there are more female apprentices than are wanted for servants, in other parishes there are not enough of them, other female servants being hired. If apprenticeship did not exist, and farmers were obliged to look about for female servants, and young women to seek for places, the surplus girls of one parish might supply the deficiency of another. On an average of several neighbouring parishes, I should not think that there are more female apprentices than there would be young maid servants if there were no apprenticeship. Girls would learn, therefore, what they now learn, and they would partake of all the advantages said to be enjoyed by the female apprentice, and ascribed to her living in the farm-house. So far, therefore, there would be no difference between the female apprentice and the girl not apprenticed; whilst, on the other hand, the causes tending to degrade the former in her own estimation, and that of every one around her, would cease to exist.

If carefully examined, the whole of the advantage claimed for apprenticeship, so far as relates to improving the morals of the apprentice, lies in the fact of his being placed under certain restraints whilst living in the farm-house. A young lad is not allowed to go to the beer-shop, to wakes, fairs, &c., nor is he allowed any opportunity of intimacy with the female apprentices. On the other hand, girls are kept from the young men on the farm, and they are not allowed any freedom, but are closely kept to the farm-house. All this is accomplished by the internal arrangements and customs of the house, which, it is alleged, would have no effect upon hired servants. But there is no reason for supposing that hired servants are less obedient to the reasonable injunctions of their masters than apprentices: the apprentice obeys his master's directions because they can be enforced by the magistrate; but experience shows that the greatest inducement to comply with the proper commands of a master is the fear of losing a good place; and whatever the restraints under which an apprentice is placed, they ought to be no more than every young person of the same age should be subjected to. The reasonable restrictions that gall apprentices would, in my opinion, be cheerfully put up with by hired servants; for it must be borne in mind that hired servants, being selected by their master, would generally be persons of good character, more willing to put up with, at the same time less needing, the proper restraints of a well-conducted house.

In January, 1833, a committee was appointed by the magistrates of the county of Devon from their own body, "to inquire and report upon the present state of the law relative to the compulsory binding of apprentices, and to accompany their report with any remarks that may suggest themselves on the operation of the law, and with any proposals which they may see fit to make for remedying such evils as they may find to exist." This committee sought information from all quarters, and obtained, as I was informed, a great deal of intelligence upon the practical working of apprenticeship. Their report, recommending certain modifications of the existing law and practice respecting apprentices, was made in March 1833, but no steps were ever taken to carry their recommendations into effect.

The object of the appointment of the committee was to reform the system of apprenticeship, and the mischiefs inquired into were those apparently within the reach of reform, whilst those that are inseparably connected with the system were not investigated or reported upon. Thus the committee suggested the earlier termination of the time of servitude; the providing for better moral and religious instruction of the apprentice; the restricting the persons liable to take apprentices to a better class, as a security against the ill treatment of the apprentice, and also that the system might be rendered less oppressive to the smaller occupiers; and further securities for the better conduct of both master and apprentice by bringing apprenticeship more completely under the control of the magistrate. But the great and paramount objections to apprenticeship,—its injustice towards the industrious labourer and his family, the separating children from their parents, its degrading effects upon the apprentice, &c., were not touched upon.

The report, however, is a document of great importance, and any statement it contains is entitled to the best consideration. The questions circulated by the committee throughout the county to collect information before they made their report, together with the report, are in the Appendix (Nos. 46, 47).

In conclusion, I am of opinion that the system does not admit of any reform which will remove the radical objections to it; and I do not think that changes in minor points can produce much benefit. It appears to me that, with the growing dislike to apprenticeship, it will be better to discontinue the practice for the future, than to try to preserve it by means which will not materially diminish its present evils.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

ALFRED AUSTIN.

Serjeants' Inn, Temple, March 25, 1843.

APPENDIX.

No. 1.

Communication from the Rev. *J. Guthrie*, Vicar of *Calne*, *Wiltshire*.

In regard to the employment of females and children in agriculture, I do not apprehend that any injurious effect to the health of either is produced.

I am not aware of any injurious tendencies on the morals of the boys from such employment. Very few young girls are employed, except during the potato planting and gathering.

Neither do I think that injury to the morals takes place to any extent from field-labour to women, except in nursery-gardens, where it certainly does. The mixed employment of men and women in nursery-gardens is continually producing vice and immorality. The bad effects of this promiscuous labour are constantly brought most painfully before me. I consider that it has a bad effect on masters and labourers also.

The rate of wages for women among the farmers at present (December) is 7*d.* a-day; after Lady-day it may be 8*d.* In hay-making time 10*d.*, with beer, and sometimes 1*s.*

The average rate of wages amongst the farmers is 8*s.* per week, or 1*s.* 4*d.* per diem. The price of the gallon of bread is now 1*s.*; it was formerly at 1*s.* 3*d.* and 1*s.* 6*d.*

In the parish of *Calne* there are more than 8000 acres of land. Nearly 400 acres are let out in allotments to the poor; the greater part by Lord *Lansdowne*, in portions varying from a quarter of an acre to two acres, at a moderate rent. On these allotments women and children are employed to a very considerable extent, under the direction of the labourers themselves; but in this case it is rather as occupiers than as hired labourers. Such employment is equally advantageous to their morals and comfort also; out of a girls' school, consisting of 120 children, about 30 are absent for a fortnight about planting time and digging time. The same remark applies to the boys' school.

The great evils with which we have to contend in regard to the poor are,—

1. Want of employment.
2. Want of education.
3. Want of comfortable, decent abodes.
4. Love of drink.

I believe that every one of these evils may be alleviated, if not altogether removed, by the proper exercise of vigour and judgment.

The want of employment is pressing at this moment, and has been pressing for the last 18 or 20 months, more heavily on the poor generally than we can remember for some time past; this pressure ceases to be occasional,—it is continuous.

It is partly owing to the stagnation in trade, but very much owing to the inadequate employment of labour on the farms in this neighbourhood. Very slight improvements in agriculture take place in the parish, or in the neighbouring parishes. There is abundant labour to be done, quite sufficient to occupy the disposable part of the labourers; but there is not the spirit or energy in the farmers to employ them; such labour would defray itself. When the price of corn was very low, many improvements took place in draining, half the expense of which was borne by the landlord and half by the tenant; this system is still pursued, but not to the extent of which it is capable.

But the land in these parts being held generally by yearly tenants, such improvements can never be made on any great scale, or be continued for any length of time; for the present generation cultivate their land nearly on the same system as their great-grandfathers did before them. This remark applies peculiarly to dairy-farms. If in each farm a portion of meadow-land were broken up to enable the farmer to grow more *roots*, it would be equally advantageous to the owner, the tenant, and the labourer.

In regard to want of education, I trust we are in a fair way of remedying this evil; but it is a fearful one; and if public men, landlords, and farmers, could be made aware of the evil, and would assist us to cure it, they would find how much *cheaper*, better, and easier it is to give 100*l.* yearly for good schools, in order to remove ignorance, the parent of crime, than to pay 1000*l.* to a police for the purpose of detection. This ignorance is felt grievously among the women, who are not taught how to make their earnings go as far as they might.

The want of good cottages, where the members of a family can live separate, is a great cause of demoralization. When grown-up members of the same family are continually occupying the same room, modesty and delicacy and sense of shame are soon put to flight. When these are absent, and dirt and disorder take their place, a gradual declension in good morals and character succeeds, and the whole family sink perceptibly to a lower grade in character and conduct.

In regard to habits of drinking, these do not prevail at present to their former extent, because men have not the means to indulge it. At stated times, particularly at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide, drinking prevails to a fearful extent, particularly at Whitsuntide, when the various clubs have festivals, at which riots and drunkenness are most frequent.

I frequently see it stated in public and in parliament, that beer-houses are worse than public-houses. My own experience and observation lead me to a different opinion. The worst houses that I have known have been public-houses; they exercise worse influence, and present greater enticements to the poor than common beer-houses. Music and cards, and skittles and other games, are suffered. Females of loose character are too often not only permitted, but encouraged, to resort to them; there is no precise hour named for their closing the houses; the police exercise little, if any, control over them. In fact, I consider the public-houses in this part of the country have done more to demoralize the people than any one cause that can be assigned.

The people in this neighbourhood are in general well disposed and orderly; they are extremely credulous, and every neighbourhood has its wise woman, who is consulted for fortune-telling, and on great emergencies.

Much is done to relieve their distresses by many, and is done with judgment and discrimination; but when all is done, I never could make out how they can live with their present earnings; for after examining with all the accuracy that much local knowledge both of persons and places can supply, the accounts of their necessary weekly expenditure, and trying to compare it with their weekly earnings, in all cases that I have tried, without exception, their expenditure seems to exceed their earnings. This problem many of us have tried to solve, but without success.

In conclusion, I should state my opinion, that the best way of relief is by emigration, by education, and by improving the system of agriculture, so as to compel the farmers to employ more men. Only give us a little present relief, that we may have time to raise the character of the rising generation and we may still see Merry Old England once more.

No. 2.

Dr. *Greenup*, M.D., *Calne, Wiltshire*, examined.

Will you state what opportunities you have had of observing the health of the labouring population in Calne and its neighbourhood?—I have lived in Calne only three years, but for upwards of ten I have practised in this county, and during the whole period I have given up a considerable portion of my time to the poor, and they have been generally of the class employed in agriculture.

Amongst the persons of that class who have consulted you, have there been women, and also boys and girls, employed in agricultural labour?—The greater proportion has been women and children.

Have you remarked that women so employed are subject to any peculiar diseases, or more liable generally to disease than women of the same class who do not work in the same employments?—As I do not attend the poor at their own houses, I do not see the acute diseases, if there be any, arising from their employments. I have not remarked any disease peculiar to them arising from their work but rheumatism, except in the case of girls employed in dairies.

Can you describe the peculiar symptoms you have observed in women employed in dairies, and to what you attribute them?—The symptoms are those of over-work generally, and to be attributed to that cause: Pains in the back and limbs, overpowering sense of fatigue most painful in the morning, want of appetite, feverishness, &c.

Do you consider the disease indicated by these symptoms as permanent when once produced, or is it one easily subdued without leaving any consequences?—I have not seen any case among the servants which seemed likely to leave permanent ill consequences. They soon recover when they can have rest.

With regard to girls employed in the fields, have you observed any ill effects on their health from such employment?—No. They are occasionally employed in work which I think fitter for men; but I have seen no ill effects from it.

Or with regard to boys, who would appear to begin out-door labour at a much earlier age?—The boys begin to work about 12 years old, and are first employed, I believe, in driving the plough, and such light work. I cannot trace any disease to their employments, in lads of average strength; weakly lads suffer, but not more than in any other employment.

Do you find that the mistresses in dairy-farms suffer in the same way as the female servants employed in the dairies, for I understand they frequently perform some of the laborious work?—They suffer much more, as the causes are longer continued; and, from the pride they have in their dairies, they do not give up their work as long as they can in any way perform it.

Then with the exceptions already mentioned, you do not consider that the employment of women, girls, or boys, in the way it is carried on in your neighbourhood, is detrimental to their health?—Not at all. On the contrary, I think the employment very healthy. Here the poor do not suffer from work; the diseases I see arise almost all from want of proper food and clothing.

Are you able to state, from the condition of the women employed in agricultural labour, who have applied to you for your advice, whether, in fact, their food is of the proper kind and quantity for women so employed?—Of those who apply to me, four out of five suffer from complaints traceable to their food being insufficient in quantity, and not good enough in quality.

What are the symptoms which prove the want of sufficient and proper food?—Indigestion in its various forms, producing waterbrash and other diseases of the stomach; then general debility, liability to fever, slow and difficult recovery from any disease, and a smaller proportion of recoveries.

Do you know what the food of the agricultural labourers is in your neigh-

bourhood?—Where there is a family, potatoes do, and must, necessarily form the principal food. Where there are not more than two or three children, a little bacon may be bought; but as the wages are only 8s. a-week, unless a man has an allotment he will not be able to buy much bacon, even if he has only two children. I calculate that in my own family each individual consumes a shilling's worth of bread every week, besides animal food, &c. Apply this rule—if it be one—to the poor man's family, and there is little left for anything more than bread. Fresh butcher's meat is never bought. The entrails, or "in'ards," as they are called, of the numerous swine killed here, form the chief luxury of those who can afford something better than bread and potatoes.

Is there any difference between the diet of that of the men and that of the women employed in agricultural labour?—I cannot say, except it be that the men try to obtain beer, while the women drink more tea.

Do the boys and girls, who work in the fields, suffer in the same way from want of a proper quantity of food, or of food of a proper quality?—Scrofulous diseases are very common amongst them, but the children do not appear to suffer directly so much as the parents; whether their young stomachs digest the food better, or the parents stint themselves for the sake of the children. Again, when the children begin to earn wages, more food can be obtained.

From your observation, would you say that a woman with the same food—*i. e.* the food you have mentioned—would be worse for labouring in the fields, or would there be no difference?—Of two women fed alike, and well fed, the labourer would probably be the healthier. If underfed, she would sooner suffer.

Do you attribute the low diet you have spoken of to the smallness of the wages, or to other causes?—The wages are certainly insufficient. Even when there are only two children, it requires good management to keep them decently out of 8s. a-week. Take any standard of comparison, and it will show the insufficiency. Perhaps the fairest is the cost of the pauper's food in the Union Workhouses, where the articles are generally such as form the poor man's food at home, bacon, bread, and potatoes, without beer or other luxury, and where the quantity is supposed to be absolutely necessary to keep the inmates in health. If the labourer has not as much food as the pauper, he ought to have. In our union the cost of each individual, taking the average of men, women, and children, is 1s. 6d. weekly for food only; and buying by tender, and in large quantity, we buy at least 10 per cent. cheaper than the labouring man can. But, without considering this advantage, apply the scale to the poor man's family. A man, his wife, and two children, will require, if properly fed, 6s. weekly; then rent, at least 1s., and fuel, will very nearly swallow up the remainder. But there are yet many things to provide; soap and candles, clothes and shoes. Shoes to a poor man are a serious expense, as he must have them strong, costing about 12s. a-pair, and he will need at least one pair in a year. When I reckon up these things in detail I am always more and more astonished how the labourers continue to live at all. It is very possible that if they had better wages they would not lay them out judiciously, as, in fact, even now they waste part of their little means; but they would, at any rate, have the power of being well fed and clothed.

Is the health of the labouring class affected by other things besides the insufficiency of diet?—Yes; the want of proper clothing and fuel is much felt, and is the cause of much sickness. Personal cleanliness is neglected; many will wear a flannel waistcoat, for instance, if they have one, night and day for a month, or even until it is worn out. The cottages are generally ill ventilated, and frequently damp. Mothers suckle their children a year and a half or two years frequently, from a false notion of economy. But all these matters, though in themselves of importance, are but secondary in comparison to the great evil—insufficiency of food.

There are many things which might be done to raise the condition of the labourer, but it must be more known than it is before the absolute necessity of doing something will be allowed. Many people are exceedingly kind in relieving individual instances of distress who have no idea how widely spread the suffering is, and are, of course, content with relieving the cases they see; and, from the majority, nothing more can be expected than such charity. But the landowners have the power, in many instances, of raising the condition of the poor, by employments which would be very profitable to all parties. In riding about the country, I see much land ill drained and half cultivated, which, I am told by practical men, would return a profit of 12 to 15 per cent. on money properly laid out in improvements, and would employ all the labourers in the neighbourhood many years. This would give time for emigration to take effect, and for other means of profitable employment to be acted upon, amongst which I am persuaded that properly managed cottage-farms would be very useful. A hundred acres in this neighbourhood, as now farmed, gives employment to two, or at most three labourers; but if divided into cottage-farms of five acres each, and let under proper superintendence to steady labourers, would give employment to 20 men, or, taking the average of families, to 100 persons. This is much more than would be required in most parishes, few having so many surplus labourers. And it would be the beginning of a gradation of holdings, a change much wanted. The allotment system does some good, bringing land profitably under the spade; but its tendency is, I fear, not to raise wages. The cottage-farms might be made very useful if the tenants were carefully selected from the best labourers, and the evils of the Irish cottier system might be avoided by proper management. Thus the applicants for regular employment would be diminished, and the farmer, paying less poor-rates, would be more able to pay full wages to the remaining labourers.

No. 3.

Thomas King, Esq., Surgeon, Calne, Wiltshire, examined.

I was the medical officer of the Calne Union between two and three years, and during that time I had great opportunities for observing the agricultural labouring population in and about Calne.

The married women bear the labour in the fields extremely well. I have never observed any other effects upon their general health than colds, from which they suffer occasionally, caught from wet and exposure to the weather. I am not sure that they are even peculiarly subject to colds. Women in the family-way, or suckling children, are certainly not hurt.

I do not think that their work is too hard for them, or injurious, even taking into account the fact of their sometimes having insufficient food. The out-door work they perform is healthy than otherwise.

As to young girls, I do not think they should work in the fields from 12 to 17, or, indeed, I may say under 20. It is not the severity of the labour or fatigue that I think injurious to them, for it is by no means excessive; but I think the exposure to wet and cold, which, of course, is inevitable, has a tendency to engender affections of the chest. I am not able to recall any particular instance of such disease being distinctly the result of exposure to cold and wet, in the way mentioned; but I think that much of the ill health amongst women in that class, in after-life, especially consumption, arises from early exposure to the weather.

The work which boys perform seems to agree with them perfectly. I have never seen any ill effects to their health from their working in farm-labour. The employment for young lads is decidedly healthy.

The work in dairies is extremely laborious; when cheese is made twice

a-day, the work is nearly day and night; the fatigue is continuous; yet I am not aware that it produces disease or illness. The farmers take great care of the health of their dairy-women, as the loss is great if they are taken ill. I do not think that work is injurious to health; the fatigue is certainly continual, but perhaps not greater than that of many a servant of all-work in London, running up and down stairs all day long. Besides, the dairy-women are well fed and lodged, and receive every attention, as much depends on them.

If women and boys who labour in the fields suffer in their health at all, it is not from the work they perform, but the want of food. The food they eat is not bad of its kind, but they have not enough of it, and more animal food would be most desirable; but with the present rate of wages it is impossible. Their low diet exposes them to certain kinds of diseases, more particularly to those of the stomach.

I am not aware of any ill consequences, either physical or moral, resulting from the employment of grown-up women or boys in agriculture. They are certainly not worse in health; and in my opinion they are more moral from being so employed. The women work hard and cheerfully, though their privations are very great. Considering their condition, the agricultural labourers generally in this neighbourhood, with the exception of a particular parish, are very good people; they are for the most part industrious, quiet, and inoffensive.

I don't think there are three women addicted to drinking in the whole Union. I know of no gin being drunk, or opium used. Amongst the men intoxication is only occasional; but the labourer will always drink a quart of beer on a Saturday night. In the Union I have never seen any physical effects of drunkenness. Of course there are those who drink more than others; but I speak of the greater number.

I think perhaps beer-shops have a tendency to introduce habits of drinking; they are very tempting to labouring men; they stand in any out-of-the-way place, to which labourers can resort to quietly and unseen,—not like the public-house, which must be by the road-side. I am afraid that beer-shops have that tendency.

No. 4.

Mr. Henry Phelps, of *Bremhill, Wiltshire*, Agent of the *Marquis of Lansdowne*, examined.

You know Calne and the neighbouring parishes, and have had much to do with the agricultural labourers?—Yes, for the last twelve years.

Are women employed in farm-labour in these districts?—A small number are pretty constantly employed; but at harvest and hay-time many more; at the latter times half as many women as men: at other times the number of women to men may be as two or three to seven or eight. Both single and married women work in the fields.

What is the nature of their employment?—At Bowood, where there are generally about twelve employed, they work principally in the grounds in keeping them clean, and the work is light; but at Studley, part of the adjoining parish of Bremhill, they work in the fields, doing a great deal of the work like men. They are employed in reaping and binding corn in harvest, hay-making, hoeing turnips, weeding, picking stones, filling dung-carts, &c. There are many dairy-farms in this neighbourhood; and in the dairies the women work very hard. But these farms are generally small, and the wives of the farmers take a great deal of the hard work on themselves,—the heaviest part of it. I know many dairy-farms where the mistress never allows a servant to manage or clean a cheese, nor to touch it after it comes out of the vat, thus performing the severest part of the

labour herself; the servants, however, may work a greater number of hours, but their work is not so fatiguing. The mistresses in many, indeed most, cases have families of children. I should say that the labouring women who work in the fields have harder work to perform than the servants in a dairy; filling a dung-cart, or hoeing turnips, is severer labour than that performed in the dairy, except perhaps by the mistress, but at the same time I think it more healthy.

What are the wages received by women employed in the fields?—At Bowood they get 8*d.* a-day in winter, and 10*d.* in summer. At Studley and Foxton, another part of Bremhill parish, they get 8*d.* a-day, which is the common amount of their wages. At harvest sometimes they get more,—as much as 10*d.* a-day, but they work more.

What are their hours of working?—Not so long as those of the men; they work from nine to ten hours, whilst the men work from six to six. At Bowood the regular hours, except in winter, are from eight to nine hours.

Do they work in the fields more at one age than another?—Girls sometimes begin to work about 14 and 15, but generally after that age; after that they work at all ages; you may occasionally see an old woman of 60 or 70. Age makes no difference in the wages of women.

Have you observed any bad effects to the health or persons of women, from their working in the way you mention?—Not from the work, certainly; the work is a healthy employment.

Are they subject to accidental injuries?—No.

What description of food do they live on?—Bread, potatoes, with a very small quantity of bacon; they sometimes have cabbages from their allotments; they get a little beer, tea, and they drink water.

Is that the food of the family?—Yes, they all live alike.

Do they never get fresh butcher's meat?—Very rarely; hardly ever, unless it is given to them.

Whilst working in the fields, do women work in company with men?—The women generally work together; they don't get on so fast as the men in their work, particularly in reaping and hoeing turnips. Still they are more or less with the men.

What is your opinion as to the effects of their mixing with men in their occupations upon their morals?—I have never perceived any particular effects, or any immoral consequences from it; the character of the women, in this respect, depends much more on the way in which they are brought up, and live at home. I was engaged in taking the late census in Bremhill parish, and in one case in Studley I found 29 people living under one roof; amongst them were married men and women, and young people of nearly all ages. In Studley it is not at all uncommon for a whole family to sleep in the same room. The number of bastards in that place is very great: the number of unmarried women is greater than that in the neighbouring places. I don't think that this state of things is attributable to the women working in the fields, but more to the want of proper accommodation in the cottages.

Does the same state of things exist at Foxton, the adjoining district?—Nothing can be more different than the two places; the people in Foxton are much more orderly and better disposed.

Have you ever thought of a satisfactory reason for this difference?—First, the wages are the same, and the employment just the same for men and women; but in my opinion the difference arises from the circumstance of each family occupying a separate tenement, whilst in Studley that is hardly ever the case. In Studley the population has always been large, and a cottage lets for 3*l.* or 4*l.* a-year easily. In Foxton, where the cottages all belong to the Marquis of Lansdowne, his Lordship lets them at half that rent, but will not allow more than one family to occupy at the same time; each cottage has moreover a small garden. The cottages in

Foxton have at least three rooms, and no family is allowed to occupy fewer. I attribute a great deal to the commodiousness of the dwellings, the superior decency of the manner of sleeping, and the other arrangements of the family at Foxton. The labourers are a very different kind of people to those at Studley.

Are there schools in both places also?—There has never been a school in Studley till the last year and a-half, since the opening of the new church, to which it is attached. It is a Sunday school, and there are already upwards of 300 children who attend the school. The attendance decidedly improves. The children are neatly dressed; and altogether there is no doubt of the population of the district having improved since the opening of the church. Before that time there were hardly 20 inhabitants who lived within two miles of a church.

Do the parents of the children attend church?—Much more than they did: in that respect there is a marked improvement. In a little time there will be a day school, which will do much good. For some years past a great many children of Studley have been placed at the Book-hill school, at the expense of Lady Lansdowne, and have nearly all been put out at different places afterwards. At Foxton, there has been a day school for several years, at which about 50 children are educated. This has much to do with the difference between the two places, yet I am of opinion that the better way of living in Foxton is the great cause of the labourers being better-behaved people.

What information can you give me as to the employment of boys?—Boys begin to work at about 8 years old. They work tolerably hard at 14. At first they have but little wages; they can soon earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a-week, and by the time they are 15 or 16, will earn 6*s.* a-week. Their work is not hard generally, and I should say very healthy.

If they work with men, does not that tend sometimes to corrupt them?—Not so much as what they see and hear at home; I mean when the way of living is as at Studley. It all depends on that.

From the time boys begin to work in the fields, what hours do they work?—Like the men. They are considered as working with the men rather than with the women. But the work is light for a long time; I do not consider that the work they have to perform has any bad effects on their health. I should not say so from looking at them.

Then am I to understand that you do not consider that any bad effects are produced upon their morals in any way from working in the fields from so early an age?—None that I know of.

I understand from you that girls do not begin work in the fields so early as the boys?—They don't begin before 14 or 15.

When a woman, the mother of children, works in the fields, what becomes of the children during her absence from home?—Sometimes a girl will be hired to take care of the children; sometimes there is a grandmother; but it depends on circumstances; if the eldest daughter is old enough, she is left in charge of the others. In a few instances they are left alone, from which serious accidents have happened. I know of two or three cases of deaths from burning of children, since I have been in the neighbourhood. The married women generally have families; in Studley, the average number of a labourer's family is from five to six.

I believe the Marquis of Lansdowne has for some years let small pieces of land to labourers; is that not the case?—It is; there are a great many allotments held by the labourers.

What in general is the size of an allotment, and what rent is paid?—The rent is the same as would be taken of a farming tenant taking a larger quantity; it is neither high nor low. The quantity depends upon my discretion, regulated generally by the size of the family. They are from $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, and an acre each, varying also between those sizes.

To what use are these allotments put by the labourers?—They grow corn

and potatoes on them generally ; sometimes a few other kinds of vegetables. In managing them, the wife and children are of great service to the labourer.

No. 5.

Mr. *Robert Bowman*, Farmer, and Vice-Chairman of the Board of Guardians of the *Calne Union*, examined.

In the parish of Calne there are 5000 people. Formerly there were several factories ; now there is only one, and not more than one-fifth of the manufactures made of what was then the case.

I do not think there is any immorality caused by women working with men in the fields, nor do I think that boys learn any immorality from working at an early age with men ; I think their working in the company of men rather a restraint upon them.

In my opinion, the very best thing for a young boy, the child of a farm-labourer, is to be employed on the same farm with his father : he is learning his work, and is well looked after by both father and master. Nothing can happen to a young boy so advantageous as to be so placed out. I think a boy so employed all day long, being about something, however light, but working in the company of a man, is much better placed than when working or allowed to be with other boys. When young boys are much together, and not well looked after, they teach each other all kinds of wickedness.

I have always had a boy or two at work for me. I think the work improves their health. I generally take them about seven years old and keep them till twelve, and then if they can get a more profitable place elsewhere I let them go. At twelve they have learned a deal of useful knowledge when they are in good hands.

Looking at what boys learn at school, and seeing that now they learn as much at seven or eight as some years ago they did at twelve and fourteen, I think that putting them to work at seven or eight is the very best thing for them, though it necessarily takes them from the day school. They lose school instruction, certainly, but I think the knowledge they get of their future occupation quite compensates for such loss. According to my experience, I find that a boy beginning as early as seven or eight gets a more thorough knowledge of every part of the work wanted about a farm. When he grows up he can turn his hand to everything that is wanted, and consequently gets more lump-work, which in fact is larger wages. But a boy who begins at thirteen, fourteen, or fifteen, never gets beyond a common labourer. At the same time I don't let my boys neglect their Sunday school ; I keep them strictly to that.

From the time I take a young boy he works the same hours as a man, but his work is very light ; it can hardly be called work : it is only some little matter to occupy him, to get him into the habit of being employed, and to keep his hands out of mischief. He then gets on by degrees. Children are much better employed in this way than when stuck up in-doors. A boy thus placed, learning his employment early, and well looked after, is in my opinion quite as well placed as being at school.

I begin by paying him 1s. 6d. a-week. His wages go on increasing, till at twelve years old I give him 2s. 6d. a-week. From the first of his coming to me he is, you may say, off his father's hands. If you take his father's wages at 10s. a-week (which is above the average in this neighbourhood), and five children, and allow the father and mother 2s. 6d. each a-week, that leaves each of the children 1s. each. Another good consequence, therefore, of putting boys out early is the relief it gives to the father.

In the great majority of cases the labourer's family has only the man's wages, 8s. or 9s. a-week, to live on. On that a man and his wife, and

family of four, five, or six children, must live, though it is a mystery to me how they do it. It is a great thing, therefore, for the family if one or more of the children are employed; and so if the wife at hay-time and harvest can earn 4s. or 5s. for some weeks, it helps to pay the rent, which can be done where employment can be found or the circumstances of the family permit. Unless there is a very young child, by paying a girl 9d. or 1s. a-week, with her food, the children are taken care of, and the mother can go out to work.

I don't think women get into any bad habits by going into the fields to work: I know of none that they acquire there. They don't learn to drink: they have no opportunity. The labourers generally do not drink so much beer as formerly. The fact is, they can't get it: I don't know that they desire it less. There certainly are not so many girls of the town in Calne as formerly, when there was more manufacturing.

I don't think the labour in the dairy-farms so hard as it used to be. The press is improved: it was formerly worked by levers, now by machinery, and the labour is much lightened. I never heard of any servant in the dairy being hurt by her work. The mistresses often take the hardest part of the work upon themselves. The work in the dairies is hard, certainly, but not injurious to health, I should say.

For the last seven years the wages of the farm-labourer have been between 8s. and 9s. a-week, but more commonly 9s. than 8s.

I am of opinion that it is owing to a want of a better system of cultivation, which would also benefit the farmer, that wages are so low, and that so many people are out of employment. I am a practical farmer myself, and I think that if a proper system was adopted it would be profitable to the farmer, and that it would at the same time give employment to all the labourers. I speak of the surrounding district, which is tolerably populous. It would not be too much to employ one labourer to every 50 acres of pasture, and one to every 30 acres of arable, and on the dairy-farms a man and a boy to every 50 acres. This would occupy all the labourers and the boys capable of doing work, and it would raise the wages received by the labourers' families, and the poor-rates would sink to nothing.

The poor-rates have been the same for two or three years.

I am not for increasing the size of the allotments: I think half an acre quite as much as a man can manage, and at the same time work properly for his employer, and it gives him great assistance.

No. 6.

Mrs. *Smart*, Wife of ——— *Smart*, *Calne*, *Wiltshire*, Stone-mason, examined.

I went out leasing (gleaning) this autumn for three weeks, and was very lucky: I got, six bushels of corn. I got up at two o'clock in the morning, and got home at seven at night. My other girls, aged 10, 15, and 18, went with me. We leased in the neighbourhood, and sometimes as far as seven miles off.

I have had 13 children, and have brought seven up. I have been accustomed to work in the fields at hay-time and harvest. Sometimes I have had my mother, and sometimes my sister, to take care of the children, or I could not have gone out. I have gone to work at seven in the morning till six in the evening; in harvest sometimes much later, but it depends on circumstances. Women with a family cannot be ready so soon as the men, and must be home earlier, and therefore they don't work so many hours. In making hay I have been strained with the work: I have felt it sometimes for weeks; so bad sometimes I could not get out of my chair. In leasing, in bringing home the corn, I have hurt my head, and have been made deaf by it. Often, out of the hay-fields, myself and my children have come home

with our things quite wet through: I have gone to bed for an hour for my things to get a little dry, but have had to put them on again when quite wet. My health is very good now.

I generally had 10*d.* a-day, sometimes as much as 1*s.* a-day. My husband earns 15*s.* a-week, but his employment is not regular. Our boys are brought up to their father's work.

We pay 7*l.* a-year rent for our cottage and large garden. There are three rooms in the cottage; two bed-rooms, in which we have three beds; and we find great difficulty in sleeping our family. When we wash our sheets, we must have them dry again by night. In the garden we raise plenty of potatoes. We have about a shilling's worth of meat a-week; a pig's milt sometimes; a pound or three-quarters of a pound of suet. Seven gallons of bread a-week; sometimes a little pudding on a Sunday. I can cook a little. I was, before I married, housemaid, and afterwards cook in a family.

No. 7.

Mrs. Britton, Wife of ——— Britton, of Calne, Wiltshire, Farm-labourer, examined.

I am 41 years old; I have lived at Calne all my life. I went to school till I was eight years old, when I went out to look after children. At ten years old I went to work at a factory in Calne, where I was till I was 26. I have been married 15 years. My husband is an agricultural labourer. I have seven children, all boys. The oldest is fourteen, the youngest three-quarters of a year old. My husband is a good workman, and does most of his work by the lump, and earns from 9*s.* to 10*s.* a-week pretty constantly, but finds his own tools,—his wheelbarrow, which cost 1*l.*, pickaxe, which cost 3*s.*, and scoop, which cost 3*s.*

I have worked in the fields, and when I went out I left the children in the care of the eldest boy, and frequently carried the baby with me, as I could not go home to nurse it. I have worked at hay-making and at harvest, and at other times in weeding and keeping the ground clean. I generally work from half-past seven till five, or half-past. When at work in the spring I have received 10*d.* a-day, but that is higher than the wages of women in general; 8*d.* or 9*d.* is more common. My master always paid 10*d.* When working I never had any beer, and I never felt the want of it. I never felt that my health was hurt by the work. Hay-making is hard work, very fatiguing, but it never hurt me. Working in the fields is not such hard work as working in the factory. I am always better when I can get out to work in the fields. I intend to do so next year if I can. Last year I could not go out, owing to the birth of the baby. My eldest boy gets a little to do; he don't earn more than 9*d.* a-week; he has not enough to do. My husband has 40 lugs of land, for which he pays 10*s.* a-year. We grow potatoes and a few cabbages, but not enough for our family; for that we should like to have forty lugs more. We have to buy potatoes. One of the children is a cripple, and the guardians allow us two gallons of bread a-week for him. We buy two gallons more, according as the money is. Nine people can't do with less than four gallons of bread a-week. We could eat much more bread if we could get it; sometimes we can afford only one gallon a-week. We very rarely buy butcher's fresh meat, certainly not oftener than once a-week, and not more than sixpenny worth. I like my husband to have a bit of meat, now he has left off drinking. I buy $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. butter a-week, 1 oz. tea, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. sugar. The rest of our food is potatoes, with a little fat. The rent of our cottage is 1*s.* 6*d.* a-week; there are two rooms in it. We all sleep in one room, under the tiles. Sometimes we receive private assistance, especially in clothing. Formerly my husband

was in the habit of drinking, and everything went bad. He used to beat me. I have often gone to bed, I and my children, without supper, and have had no breakfast the next morning, and frequently no firing. My husband attended a lecture on teetotalism one evening about two years ago, and I have reason to bless that evening. My husband has never touched a drop of drink since. He has been better in health, getting stouter, and has behaved like a good husband to me ever since. I have been much more comfortable, and the children happier. He works better than he did. He can mow better, and that is hard work, and he does not mind being laughed at by the other men for not drinking. I send my eldest boy to Sunday school; them that are younger go to the day school. My eldest boy never complains of work hurting him. My husband now goes regularly to church: formerly he could hardly be got there.

No. 8.

Mrs. *Sumbler*, Wife of ——— *Sumbler*, Farm-labourer, residing near *Calne*, examined.

I have nine children; six at home. My eldest boy is 18; he was taken from school when he was not 10 years old, in order to work. When he began he worked all day, the same hours as men. He had 3*d.* a-day for two seasons, then 2*s.* 6*d.* a-week for two or three years, then 6*d.* a-day, and now 4*s.* a-week. When he was 14 he had the yellow jaundice, from catching cold; the next year he was covered with boils, from a violent cold; and the following year he was laid up for six weeks without being able to do anything owing to his being exposed to wet and cold. He was not an unhealthy boy when he was young. My second son is about 15 years old, and also works on the farm; he has 3*s.* a-week; he had the jaundice with the other. The boys get up at five o'clock in the morning, and sometimes earlier, to look after the cows, and are much exposed to cold. They have their breakfast before they go out, bread, sometimes potatoes and salt, and sometimes a little tea; they dine in the stable, or anywhere, and have their dinner taken to them, generally potatoes, sometimes with a little greens, and a small piece of bacon. They come home to supper,—hot potatoes and a little tea.

I think boys are better when regularly employed. I do not let them go long to school, for they must be earning something. They go regularly to church on Sundays. They cannot go to Sunday school, as they have to look after the cows, being employed on a dairy-farm. They are two good boys. I was employed in a dairy myself for eight years before I married; I had 7*l.* 10*s.* a-year for wages, with lodging and board; but higher wages are given when a servant attends to nothing but the dairy. Where I was, the mistress took the management of the dairy on herself. The work is very hard in a dairy; when cheeses are made twice a-day, the work is never done; the work lasts all day, from three in the morning till nine at night. The work is very hard moving the cheeses to wipe them twice a-day till they are salted; and once a-week all the cheeses in the loft are moved; these cheeses weigh nearly half a hundred-weight. The work on the Sunday is like that of any other day; things cannot stop. Milking is also hard work; an hour and a half in the morning, and the same in the evening. The fatigue sometimes is quite too much.

I have been married 25 years, and have worked all that time in the fields in the spring, and at hay-making and harvest. Sometimes the children have prevented my going out. I have had 8*d.* a-day in the spring for weeding, turnip-hoeing, &c.; 10*d.* a-day for hay-making; and 1*s.* a-day for harvest work. I do not think a great deal is got by a mother of a family going out

to work ; perhaps she has to hire a girl to look after the children, and there is a great waste of victuals and spoiling of things ; and then working in the fields makes people eat so much more. I know it was so with me always. I often say there is not fourpence got in the year by my working out. I have sometimes had a headache from working in the hot sun ; but generally I am better in health when I am out at work.

We have an allotment of one acre all but ten rods. Last year we laid out half an acre in wheat, and had two sacks and a bushel ; the rest in potatoes. We generally fat a pig to sell to pay the shoemaker's bill. This year the pig died, which is a bad job. We never buy butcher's meat. We have about three gallons of bread a-week ; my husband being ill is allowed three gallons more by the guardians ; the rest of our food is potatoes, a little bacon, and sugar and butter. Firing costs us 1s. 6d. a-week. Our house, with the garden, might let for 3*l.* 10s. a-year, but we have it very easy ; we don't pay more than half that.

No. 9.

Mary Hunt, Wife of ——— Hunt, Studley, Wiltshire, Agricultural Labourer, examined.

I am in my fiftieth year. I have had 12 children, and, if it please God, I shall very soon have my 13th. I was left early without father and mother, with a crippled brother, whom I had to help to support. I began to work in the fields at 16. I had to work very hard, and got a good deal of lump-work. I have earned as much as 2s. 6d. a-day at digging, but I was always considered as a very hard worker. I married at 22, and had to put up with a good deal with a young family ; and have often had only salt and potatoes for days together. I was always better when out at work in the fields ; and as for hard work I never was hurt by it. I have carried half a sack of peas to Chippenham, four miles, when I have been large in the family way. I have known what it is to work hard.

I think it a much better thing for mothers to be at home with their children ; they are much better taken care of, and other things go on better. I have always left my children to themselves, and, God be praised ! nothing has ever happened to them, though I have thought it dangerous. I have many a time come home, and have thought it a mercy to find nothing has happened to them. It would be much better if mothers could be at home, but they must work. Bad accidents often happen. I always hold to it to put children out early, and to bring them up to work ; they do better. Families are better altogether when children go out regularly ; the children are better than when kept at home getting into all sorts of mischief.

No. 10.

Mrs. Wilshire, Wife of ——— Wilshire, Farm-labourer, Cherill, near Calne, Wiltshire, examined.

I am 37 years old. I was employed in Mr. Bailey's factory, at Calne, from 16 till near 30. I married my present husband 15 years ago ; I have six children ; the eldest, a boy, 14 years old ; the youngest, also a boy, a year and a half old. I did not leave the factory till after my third child was born. My husband was also employed in the same factory. When there I earned 4s. 6d. to 5s. a-week, and he earned 10s. a-week. For some years he has been a farm-labourer ; and for the last seven months he has had 8s. a-week also two dinners for some extra work he does at his master's house in

cleaning knives, &c. This is all our family has to live on. We occupy a cottage with three rooms, for which we pay 50s. a-year. We have also two small pieces of ground, together 65 perches, for which we pay 2*l.* 7*s.* a-year, and upon which we grow potatoes. We would like to have an acre more, for then we could raise a little corn, and have more bread than now at a cheaper rate. The land we have does not furnish potatoes enough; we have to buy some in the spring. We never see such a thing as butcher's meat. Our food is principally potatoes, with bread. We eat about six gallons of bread a-week. Sometimes, when cheap, we buy $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of butter a-week, but most frequently fat, which we use with the potatoes to give them a flavour. Our neighbour, the Rev. Mr. Guthrie, gives us a little milk. We lay out about 2*½d.* a week in tea, chiefly to let my husband have a comfortable breakfast on the Sunday, the only day he breakfasts at home, and as it is the only thing I indulge in. Our common drink is burnt crust tea. We also buy about $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. sugar a-week. We never know what it is to get enough to eat; at the end of the meal the children would always eat more. Of bread there is never enough; the children are always asking for more at every meal; I then say, "You don't want your father to go to prison, do you?" The eldest child, some time ago, had a swelling in his throat; I don't know what the doctors called it, but they said he must live better, and the guardians allowed 2*s.* a-week for meat for several weeks, and after that a smaller sum for bread, and the child got well. The youngest child is not yet weaned; the other children were nearly as old, though not quite, when they were weaned. Two or three years ago, my husband was employed by a farmer, who was a liberal man, and had 10*s.* a-week; the extra 2*s.* did a great service, it paid rent and firing. We generally get a pig in the spring, and keep it till late in the autumn, and feed it with potatoes off our piece of ground; but it is always parted with to pay the shoemaker, and other tradesmen. We have never killed a pig for ourselves.

No. 11.

Mary Haynes, Widow, Calne, Wiltshire, examined.

I have been accustomed to work in the fields for the last 16 years, all the year through, except just the winter months. I am employed in stone-picking, weeding, hay-making, reaping, turnip-hoeing, heating manure, &c. I have always been employed by the same master, who is particular in his labourers, and whom he pays well. I have always received 5*s.* in summer, and 4*s.* 6*d.* in the other months, a-week; those are the regular wages. I am a good reaper, as good as many men; and in harvest, when I have worked by the job, I have earned 2*s.*, sometimes 2*s.* 6*d.*, a-day, but only for a short time. The hours in harvest depend on the work, at other times from half-past seven in the morning, till five and half-past five in the evening. I think reaping the hardest of all the work I have ever done; it makes me very stiff at first, but that goes off in a few days. I always work in my stays, which get wet through, and they are still wet when I put them on again in the morning. My other clothes are also often wet when I take them off, and are not dry when I put them on again in the morning. I have not a change of clothes; but I have never had my health affected by the hardness of the work or damp things. In general, the women don't mix much with the men whilst working in the fields, except at hay-making. I never heard of anything improper happening from their mixing together. My master was always particular in choosing respectable people to do his work. My husband worked for the same master till he died, not long ago, and always had 10*s.* a-week in summer, and 9*s.* a-week in winter.

I was married nine years before I had a child, and I never had but one, a boy, now about 8 years old. When my husband was alive we did very well, and lived very comfortably, for then we had four gallons of bread a-week,

1 lb. or 1½ lb. of cheese, bacon, salt beef, butter, tea, sugar, candles, and soap, with beer on Saturday night. Our master allowed my husband small-beer during work. Since my husband's death, the guardians allow 1s. 6d. a-week for the child, and I earn (December) 4s. 6d. a-week. I pay—

	s.	d.	
For rent	1	6	a-week
1½ gallons bread	1	6	"
½ lb. candles, ½ lb. soap	0	4½	"
¼ lb. butter	0	2¾	"
Tea	0	1½	"
¼ lb. sugar	0	2	"
Rent of allotment	0	5½	"
	4	4	

The 1s. 8d. that is left goes for firing, shoes, which cost a great deal, &c. My husband hired 54 lugs of land, and I continued it after his death; without it I could not get on. It produces just potatoes enough for me and my child; also, this last year, three bushels of wheat. I manage the ground entirely myself. My father had a little property when I was young, and I was sent to school. I was at school just two years. I was afterwards maid-of-all-work with the master for whom I have always since worked, and afterwards in the dairy. I have always found that being maid-of-all-work was of great use to me after I was married. The work was hard in the dairy, but it never hurt me.

No. 12.

Jane Long, the Wife of Joseph Long, Agricultural Labourer, Studley near Calne, Wiltshire, examined.

I am about 48 years old, and am strong and healthy. I began to work in the fields when I was quite a girl. I have worked for these 35 years in the fields. I cannot work now, perhaps, quite so much as formerly. I began to work at 12 or 13, or even before. I helped my father to bind up the corn when he was reaping when quite a girl. I have reaped myself as much as half an acre a-day, and tied it up. I and another have reaped an acre a-day between us. In harvest I have worked nearly night and day, at the time that I had four or five children. At other times of the year I have worked at all kinds of things in the fields, couching, turnip-hoeing, hay-making, and stone-picking. Hay-making is harder than turnip-hoeing, there is more ground to go over. I would reap quite as soon as be employed in hay-making. At hay-making and other times I went out at six in the morning, and got home at six in the evening; hours are earlier and later at harvest. I generally worked about six months in the year, sometimes, perhaps, rather more. I have been always paid about the same for the same kinds of work. At hay-time and harvest I am paid better than at other times. When a girl I got about 2s. a-week; afterwards 8d. a-day; at hay-time I have always had 1s. a-day; and in harvest I am paid by the lump, and have earned as much as 4s. a-day. I never felt the work hurt me, not when a girl more than since I have been grown up. I often come home too tired to do anything, but always with a good appetite. I was always better when working out in the fields than when I was staying at home. I have had nine children; eight of them are now alive. The youngest, a girl, is 13; we have two other girls, one at service in London, the other at home; our other five children are boys. We had a little parish relief when our children were quite young, but none since the eldest

boy went out, which was when he was about 7 or 8. All my boys worked at that age. I think boys and girls are always better when they are out at work. It makes them better behaved. My boys worked the same hours as men. My three youngest boys, 14, 16, and 18, are now at work five miles off. They start at five o'clock in the morning, and get home at a little after seven at night. They get 2s. 6d., 3s., and 3s. 6d. a-week. They have potatoes and a little tea in the morning, before they start; they take about 1 lb. of bread, and sometimes a little cheese, with them for their dinner, and drink water; at night they have potatoes and tea again for supper. We always lived much as we do now; but better since our children have grown up. We have a little piece of land, half an acre, and get from 30 to 40 sacks of potatoes from it on an average. We keep a pig, which pays the rent. I work on the land myself. We pay 4l. a-year for our cottage, without a garden. There are three rooms in it, two of them bed-rooms. I and my husband and youngest girl sleep in one, the others in the second. I always kept my children at school when I could. I think it much better for boys to go out early; it makes them more orderly and better behaved. My children have always been well disposed. My neighbours have praised them for their good behaviour. I do not think there are any bad consequences to young people from working in the fields. I have heard bad language used; but people will get to laughing together at such times.

No. 13.

Letter from the Hon. and Rev. *S. Godolphin Osborne*, Rector of *Bryanston-cum-Durweston*, *Dorsetshire*.

Bryanston, Dec. 26, 1842.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have great pleasure in submitting to your attention the result of my observation upon the moral and physical condition of the women and children employed in agriculture.

I have now, for more than 11 years, been actively engaged as a clergyman in agricultural districts; for seven years I have acted as a magistrate and *ex-officio* guardian; my opportunity for observation in the matter in question has thus been great.

As to the physical effect of field-labour on women, whatever injury may result from it to their bodily health is, I think, purely accidental. It cannot be denied that exposure to excess of wet or heat is, in many cases, prejudicial, as well to young unmarried women as to those who are wives and more advanced in years. To both classes there are seasons when the quiet and shelter of home would be preferable to exposure to the weather, and to fatigue of body abroad. That women will work too hard up to the hour of their confinement, and too soon afterwards, and that we frequently see serious injury following upon such imprudence, is very true; but I question, if no field-labour existed, whether the same imprudence would not be shown, though in some other form.

I have often known women hard at work at the washing tub, in their own or a neighbour's house, within a few hours of their delivery.

Occasional instances of severe illness occur from over-work in the gleaning season, both to the women and children: but, it must be remembered, this is employment of their own seeking, guided as to its extent by their own will; and as it is always a species of scramble, there is a jealousy in its performance, which, whether the end it seeks be considered praiseworthy or not, is productive of too great and too prolonged exertion at a season when the weather is most trying to the physical powers.

As to the reaping and binding corn; where a woman is thus employed, it is seldom as a hired servant of the farmer; but her husband, being paid

by the acre, she works with him, and virtually *for him*. If she over-works herself it cannot fairly be said that the owner of the farm is to blame.

With regard to "hoeing," or weed-picking, there is exposure to the weather, and perhaps weariness from many hours of stooping, but the women are in general clad for field-work, and I have never known any complaint of the severity of such work.

Hay-making is not severe work; it requires from the women no great exertion of manual strength, and does not generally commence so early in the day, and it is more subject to interruption than other harvest-work.

In dairy countries women are, I fear, often worked beyond their strength. Many of the operations in a large dairy require great muscular exertion, and the women are exposed to damp within doors, as well as to more or less wet without; but I cannot call to my mind any instance in which I have known serious injury to women so employed.

With regard to children, except for bird-keeping or watching cattle, &c., in the field, I do not think that very young children are often employed by farmers; but it frequently happens that a labourer takes wood-cutting, hedging, and thatching by the piece—he then has one or more of his children to assist him, or rather, I should say, to wait on him with his tools. I do not think the child is injured by the amount of labour required of him, but I have seen injury done to children from their having to go with their parent too great distances from home, especially when the circumstances of the parents have not permitted them to give their children sufficient and proper food.

As to bird-keeping, it may appear cruel that a child should have to pass some eight or ten hours a-day apart from all human society, its sole employment the frightening birds from the corn; but I have never yet had any reason to believe that the boys so employed in any way suffer injury from it. Towards the end of the day, they are, doubtless, anxious to return home, and their inquiries of passers-by as to "what o'clock it is," prove how gladly they watch for the hour that is to release them from their day's labour; but this, after all, is no more than any schoolboy feels, who is anxious for the hour when business for the day concludes, and he is released from his books and invited to his evening meal. That these juvenile watchmen do contrive to mix up amusement with their toil, no one who has observed their labyrinths cut in turf, or their carving on gates, trees, or sticks, can doubt; for my own part, I think the importance of their trust, and the knowledge that they are earning wages, goes far to lighten the effect of the monotony of their employment.

Bird-keeping is the earliest work at which boys are employed. Their next stage in labour is the watching cattle or poultry in the field; for this purpose more personal activity is required. Their next step in life is driving the plough, and assisting the carter in the stable, &c.; and then comes the actual holding plough, mowing, ditching, and the usual work of a regular farm-labourer.

I cannot say that, in my experience, I have ever known any of these stages of schooling in out-door employment to tax too heavily the physical powers of the age at which it is entered on, except in cases where, from the parents' neglect or poverty, the constitution has not been dealt fairly with in the way of food.

I have seen the effects of lace-making, straw-plaiting, and button-making, and I have no hesitation in saying that there are many diseases directly proceeding from the confinement of young persons in crowded rooms, the keeping the body constantly in an unnatural position, and the incessant call upon the utmost power of the eye, which these trades require. Thousands of children of agricultural labourers are employed at these species of work. However much I am opposed to field labour for females, I must add that, in my opinion, there is infinitely less physical injury to be feared from it than from employments of the nature spoken of above.

As to the moral condition of the wives and children of agricultural labourers, I must at once affirm that it is far below what it ought to be, but it is not worse than, under the circumstances, we have a right to expect. The rent of a cottage, so constructed as to enable a labourer to rear his family with attention to the common decencies of life, is far beyond what his wages will allow him to give.

To say nothing of the physical injury done to himself and family from the want, in most instances, of anything like proper drainage without his dwelling, and the foul air which they are compelled to breathe from the too confined space of the dwelling within; from infancy to puberty, his children, for the most part, sleep in the same room with his wife and himself; and whatever attempts at decency may be made—and I have seen many most ingenious and praiseworthy attempts—still there is the fact of the old and young, married and unmarried, of both sexes, all herded together in one and the same sleeping apartment. Within this last year I saw in a room about 13 feet square three beds: on the first lay the mother, a widow, dying of consumption; on the second, two unmarried daughters, one 18 years of age, the other 12; on the third, a young married couple, whom I myself had married two days before. A married woman, of thorough good character, told me, a few weeks ago, that on her confinement, so crowded with children is her one room, they are obliged to put her on the floor in the middle of the room, that they may pay her the requisite attention. She spoke of this as, to her, the most painful part of that her hour of trial. I do not choose to put on paper the disgusting scenes that I have known to occur from this promiscuous crowding of the sexes together. Seeing, however, to what the mind of the young female is exposed from her very childhood, I have long ceased to wonder at the otherwise seeming precocious licentiousness of conversation which may be heard in every field where many of the young are at work together. Early robbed by circumstances of much of that purity which is her honour's safest guard, field-work lends a finish to the mischief.

Few persons will take a woman of known laxity of character as a domestic servant, but for out-door work it is rare to find any other qualification required, beyond punctuality to time and activity in the work undertaken; so that the worst characters in a parish are in general the chief leaders in the conversation, as they are the most accustomed to the different kinds of labour in the fields in which the women are employed. I once spoke to a rather wealthy farmer on the impropriety of giving so much beer to the young of both sexes employed in the hay fields, and the allowing unchecked the grossness of their conversation, and the indecency of many of their acts. His answer was to this effect:—"Those young ones would never stick to their work if it was not for the beer I find them, and the fun they make for themselves." I have no hesitation in affirming that field-work for women, let it be overlooked how it may, is liable to great moral abuse; that little overlooked, as it mostly is, it is one of the greatest sources of immorality that I know.

I know that every farthing that can be earned by any member of a labourer's family is of importance to him; but I also believe that the habits gained by this species of employment are of a nature directly leading to a course of life in which far more is eventually squandered in evil than was ever saved for good purposes.

When, too, as in the case of the hop-growing counties, the children of the agricultural labourers are mixed for weeks together with the population that yearly immigrates for the purpose of hop-picking, from London and other large towns, I can see no bounds to the mischief. I wish I could see a remedy for it which would stand any chance of general adoption.

I am well aware of the commonly received opinion, that children are taken too early from school to go to work; but the necessity laid on the parent of obtaining all the help he can towards the support of his family cannot be

denied, and this it is that forces him to get them, as soon as he can, into regular employment.

For my own part, as soon as a boy is capable of taking any situation, which whilst it may afford him some wages at the same time initiates him into the calling by which he is in the end to gain his bread, and gradually inures him to that exposure to the weather which must form a part of his lot, I am glad to see him obtain one. Bird-keeping boys are not, however, removed from school altogether, but are generally "out on leave" for this particular purpose: their education is interrupted, not ended.

The plough-drivers, and those whose strength and age enables them either to work regularly with their father, or take a regular situation on a farm, have in general arrived at a time of life when for many reasons I think it unadvisable to retain them in the day school.

Girls, when taken from school altogether, are mostly either sent to service, or needed at home to assist the mother in the care of the younger children and other household duties. If the parents are of good character I do not much regret this, as it is to be hoped they have been already well grounded at school in religious truth, been taught to read with ease to themselves, and probably to write and sum enough for the situation of life in which they are likely to be placed. If girls are well looked after at home, a few months there between leaving school and going into service is advantageous to them, as they thus pick up some knowledge of household work, and get some experience in the care of young children. If children, as is now usually the case, are, after leaving the day school, allowed to attend the Sunday school, further opportunity is afforded them of advancing in religious knowledge. I cannot but think that children are in most places kept at the day school as long as is advisable, but I am also strongly of opinion that they should be put to school at the earliest possible age. The system pursued at a good infant school gives to a child before it is seven years old as much knowledge as used to be obtained in the old day schools at the age of 12. Let a child on leaving an infant school at seven enter and continue in a good day school, say from two to three years: this, followed up by instruction in the Sunday school to the age of 13 or 14, and I imagine that the result will be, that enough of religious and general knowledge will have been obtained to lead the mind through life to profit by what it has already learned, and to seize every opportunity of procuring for itself more experience as well in spiritual as in secular things.

The habits of order and cleanliness, the habit of strict obedience maintained in every good infant school; the fact that the children are taken at the very earliest moment they can be taught anything, and instructed in a manner adapted to their age in things that shall profit them as well in this as the next world; the getting them away for so many hours from the crowded cottage, its impure air, and too often its unprofitable examples,—all this has made me feel from experience that the infant school, when it is well managed, is of all instruments in our hands one of the most powerful in improving the moral character of the poorer classes of society.

In some parishes there are evening schools for adults: they prove most useful, giving as they do opportunity to many young persons who wish to improve themselves of snatching an hour or two hours' instruction after their day's work; they should receive every encouragement.

There are also adult schools for young women, to which, after they have left the day school, they are admitted for a part of the day to learn the art of cutting out clothes and the various species of needlework which may be required of them in "good service:" they are also further instructed in religious knowledge. Under proper management these schools are most valuable: without taking the young female entirely from home, thus permitting her there to acquire a practical knowledge of many things required in "service," they still keep her under the eye of her superiors, within reach of the advice of those who are best qualified to advise, and this at an age

when proper superintendence is most valuable, and a word of friendly advice from those she has been taught to love and respect will often rescue from habits tending to ruin. There can be no question but that the sooner young women can be fitted for and get out into service the better for them, and I know no way in which the higher classes can better direct their charity than in promoting every means of fitting the female children of the village poor for respectable service.

Let me now call your attention to one of the most destructive sources of evil to which the character of the young female is exposed in the agricultural districts. In many counties it is the custom to hire lads and girls for farm-work at what are called "Statute Fairs," known amongst the poor as "Staties," "Mops," or "Wakes." Some second-rate country town is in general the scene of these assemblages: a few shows, a few stalls for the sale of toys, &c.; a good many itinerant singers and sellers of ballads, many of which are of the most obscene character; a certain number of fiddlers in a certain number of public-houses and beer-shops, comprise the chief attractions of the fair. The business part of it consists in the exhibition of a large number of young lads and girls, dressed in all the finery they can muster, that they may be seen, as they think, to the best advantage, and be hired on the spot by those masters or mistresses who come to such places to seek for servants. Apparent strength and health are the only requisites, with the exception of a professed knowledge to a greater or less degree of the duties of the situation for which they propose themselves. Mothers with a girl of bad character at home will often say, "Well, she must go to the next staties, and as she is stout and healthy she'll be hired fast enough." Accordingly such girls are cleaned and dressed up for the fair, are often at once hired, and as often within a few months have to appear on summons before a bench of magistrates, that the said hiring may, for some dishonest or profligate conduct, be terminated. Those only who have witnessed them can form any idea of the scenes of vice which these fairs become late in the day: I know no language of reproach too strong to apply to them, and I think one of the first duties of the legislator, who seeks to throw the protection of the law over the moral character of the young in country districts, will be either to put an end to, or at least appoint some efficient superintendence over, these fairs.

As to the crimes most common amongst the class we have been considering, wood-stealing is the most common overt act of crime they commit: it is practised in some districts to an immense extent by women and young children. The boys at an early age but too often take to turnip-stealing and poaching.

As a magistrate I have frequently found these crimes to originate in a great measure from circumstances of a local character. Where there is a poor straggling village, with few, if any, resident gentry, at a distance from any market at which fuel could be purchased at a price within the poor man's means; where wages are low and work difficult to be got—and these two things are in general indicative of a population too large for the locality, which again is a cause of house rent being high from the number of dwellings being disproportioned to the population,—in such a district I am not surprised if fuel and food are both obtained dishonestly.

We are too apt to forget that the poor are often so situated that they have no market within their reach at which they can procure many of the absolute necessities of life, and this is especially the case with regard to fuel. Unless they have a right of turf-cutting, or the proprietors of woods will sell fuel on the spot, they are often wholly without the means of procuring it honestly.

If a market for fuel is within the labourer's reach, I have never found any difficulty in getting him to lay by, in small instalments through the summer, sufficient money to purchase his winter's stock of that article, but the expense of its carriage from any distance is a complete bar to his obtaining

it at all. From no limited experience I can say, that the only way in which wood-stealing can be successfully checked is by first placing fuel at a fair price within reach of the poor man, and then showing a firm determination to prosecute in every case in which the stealing it is detected. There is, however, a very great disinclination on the part of the farmers, generally speaking, to prosecute a labourer, let him be discovered in what theft he may. This may arise from the expense and trouble of a prosecution: it does, I know, often arise from fear of injury to their property by the associates of the criminal, or from himself, should he be acquitted, or only sentenced to some short term of imprisonment. I think, too, instances might be found of this feeling arising from a cause which you may gather from the following argument of a farmer:—"I know Will ——— is a thief; he has robbed me. He robs us all in turn—something from one, something from another. However, he has a large family: they cost us nothing now out of the rates; but if we put him in prison we must put them in the union, and that would cost us a pretty deal." Whilst I trace the immorality of the labouring classes to defective education, the want of means to preserve decency in their families, and the temptations to intemperance which are to be found in the manner in which the beer-shop keepers, unchecked by legal interference, offer at every hour of the day, and almost every hour of the night, all the inducements likely to draw the labourer from home, and to fix him in a love of drink and bad company, I trace much of the crime he commits to *absolute want*. I am satisfied that the law should, under any and every circumstance, be enforced against offenders when detected, and that every means should be used for their detection; but is it not the bounden duty of the higher and middling classes of society to endeavour at any cost to place the labourer, as far as possible, in such a condition as shall afford him the option of acquiring for himself and children right principles of action towards his fellow-men, and the means of obtaining by his own industry all that is necessary for his own and his children's support? The law must be held in respect; but who shall justify us in placing any of our fellow-creatures in a position in which, whilst they have little encouragement to do right, they have every temptation to do wrong.

With regard to the general condition of the agricultural labourer, I believe the public to be less informed, or worse informed, than about that of any other class of society. His most common vices are, it is true, pretty well known, for they have been exposed with no hesitating pens, have been officially proclaimed throughout the length and breadth of the land; but the hardships of his life at best, its temptations, the hindrances to its improvement, the scanty remuneration afforded for his hardest labour, the ingenious methods used to hold him in thralldom, permitting him neither to work where he likes, at the wages he could obtain, or to spend those he does obtain where he chooses; the manner in which he often sees the welfare of the beast he drives more valued than his own, and his own welfare often sacrificed to some caprice of his employer—threatened with the "Union House" if he refuses them, his wages are settled by the combined interest or opinion of the employers around him, forced to pay an exorbitant rent for a dwelling in which he cannot decently rear his family: if he is single, he is to receive less for the sweat of his brow than if he was married; if he does marry, every ingenuity is used to make him feel that he is regarded as one about to increase the burdens of the parish, to say nothing of the ingenuity used to shift him into some other parish,—these are parts of his condition on which the public are not so well informed, or at least of which they seem to act in perfect ignorance. Let the charitable do what they will to increase the comforts and elevate the character of the poor of a parish, alas! but too often because Parish A is thus more favoured than parish B, it is made the pretext for raising the rent of the labourer's dwelling, and diminishing the amount of his wages.

I do, Sir, sincerely hope that this your present commission may be but

the forerunner of one that shall thoroughly investigate the condition of the labourer—his moral, social, and physical condition. Let the public have *bonâ fide* evidence of the labourer's condition, and I feel confident the wonder will be,—not that this class of the community have from time to time shown a disaffected spirit,—not that evidence of their immorality, dishonesty, and extravagance abounded,—not that they are daily becoming more and more burdensome upon the poor-rates, but that they have borne so long the hardships of their condition, have not been urged to greater crimes—that any of them can at all, at the prices they have to pay for rent, fuel, and food, honestly support their families out of the wages they receive. I cannot say that their wives and children are subject to any physical injury from the nature of the employments in agriculture in which they engage, but I do assert, of the agricultural labourers as a class, that they have found fewer friends of any weight to contend for their rights in high places, and more enemies to their moral and physical improvement at their own doors, than any other class of society. Attachment to their superiors, respect for their employers, loyalty to their rulers, is fast passing away; they have found themselves made the subjects of experiments, the smart of which they have felt, but the intention of which they could not understand. Their education has occupied the mind of the public chiefly as a scene for party strife; their relief in age or sickness has been discussed in a philosophical tone, of which the most forbidding features were the only ones they could appreciate. Pamphlets on cottage husbandry, plans for cottage buildings, tracts on morality, treatises on economy, have been sent forth with no sparing hand; but in nine villages out of ten the cottage is still nothing but a slightly improved hovel, morality is borne down by the pressure of temptation on minds unfortified by education in good principles, and the wages of the stoutest and most industrious scarce find the coarsest food, the smallest sufficiency of fuel. In my opinion, unless those above them soon determine to give up some of their own luxuries, that they may give to the labourer such wages as shall enable him to rear his family in comfort in a dwelling in which decency can be preserved, and within reach of a school, and a church in which he and his may be taught the learning fitted for their station here, and tending to place them in the way to heaven hereafter—unless some great effort is made to obtain these objects, our peasantry will become not the support they should be to the country, but a pregnant source of all that can tend to subvert its best institutions.

Yours truly,

S. GODOLPHIN OSBORNE.

*To Alfred Austin, Esq.,
Assistant Poor Law Commissioner.*

No. 14.

Statement of the Rev. *Henry Austen*, Curate of *Pimperne, Dorset*.

I have held the curacy of Pimperne 23 years. We have a school for the children of the labouring classes, with nearly 100 boys and girls. Each child pays 1*d.* a-week, which is returned, with an extra shilling for good behaviour, at the end of the year. The boys are taken from school to go to farm-work from 11 to 12 years old. I think that is not too early to make them skilful labourers. We have had a few instances of boys kept at the school till they were seventeen, and it was found that they could not at that age, and after habits acquired in attending school so long, turn to that kind of labour. They continue to loiter about the village, and become idle. Girls generally leave the school at about 15 or 16, now and then remaining until 17.

Since I have been here, I have had the opportunity of seeing children grow up, who were in the school: I find them always thankful for having received an education; and they are better fathers and mothers, and superior in all respects, when compared with others who have received no educa-

tion, or with those who went before them. The parish has been extremely benefited by the school. I find the strongest desire always on the part of parents in the parish to send their children to the school; and I find a corresponding increase of attendance at church and at the sacrament.

Mrs. Austen, who has always given her personal attention to the poor, visiting their cottages, and watching over the conduct of the children, observes a considerable improvement in their habits, particularly amongst the women, which she cannot but attribute to their better education.

A few years since I established an evening school for boys and young men, whose time during the day was taken up by their work, and I have much reason to be satisfied with the result. They formerly paid 4*d.* a-week. I am happy to say that I am now enabled to let them come free, the expenses being made up by subscriptions. I observe that the young lads who were inattentive as children at the day-school now attend the evening school, and are most anxious for instruction. The school is open from six to eight, and the young people who come home tired at five o'clock from their work, take their meal and hasten to their school with manifest pleasure. This evening school is open for the four winter months, beginning in November; and I feel it has a most important advantage in one respect, it keeps the young man out of the beer-shop, and other mischief, and finds him a rational and instructive pursuit. It is held in the National school-room; and the scholars have the use of the books, desks, &c., supplied to the day-school, the master of which superintends for a little additional gratuity. They are divided into classes, according to their proficiency in reading; they read some chapters from the Scriptures, and other books of religious instruction, write, and those who have been at the day-school resume their arithmetic. The number of scholars of course varies; sometimes we have had between 40 and 50; another year not more than 30. Their ages from 11 to 20. Seeing the change produced by the schools in this village, I should consider it a most lamentable case for any parish to be without them.

I should say that the constant employment of women in field-labour tends to degrade them extremely. They get into the company of young men, and often hear improper language, and become very bold; indeed few if any of our younger females seek such employment, except in the hay and corn-harvest. The poor people have to struggle with the want of proper accommodation in their dwellings, which I fear is too general in our rural districts. A man and his wife, with a large family of children, have in most cases only two bed-rooms. There are instances of a man and wife, and several children, sleeping in one bed-room. But, as they grow up, neighbours, for their mutual accommodation, sometimes arrange so that the boys and girls of two families shall occupy separate apartments.

I think 11 years old a very proper age for boys to begin farm-work, and do not think that it need at all obstruct their religious or moral improvement with a punctual attendance at the Sunday and evening schools, both of which many readily avail themselves of after they are so employed: I do not think that even their mental improvement is too much interfered with by their being employed at that age.

No. 15.

Extract from Communication from the Rev. J. C. Prattent, Curate of *Stourpaine, Dorset*.

I am of opinion, nay, I am certain, because I can prove it, that the employment of children in agriculture is attended with the worst effects in a moral and religious point of view. The frequent absence of the children from school, in most instances required by the necessitous condition of their parents or friends, is productive of bad effects. But as regards the total removal of the boys from school at the above-named early ages, eleven to

thirteen, the evil of so doing is very great. The boys are employed as helpers in stables, or at ploughing, or to a shepherd; they feel it an emancipation from school discipline, a considerable step towards manhood: they now come under the influence of the carter, ploughman, or shepherd, and also of other boys somewhat their seniors,—an influence of a very different, and generally of a much worse kind, than that of the schoolmaster or mistress. They imitate the more matured accomplishments of their new master in obscene and foul language, profane swearing and drinking, and are thus directly on the road to becoming very bad characters. Most of these boys might attend the Sunday school; but I never knew an instance of a boy being wholly taken away from the day school and continuing to attend the Sunday school afterwards. Among the peasantry, I should say that generally the parents not only do not exercise their parental authority, but do not even possess it. Ignorant and vicious themselves, what notion of the parental duties can they have? What authority can they possess? Such is the state of things at present in Stourpaine, and I am certain in hundreds of other rural parishes, and for which I can divine no other remedy than that the owner or owners of lands or of houses should strenuously support parish and Sunday schools, and exercise that influence which the sense of interest on the part of their tenants gives them over such tenants for the promotion of good morals and religion. Let the labouring class see that they depend upon the observance of the decencies of life, and moral and religious conduct for employment and the means of comfortable living—let them thus experience the respective consequences of virtue and vice. Till this take place, ministers will labour, and schools will exist, and be attended to with little permanent good effect. Let everything be done, that in fairness can be done, for the temporal comfort of the labouring classes; and then let them be made to feel that their comfort depends on their own conduct.

No. 16.

Communication received from the Vicar of the parish of *Hilton, Dorset.*

There is no regular charity or free day school for the children of the poor at Hilton, but there is a pay school kept, in which the children of small farmers and shop-keepers, &c., of Hilton and other adjoining parishes are educated, at the cost of their parents. Into this school the Vicar of Hilton at present puts twelve poor boys, from the age of six to twelve years, who, in addition to 5*l.* per annum paid for them by the vicar, and 1*l.* 1*s.* by the Rev. H. Boucher, lessee of the rectorial tithes, pay one penny each per week to the master, for which they are taught to read, the rudiments of religion, and to write words and arithmetical figures on slates.

The population of Hilton being about seven hundred, consisting almost entirely of very poor agricultural labourers, a daily charity school, free to all, is greatly needed, though there is no prospect of obtaining voluntary support for one in the parish beyond what might be expected from the vicar, the lessee of the rectorial tithes, and the chief landed proprietor, who at present is a minor.

The children of the parish are generally engaged very young to follow the plough, waggon, or to tend birds and sheep, in preference to lads from twelve to sixteen years of age, who between these ages are left very much in idleness for want of employment, or if they obtain it, it is at a rate of wages which scarce procures them bread alone. Very bad habits are consequently acquired by many of the youths of the parish from their being so much out of employment. Were there a day school, the children from ten to thirteen years of age would, I fear, be very much hindered the benefits of it by their being employed as above stated.

There is a Sunday school at Hilton, in which from eighty to ninety children are taught to read, and the rudiments of the Christian religion, &c.,

by the master of the private daily pay school, who receives for his trouble only 5*l.* per annum,—a very inadequate remuneration for so many children.

The age of the children attending the Sunday school is from five to fifteen years, the elder assisting as teachers. I am not aware that any are hindered attending the Sunday school by parish apprenticeship, and believe there are none such in the parish. But many boys are hindered in part, if not entirely, from coming to the school or church, by being employed to attend on farm-horses in the stable, or birds and sheep in the fields, on Sunday, which, if it does not necessarily prevent their attendance during the whole day, of either school or church, yet affords them an excuse, which they are too apt to take advantage of, for staying away altogether. This, however, might be prevented if their masters were careful in regulating their time, and requiring their attendance at school and church. Many children are also hindered in their attendance for want of decent clothes or shoes,* owing to the extreme poverty of the parents, their wages generally being only seven or eight shillings per week, and many of them frequently out of employment.

The children generally are apt and quick in learning, and the people mostly anxious for education and knowledge, which is evinced by the old lamenting their want of instruction in youth, and those of all ages eagerly taking advantage of a lending library, consisting of one hundred and eighty volumes of useful and religious knowledge, established last spring by the vicar, and from which about one hundred volumes are in constant use among the people, and exchanged by them every month.

I consider that the system of education best adapted for the poor of this parish would be an infant school, in which children from five to twelve years only might be admitted; unless youths of from twelve to fifteen years (whose services are now required, when they can procure work, towards the support of the family,) were to be kept at school. If the younger children, however, were not employed at all in the fields till after twelve or thirteen years old, but kept entirely at school, it would be better for their moral education and habits. At present they are kept at work, and sometimes hard work, though earning no more, I believe, than 1*s.* per week for the benefit of the family.

The character of the people is patient, enduring, thankful, and civil, but either from extreme poverty, or the habit from earliest youth of seeking their fuel in the woods or fields, they are rather given to pilfering.

No. 17.

Communication from *Henry F. King, Esq., of Blandford, Dorsetshire,*
Surgeon, one of the Medical Officers of the *Blandford Union.*

Blandford, Feb. 16, 1843.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th, and feel obliged to you for furnishing me with an excuse for my neglect; but, in truth, I have been most fully engaged, and equally true that the memoranda you left with me escaped my memory. I yesterday visited several parishes in my district, and have, as far as I could, made the necessary inquiries. I was pretty well acquainted with them before, but I wished to be as correct as I could. First, with regard to the average wages of able-bodied men. I find the wages are generally 7*s.* and 8*s.* per week, in some few cases 9*s.* They occasionally earn more for a short time by task-work, but I believe the average per week will not exceed 8*s.* or 9*s.* In this place and neighbourhood women are not much employed in out-door work, but when they are it is chiefly in weeding and hacking turnips. I certainly think that women ought not to be employed in agricultural labour in the

* There is a clothing-club established in the parish, but, with one exception, none of the farmers contribute to its support for the benefit of their labourers.

winter, for they [must be necessarily exposed to the vicissitudes of the weather, and, from the nature of their employment, must be very frequently wet about the feet and legs, which often proves very injurious to the general health. In the summer the work is of a different sort, and I do not consider that much (if any) mischief would result from it, and I believe that they look forward to the hay and corn harvest with pleasure. I should add that women, when they are employed in out-door labour, do not work on wet days, as the farmers well know that on these days they cannot get their *quid pro quo*. During the winter a woman's wages is 8*d.* a-day; in summer the same, with the addition of drink, and sometimes food. I find that the hours of work, on the average of winter and summer, will be about 11 hours a-day,—of course allowing a short time for meals. With regard to the children, they are generally sent out to work at the ages of eight or nine, and some as young as seven years of age. They assist occasionally in ploughing, but more generally in bird-keeping, attending cows, pigs, and horses, when at field. The labour of these *infants* is seven days a-week, for the same duties (excepting plough) continue on Sundays. The consequence is, they seldom, if ever, enter a place of worship, and leave the parish schools much too early to obtain, in my opinion, any religious ideas. Morally speaking, I should say it is a miserably bad system to prevent these children from attending daily and Sunday schools, and the church; for by degrees it insensibly, but as certainly, leads to the formation of loose, bad characters. Physically speaking, I think it does, in children so young, produce severe chills and colds, &c., &c., which occasionally terminate in other diseases which prove injurious in after-life (I have known such instances). They are, during the most severe weather, constantly exposed to its vicissitudes, and at an age much too young, when much more advantage, morally as well as physically speaking, would have been derived by their being at school, and attending more regularly a place of worship. But I find, on investigation, this is not so much the fault of the employers as of the parents, who are too glad to add a small sum to their weekly income. The average pay of these children is, as nearly as I can find out, as follows:—From 8 to 12 years, 1*s.* and 1*s.* 6*d.* per week; after 12, to 14 or 15 years, from 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* I now proceed to the females. Young females generally attend schools daily; *very few* are employed in agricultural pursuits. At school they are employed in needle-work, reading, and writing; and generally three or four days a-week are allowed for making buttons, which in this neighbourhood is a considerable trade. But then children, whilst at school, do not earn more than 3*d.* or 4*d.* a week; some not more than 1½*d.* In regard to the employment of young females in out-door work, it is, in my opinion, improper that, during the winter season (at any rate), they should be exposed to the weather, and most probably just at the age of puberty, when the general health is of the greatest importance, the work during this season being hoeing turnips, &c., &c., in which employment they must be necessarily much exposed to wet and cold. The daily and Sunday schools are, I believe, well conducted. Many of them are gratuitous, and few pay more than 1*d.* or 1½*d.* per week, and this is repaid by buttoning. I should also mention, that in some parishes the unmarried able-bodied labourer receives less wages than the married; this is, in my opinion, wrong, and tends to early marriages, with their consequences. I should also add, that I find from my own experience, and from those of whom I have made inquiries, that where there are most cider and beer houses, there is most poverty, with its consequent distress.

I remain, dear Sir,

Your obedient servant,

H. F. KING.

To Alfred Austin, Esq.

&c. &c. &c.

No. 18.

Edward Oke Spooner, Esq., Blandford, Surgeon, examined.

I have been one of the medical officers of the Board of Guardians for the Union of Blandford, from the formation of the union.

I attend the district of the union comprising the parishes of Charlton, Speterburgh, Langton, Pimperne, Crawford, Gunville, Hinton, Keyneston, Launceston, Monkton, Rawston, and Rushton, together containing an area of 22,000 acres, and a population of 3625 souls, according to the last census.

If women avoid exposure to wet, especially at certain critical times, I am of opinion that employment in agricultural labour is not injurious to them. Of course, the labour is understood to be the ordinary light kind of labour they perform in the spring and at harvest.

I have found much more disease in women of sedentary habits of the same class, such as those employed in button making and household service. Where women have no out-door exercise, chlorosis, constipation, and indigestion are found, which are very uncommon with women who labour in the fields.

Women who labour in the fields like men, are, if exposed to too much wet and cold, subject to rheumatism and catarrhs. Women in particular should, especially at certain times, avoid such exposure. Exercise in the open air, under proper limitations, renders people less susceptible of the morbid effects of atmospheric changes.

I think that girls, under the age of puberty, ought not to be subjected to labour, and that, moreover, they should not be exposed to cold and wet. Girls, before they arrive at the age in question, are much more liable to contract diseases from the same causes than afterwards, when they are full grown and functionally perfect.

I am of opinion that, generally speaking, boys above 12 years of age are the better for employment in agricultural labour: it tends to develop their persons and strength. Generally they are strong and hearty, and better in health from the employment. I have known, however, cases of boys having inflammation of the knee-joint, periostitis, and rheumatism, from being over-fatigued, and working exposed to cold and wet in the open air. I have at the present time, under my care, a boy with knee inflamed, from being too much on his legs all day, from over-walking at an early age. It is like over-working a young horse, which produces diseases known by the names of splents, and spavins, and joint lamenesses. These things happen sufficiently often to make it necessary that care should be taken in working boys. Sometimes their work is very hard—too fatiguing for their years. Scrofula is frequently developed by exposure to cold and wet; it appears in such cases in the form of consumption, glandular enlargements, and diseases of the bones and joints. Boys of a scrofulous habit are occasionally exposed to a degree of wet and cold injurious to them which would not produce any ill consequences in a healthy boy.

Generally the cottages are too small for the families living in them, and tend to produce and aggravate disease from the inmates living so closely together. Two years ago typhus fever occurred in a neighbouring parish, which I attend. There was one cottage I attended, which consisted of one room on the ground-floor, and two small bed-rooms up stairs. In this cottage lived an old man, with his wife, his two daughters, middle-aged women, and his son and wife, with their children—in all, ten individuals. The whole family had the fever, some of them very severely. The son's wife, with two of her children, were on a bed in an out-house. In the out-house was a well, and a large tub containing pig's victuals, and was the general receptacle for everything. The floor was earthen, with no ceiling but the thatch of the roof. In the same village there were more than 40

cases of typhus, and the spread of the disease must be attributed to the people living so closely packed together.

I have had opportunities, in my professional practice, of knowing that immoralities take place at harvest-time, from the opportunities offered by the way in which men and women are employed together; but there are many instances where women behave with propriety, though engaged a good deal in the fields. Still the nature of the employment must offer opportunities which men and women will avail themselves of. The free intercourse at such times between the men and women, and the conversation that is carried on too frequently, must be dangerous to young females, and make them yield more easily. Generally speaking, the women who go from the town of Blandford, and villages in the immediate neighbourhood, to work in the fields, are not so steady as those who stay at home, engaged about other things; but in the more distant villages that is not the case.

The club-feasts in the villages are also other opportunities for immorality. These festivals occur generally in Whitsun-week, and I have known men drunk every day, from the beginning to the end of the week, going about from one club to another. The festivals are often attended by prostitutes from a little distance. I am often consulted after the clubs by men for a certain disease contracted at such times. I have known cases of married women diseased in the same way, the disease derived from their husbands, who have been at these clubs.

Too often, young women of the agricultural class are pregnant before marriage, and marriage takes place in consequence of it. I think that this arises from the mingled employment of men and women in the hay and harvest fields, and often in consequence of the immorality attending the festivals of the clubs. The married women I should consider generally chaste, and remarkable for sobriety, fond of their children, and attentive to their husbands, on whose labour they depend.

A great cause of the present state of the labourer's cottage and way of life is the want of instruction of the women of that class in domestic economy. The women have no knowledge of cooking, or of anything else to increase the comforts of their lives; the ignorance of the majority in common culinary management and economy is excessive.

The food of the labourer's family is bread and potatoes, with a little cheese and bacon. I know many families who do not taste butcher's meat from one year's end to the other. I do not think that there is a deficiency of food, except in special cases of distress arising most frequently from drunken habits, and such a general loss of character as to interfere with profitable employment; or, in cases of very large families, where the children are young; but I think the quality of the food is too low.

No. 19.

Thomas Fox, Esq., Solicitor, of Beaminster, Dorset, examined.

Are you acquainted with the condition and habits of agricultural labourers?—I have for the last 40 years had the care of several of the largest estates in Dorset, viz.: those of Mr. Damer, of Milton Abbey; of Mr. Compton, the member for South Hants; of Sir William Oglander, and several others; and, during the greater part of that time, clerk to the magistrates for this division.

What are the parishes of Dorsetshire with the labouring population of which you are best acquainted?—Beaminster, Netherbey, Mapperton, Milton Abbas, Whitechurch, Stickland, and Hilton.

In these parishes, or in which of them, are women employed in field or farm labour?—In all.

Is such employment for the whole, or the greater part, of the year, or only

during hay-time and harvest?—Chiefly in hay-making and in harvest; some few in hoeing turnips and weeding wheat.

Can you state the number of hours in the day during which women are employed at the different seasons of the year?—In hay-making, commonly from eight in the morning until six in the evening; occasionally, when carting the hay, later. In weeding wheat, from eight to six; and in hoeing turnips, at their own will, that work being generally done at a price agreed on by the acre.

Which of the kinds of labour, of these you have mentioned, do you consider the most fatiguing for women?—Hay-making.

Which do you consider the most calculated to affect the health of women?—I do not consider either of those employments at all likely to affect their health.

Do you know of any instances of women being injured by any one of the kinds of labour in question?—Certainly not.

Has the amount or nature of the employment of women in agricultural labour varied of late years?—I think it has lessened; for wherever a spinning mill has been erected, the young women all seek employment therein, and cannot be prevailed to take any out-door work.

Generally, do you think that the employment of women in the ways you have mentioned is beneficial or injurious to their health?—I think the out-door labour beneficial.

Are girls employed in the same descriptions of labour?—But few in agricultural labour, chiefly in spinning in this western part of Dorset, either in the mills, or at what is called at the long-turn, out-doors.

At what ages are they employed in agriculture?—From 15 years.

What is the effect of such labour on their health?—The employment, out-door, either in agriculture or spinning, in my belief, is not injurious; but not so in the mills.

Do you think it would be better for girls, as far as their health is concerned, not to be employed in the work you have mentioned before they reach the age of puberty?—The agricultural labour, and spinning out of doors, being both light, I do not consider it can have any prejudicial effect.

Have you had opportunities of making observations respecting the women and girls occupied in button making in the districts you have mentioned?—I have, in the parish of Milton Abbas, chiefly from my occasional residence there.

Do you think that particular employment affects their health?—I do not.

Do you think their health is worse than that of women and girls, of the same age and circumstances, employed in agriculture?—I do not; a more healthy set of young women cannot be seen than those employed in making buttons, at Milton Abbas and the adjoining parishes.

Have you any reasons to offer for such opinion?—From their good looks, and from the knowledge that but few assemble together at their work—that they work only as long as they please, and take exercise in the open air.

What wages do women and girls receive for the several kinds of employment in agriculture?—The farmers generally give them 8*d.* per day, other persons 10*d.*

Have they any advantages besides the wages you mention?—In hay-making they have at least three pints of liquor, either ale or cider.

Have their wages always been the same?—I think of late years the wages have increased 2*d.* per day.

Are girls employed more or less than formerly in agricultural labour?—No.

Whilst working in the fields, or in farm-labour, are women and girls thrown necessarily into the company of men?—Yes.

Is this circumstance unfavourable to their morality?—No.

Does any immorality arise from the opportunities offered by men and

women being thus thrown together for improper conversation and conduct?—Generally I think not.

Do you think that women, whether married or single, are exposed to improper solicitations whilst thus mixing with men in their work?—The employment being so open, and in numbers together, I should think it scarcely occurs.

More so than if they were not employed in such work?—No.

Do you think that there is such an amount of immorality produced by women and girls working in the fields as to make it desirable that such employment should be discontinued?—No.

Have you any means of ascertaining, and can you state, what proportion of married women, unmarried women, and girls are employed in agricultural labour in the districts in this county with which you are acquainted?—I am of opinion that double the number of married women are employed in agricultural labour to the unmarried, and a less proportion of girls.

At what age are boys employed in the districts you are acquainted with?—From 10 years of age.

What age do you think is the best for boys to go out to work, in order to become good farm-labourers?—Boys are unable to do any work profitable to their employer under 14 or 15 years—but they are employed from 10 years, and some under that age, in keeping birds from newly sown corn.

What are your reasons for that opinion?—That they have not sufficient strength to do any labour.

Will you state the various kinds of occupations of boys in farm-labour at different seasons of the year, and at different ages?—The earliest employment of boys is that of keeping birds off the corn—then of keeping sheep during the day feeding on open down lands: and if strong lads, as carters' boys, and in hay-making.

Do you think any of the employments too laborious for boys at the ages they undertake them?—No.

Are you aware of any ill effects on the health of boys, from any of the employments you have mentioned?—No.

Are boys in any such employments on their legs too much in the day?—No.

Are they exposed to too great a degree of cold and wet, or for too long a time?—Those employed in keeping birds from the newly sown corn generally contrive to get a little fire under some sheltered spot in the field, and very often are covered over head with a hurdle; so also do the shepherd's boys.

What are their usual hours of work at different seasons of the year?—From six to six.

What wages do they get at different ages, and different seasons of the year?—On their first going out to keep birds, from 1s. to 1s. 6d. weekly, rising gradually to about 4s.

Are boys taken from school too early in order to be put to work?—I fear they are.

After they go to work do you think that Sunday schools are sufficient to continue their instruction, both moral and religious?—Yes.

What is the effect upon the morals of a boy from working in company with men or women, or both, in the fields?—I do not think that they are materially injured by it, speaking generally, but much depends on the conduct of the elder.

Does he hear worse language, or is he witness to more improper conduct in the fields than if remaining at home unemployed?—I believe not.

Are there, in your opinion, any bad consequences to the morality of boys working in farm-labour, sufficient to make it desirable to prevent such employment before a certain age?—No.

What, in your opinion, are the chief circumstances which tend to the demoralization of the labouring population?—The curse of the country—beer-shops, chiefly.

Is the want of commodious dwellings one of such circumstances?—It certainly is.

Can you form any opinion as to the cause of the general want of commodious dwellings in the districts you are acquainted with?—The cost of building is the principal cause of the want of commodious dwellings for the labourer's residence.

Generally speaking, do you not find that there is a very great deficiency in the number and size of the sleeping-rooms occupied by labourers?—Certainly there is. In the erection of new cottages on the estates where I have the management, I invariably so construct the cottage that it contains one sitting-room below, with a pantry, and a place for their fuel, with three bed-rooms over,—one with a fire-place; and no landlord should ever permit a cottage to be built without these accommodations. I regret that I cannot take you to the parish of Hook (near here), the whole parish belonging to the Duke of Cleveland, occupied by a tenant of the name of Rawlings, where the residences of the labourers are as bad as it is possible you can conceive—many of them without chambers—earth floors—not ceiled or plastered,—and the consequence is, that the inhabitants are the poorest and worst off in the country, by far.

Are you of opinion that such a want of proper accommodation for sleeping must tend very much to demoralize the families of the labouring population?—There can be no doubt of it; and the worst of consequences have arisen from it; even between brothers and sisters.

No. 20.

Mr. Joseph Fowler, Farmer, Whitechurch, Dorset.

The regular wages of the farm-labourer is 8s. a-week; but he is employed at tut-work nine months in the year, for which he is paid more. I reckon he is engaged between four and five months in threshing, for which he is paid 10s. or 12s. a-week; two months at turnip-hoeing, at which he may earn as much; a month at hay-making, when he can earn from 16s. to 18s. a-week; and another month at harvest, when he earns from 18s. to 20s. a-week. I give my carter, Bustle, every advantage, and besides 1*l.*, which is regular at harvest for the carter, I let him work as he likes after-hours. At the last harvest, I find by my book, I paid him, including the 1*l.* and his regular wages, 4*l.* 10s. I pay my shepherds 1*l.* extra at harvest, and they have a dinner every day during lambing.

In my opinion the labourers in this neighbourhood are much better off in food, clothing, and lodging, than they were twenty years ago. The women are much engaged in the buttoning in this village; it is with difficulty they can be got to work for 4s. a-week in harvest; when they are paid by the piece, in the wheat and barley harvest, they can earn 1s. a-day; in hay-making they get 8*d.* a-day.

Mr. Malachai Fisher, of Blandford, Dorset, Draper, examined.

No 21.

The shirt wire-button-making is chiefly carried on in the neighbourhood of this place, also at Shaftesbury; it is carried on in the town, but more in the neighbouring villages and in detached cottages; it is universal just round the neighbourhood, and along the vale from Blandford to Shaftesbury, and from Blandford to Sturminster; it is work that is carried on all the year round. Women, girls, and boys, before they go into the fields, under

eight, are employed in buttoning; children under eight can make buttons. After boys have been into the fields to work they can no longer work at buttoning.

A young woman, with her hands clean, and constantly employed, will make 3s. a-week after paying for materials; a girl of nine or ten, on an average, not more than 1s. a-week. I should say that 3s. is far above the average earnings of individuals by this employment. The average earnings of families must depend on the number able to work at the sorts made. A child will make three dozen buttons a-day; a young woman wholly employed, six dozen a-day at the utmost. A dozen dozen, or gross of the coarser article, fetches to the maker 3d., for which the materials cost 1½d. The buttons are always bought by the drapers, to whom they are brought by the makers. Upon the makers offering the buttons for sale a price is fixed upon, one-half of which is paid down by the draper in money, and the other half is applied in the purchase of fresh materials, and in purchasing articles of linen or clothing from the draper. This mode of dealing between the draper and the button-maker has been in existence as long as the trade of button-making in these parts,—more than a hundred years. Bone lace was formerly made here, but not in my time.

The introduction of the pearl-button has made a serious difference to the button-makers; it has very considerably diminished the demand for the wire-buttons, which were the most profitable to make, whilst it has increased, perhaps, the demand for the coarser articles, upon which the earnings are small. The demand for wire-buttons has diminished perhaps twenty-five per cent., whilst the payments to the makers have diminished perhaps one-half. But the truck has not diminished in proportion, for most of the things worn or used by the labourers being of cotton, and the price of that manufacture having considerably decreased, the quantity of goods the button-makers get in part payment for their buttons has not diminished one-half.

Button-making is carried on by the children at many schools; unless that were so the children would not go to them, their parents not being able to spare their earnings. Button-making is consequently allowed at the schools, but the best teaching is by parents. I have always observed that the best buttons are made where cleanliness and order prevail in the cottage; where families are slovenly they make a bad button. Amongst the worst villages round Blandford, in those that are the dirtiest, and where the people are the worst off, the worst buttons are made. It is so particularly where the women are disposed to bad habits.

I think generally the habits of the people are worse, and the manners of the women especially, where the accommodation of the cottages is bad. Milton Abbas, I think, is a place where the character of the population is decidedly inferior. On the average, at the late census, there were thirty-six persons in each separate house. The houses there are all built on one plan, each containing two dwellings with four rooms. In most of these dwellings there are two families, that is to say, on the average a family of nine to every two rooms. Stourpaine is another village where the population is very thick, the cottages comparatively few, and in a miserable state, and the people crowded together. In that village there are more bastard children than in any other village of the same size in the Union of Winterborne. Kingston is another village where there is a similar want of accommodation, and where you may see open stagnant drains, pools, and filth of all descriptions, and the character of the people is similar to these external appearances.

Throughout the whole Union there appears to me to be a great want of cottages; very few have been built for many years, whilst the population has gone on increasing. The villages are overflowing, which produces great demoralization; the surplus, and that generally the very worst characters, then comes to Blandford, owing to a great many new houses being built within the last few years.

In schools, and particularly in Sunday schools, I can plainly see that the children of those parents who themselves went to school are better behaved and under more discipline generally than the children of those parents who had not that advantage. I am happy to say that schools are increasing all around us.

No. 22.

Mr. Tarver, of Blandford, Dorsetshire, Tallow-chandler and Farmer, examined.

I am 63 ; I was born in agriculture, and have always had a farm. Women are employed in farm-work, but I consider their labour as dear ; they want 8*d.* a-day, and they don't come till nine, and are away again at five ; I don't think it can be said that they are much employed here : the work is not proper for women ; they get with the men, which leads to filthy talk, and to every thing that's bad ; I always keep my sons away where women are employed, and for the same reason I don't like to employ boys where there are women. If girls go into the fields, after two or three years they are fit for nothing else ; they are spoiled for servants ; they get immediately into coarse bad ways. I certainly would keep girls out of the fields altogether. Women will earn 8*d.* a-day in spring at weeding the ground, sometimes perhaps not quite so much ; in harvest they get from 10*d.* to 1*s.* a-day.

I don't like to take boys under 12 ; I like them to have some education first ; it makes them better servants, and they work better ; a little younger, perhaps, they might be taken without harm ; but they certainly ought to have some education before they go into the fields. I have now two boys, they are 14 or 15 years old ; I pay them 4*s.* a-week each. I think the boys mixing with the men at their work has a good effect on the boys, it keeps them steady, and their work is not of much service without men. I have never perceived that the work the boys do is at all injurious to their health ; on the contrary, it is beneficial. I took a young boy this year to keep pigs : he was a little chimney-sweeper, and the change soon made a great alteration in his healthy looks. All the boys about here are employed. I think the labourers are better since the disfranchisement of Cranbourn Chase. The facility there used to be for stealing the deer at night, and disposing of them at as much as 30*s.* a-head, was a strong temptation to the labouring man. A labourer used to come to work in the morning, when his look would show that he had been up all night, and he couldn't work. It led to great irregularities. Since the disfranchisement the labourers have been much steadier.

I pay my carter 9*s.* a-week ; he has two pints of ale a-day, and his breakfast on a Sunday ; he has a sovereign extra wages at harvest, as he can't do task-work like the other men : he has 16 perches of potato-ground, without paying rent ; he has 1*s.* 6*d.* a journey, which, on the average, is about once a-week ; he has also grist of half a bushel of wheat a-week, which is worth 6*d.* a-week more to him.

I am not against the system of small allotments of about 16 to 20 perches ; I think that is as much as a man and his wife and family can fairly manage without his strength being expended so as to make him incapable of working properly for his employer. Larger allotments also lead to thieving ; a labourer will grow a little corn, which gives him a reason for having straw in his possession, and then he will sometimes take his master's, who can't identify it, for his pig ; he will also steal seed, &c. I have known such cases. The labourer gets his fuel cheap, from the coal-clubs, subscriptions, &c., and the farmer drawing it for him ; he can get coal at 6*d.* a cwt. ; wood and faggots he has also at half-price from the farmer.

No. 23.

Mr. Burgess, of Tarrant Launceston, Dorsetshire, Farmer, examined.

I employ six to eight women all the year round; in the winter in threshing and hacking turnips for sheep, at other times in hoeing turnips and keeping land clean, in hay-harvest and corn-harvest. In winter they work whilst it is light, and in spring from eight till six, with an hour and a half for dinner: at hay-time and harvest the hours are not so regular. Women reap; I have employed 40 women at a time in reaping. Generally they get 8*d.* a-day; at harvest 1*s.*, with two quarts of ale or cider; sometimes, if they work at task-work at harvest, they earn 1*s.* 6*d.* a-day, besides drink; they also get 1*s.* 6*d.* a-day at turnip-hoeing, which is task-work, but with that there is no liquor. Working out of doors is a good thing for women; you may tell them at church on Sunday by their size and ruddy looks. Girls, when they work, begin about 15 or 16, and they get 6*d.* a-day, and soon 8*d.* a-day; but they don't go out younger, as they are wanted by their mothers, who are out at work, to take care of the younger children. I don't think that there is any improper conduct on the part of women or girls, arising from their being employed in the fields; the master is always about, and his eye keeps everything going on regularly. I think young unmarried women are more moral when employed in field-labour than when sitting at home buttoning. I should say the buttoners have three bastards to one of the women in the fields.

The age at which boys are employed depends on their size a great deal; perhaps I may say they begin generally about 11, when they are set to scare birds. I don't use plough-boys. Boys get on by degrees. At first I give 1*s.* 6*d.* a-week, then 2*s.* 6*d.*, and when I give 3*s.* they begin to be of some service. They work, or rather are about busy in something or another, the same hours as men. I let them have a pint of beer a-day with the men. Boys are much better employed young; it is a good thing for their health, and keeps them out of idleness.

All the labourers in this parish are employed; we have hardly enough hands. I pay my labourers 8*s.* a-week, and, taking task-work in, they get 11*s.* a-week on the average. A great many have no house-rent to pay, which is a saving of 2*l.* or 3*l.* a-year to them; they all get fuel carriage-free, and the mowers have it at half-price. I let my labourers have from 20 to 40 perches of potato-ground, according to their families; and if a labourer of an adjoining parish works for me for 12 months, I also let him have a potato-ground. But they can't continue to have these wages if wheat keeps at its present price. We generally reckon a bushel of wheat, with 1*s.* added to it, the wages of a labourer. Carters and shepherds have wheat at 5*s.* a bushel, whatever the market price may be, for their own consumption: they have this privilege because they have no task-work. My labourers generally keep pigs. I sell them pigs at 20*s.* or 25*s.*; they fat them with part of the potatoes and barley grown upon their grounds, and when they kill them, they pay me, or give me a part, disposing of the rest as they like.

No. 24.

Mary Cox, a married Woman in the Union House at Blandford, Dorsetshire.

I am 35; I worked for Mr. Ingram, and then for Mr. Fowler, at Milton Abbas. I first went out to work when I was about 16 or 17. I have done harvest-work, hay-making, couching, picking stones, but no turnip-hoeing or reaping. In harvest my work was tying up corn, which is the hardest kind of work. I have done all this kind of work since I first went out till now. I am married and have had several children. I never found the work

hurt me, but I was always better when I was out in the fields at work. I used to make buttons before I went out to work in the fields. I was much better in health when working out of doors than when buttoning. Buttoners are not so healthy as those who stir about at work. I don't think there is anything wrong takes place in the harvest or hay field; Mr. Ingram never allowed talking at those times.

In the spring I used to work from eight till five; at hay-making from six till seven; and at harvest from eight till sunset. I have always had 6*d.* a-day in the spring for weeding; 8*d.* a-day for hay-making; and 1*s.* a-day for harvest. I don't think all the women get 1*s.* a-day at harvest, but I managed to work hard and earn it.

When I was about 17 I lived with my father and mother, two sisters older than I was, and a brother 14 years old, in a cottage at Milton Abbas. Robert Vacher and his wife, with three children, about 1, 2, and 3 years old, lived in the same cottage. We had the two rooms down stairs, and the Vachers the two rooms up stairs. There were only four rooms in the cottage. There were two cottages in the building. My father and mother, two sisters and young brother, slept in the back room down stairs. There were two beds: my father and mother had one; my sisters and brother had the other. I slept out at my grandmother's. The Vachers and their children slept in the back room up stairs. The Vachers still live in the same two rooms, and they have six or seven children living with them. My brother and his wife live in the two rooms down stairs; they have five children; the eldest is about 14, and the youngest between 2 and 3. The cottages in Milton Abbas are very crowded: there are many families that live together in one room; they sometimes put up a curtain between the beds. I believe that there are a great many bastards in Milton Abbas.

My father worked for Lady Caroline [Damer]; he had 9*s.* a-week. My sisters worked as I did; first at buttoning, and afterwards in the fields. My father had high wages; if he had worked for a farmer he would have had perhaps only 7*s.* a-week.

No. 25.

Mrs. Bustle, Wife of Charles Bustle, Farm-labourer, Whitchurch, Dorset, examined.

My husband is carter to Mr. Fowler. He has 7*s.* a-week wages. We have also our cottage with a garden, and ten lugs of potato-ground, rent-free; also a bushel of grist corn, if we like as much, a-week; that is, tailings at 5*s.* per bushel. Every week or ten days my husband goes a journey with the waggon; he has then 1*s.* for his dinner, and another shilling which he may spend at the public-house where he puts up, which he always does, however. If he carries his victuals with him he has still 2*s.* every journey. He is out a day and night generally on a journey. Mr. Fowler also gives us furze for firing, and my husband has 1*l.* at harvest, because he can't do tut-work like the others; he is wanted for something else. I have five girls and a boy. The three eldest girls, 8, 10, and 12, do buttoning, but I don't think they earn 2*s.* a-week between them; they spoil a good deal of cotton, and dirty more; and they don't get all money for their buttons; it would be better if they did. The boy is too young to work.

The bread we make at home is better than baker's bread; I make six loaves out of a bushel of corn: we have not quite so much as that every week; but what we have, with a bag of potatoes [240 lbs.], is quite as much as we consume at home. Four baker's loaves, with the potatoes, are not enough. Baker's bread does not satisfy the children; it is licked away in no time, and they are hungry all day long with it. We never know the taste of butcher's meat, except when a piece is given to us.

No. 26.

Susan Vacher, Widow, Milton Abbas, Dorset.

Women are employed in the hay-harvest, and at other times of the year, in couching, weeding, and keeping the land clean. Generally the regular hours are from eight to five, but at hay-time and harvest longer; it depends on circumstances. In harvest I have earned 1s. a-day, and have had two quarts. For hay-making I have had 8d. a-day, but it depends on the weather. At other times, for couching, &c., 7d. a-day. For drawing reeds I have had 7d. a-day. Wages for women have always been pretty much the same.

I am now in my fifty-seventh year, and have worked two-and-twenty years in the fields; I am always better when out at work, and prefer it to living at home. I have nine children. I have two grown-up sons,—one 39, the other 27. They went out to work when they were boys,—one at 7 years old, the other at 9. They were always quite healthy and strong. As for young women, I think it better for them to go into the fields; they are quite as well there as at buttoning, as far as their morals are concerned. Boys don't want to bide at home when they have once been out. My eldest son now [Dec.] gets 7s. a-week and a grist; he also gets his cottage for 21s. a-year, and has a garden and ten lugs of potato-ground free. He is not married. He keeps a pig. Most labourers manage to keep some of the pig when they kill it,—nearly always half of it. I know where the whole is kept. The farm-labourers generally manage to have a little bacon by them; and they don't always go without cheese. The cottages at Milton Abbas are not nearly so full as I have known them.

No. 27.

Rachel Hayward, Wife of John Hayward, Farm-labourer, Stourpaine, Dorset.

There are eleven of us in our family—myself, my husband, three daughters, and six sons. We have two rooms, one down stairs and the other up stairs over it. We all sleep in the bed-room.

My husband gets 8s. or 7s. with a grist, a bushel, a-week; my two eldest daughters get about 3s. 6d. a-week at buttoning, and three of my boys get 5s. a-week together; in all about 16s. 6d. a-week. We have 16½ lugs of potato-ground, on which we grow potatoes and a few vegetables; for that we pay 7s. 7d. a-year rent. We pay 1s. a-week for the cottage, and coal and wood cost us 1s. 8d. a-week at this time of the year (Dec.). We get $\frac{3}{4}$ cwt. of coal a-week. I buy, besides, every week, $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. soap, 1 oz. tea, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. bacon. I reckon we eat a pound of bread each day; that, with potatoes, gives us enough. My three boys that are out at work went out at nine years old.

No. 28.

Communication from Mr. J. G. Bidwell, Clerk to the Board of Guardians of St. Thomas's Union, Exeter.

St. Thomas, Exeter, January 6, 1843.

Dear Sir,—You have been pleased to ask my opinion upon the effects of "Compulsory Parish Apprenticeship," and of "Female Agricultural Labour."

For 18 years under "Gilbert's Act," I was the Guardian of the Parish of St. Thomas, with a population of upwards of 4000, and in which compulsory

parish binding prevailed when I became guardian ; but which I came to the conclusion to discontinue, because experience of circumstances satisfied me there was more of evil in it than good. This position I will not stop to illustrate by particular facts, but briefly support by the following arguments, viz. :—

1st. I cannot see any advantages in compulsory parish binding necessarily peculiar to, or resulting from it, which are not equally attainable from ordinary hiring and in-door service.

2nd. If in-door hiring and service be objectionable to the master, it is not to be expected the compulsory infliction of permanent pauper inmates upon him will tend to happy results.

With reference to female agricultural labour my experience is limited, but the inquiries I have instituted, at your request, induce me to think, as practised in this neighbourhood, it is not objectionable.

1st. Because, as I am informed, it is usually performed by married females, somewhat advanced in years, say from 30 upwards ; and

2nd. Because I do not see that it would, in the existing circumstances and habits of this class of persons, necessarily follow, that the leisure gained by its suppression would be beneficial, either for the increase of the domestic comfort of the family, or for the moral improvement of the children, unless something else were concurrently done for the improvement of the parent.

My opinion of the effects of female agricultural labour, being formed without experience, or previous consideration of the subject, is not offered with much confidence ; whilst, on the contrary, my conclusions in reference to compulsory binding are those of thorough conviction.

I subjoin a few of the data upon which I chiefly found my objection to the system of parish apprenticeship, and I would incidentally mention, that where parishes offer a premium, instead of binding by rota, it offers a temptation to parties to take apprentices, whose circumstances disqualify them for the proper discharge of their relative duties.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

To Alfred Austin, Esq.

JOS. G. BIDWELL,

&c. &c. &c.

Clerk to Guardians, *St. Thomas's Union.*

Observations upon Compulsory Parish Binding.

1. A parish apprentice who has faithfully served out his time, is not a better labourer, nor a better man, than the hired in-door servant, whilst, if he does not serve it out, he is probably tainted with some offence, or bad habit, induced by the forced relation of the parties ; for the contract, being founded in necessity and compulsion, commences unfavourably, and too often terminates abruptly, rather than by lapse of time and mutual good will.

2. Parents generally objecting to the binding of their children will submit to extreme privation to prevent it, encourage complaint of their treatment by their master, and wink at, or stimulate to, offences against him.

3. Under certain circumstances, much severity may be habitually practised by the master without exposure ; whilst, in others, slight chastisements are magnified into importance, and visited with fine and public reprobation.

4. In all disputes between the master and apprentice, in which reference is made to the magistrate, the parties are informed that he only can legally punish, and it seems unreasonable to expect beneficial results from fining the one, or sending the other to the treadmill.

5. Hired in-door servants continue to work for their previous master as long at least, if not longer, after they are 21, as apprentices.

6. To avoid the engagement, the apprentice will commit almost any legal

or moral offence ; whilst the master, with the same object, will wink at, or tempt to, its commission.

7. Receiving no wages, parish apprentices, when first out of their time, are inexperienced in laying out money, and ignorant and inapt in the conduct of their domestic affairs, which tends to early recourse to the poor-rate, and habitual subsequent dependence upon it.

8. If compulsory apprenticeship be of questionable or uncertain benefit to the apprentice, it seems hard forcibly to restrain his freedom of action for 12 years, because it may be that the parents have, under sickness or accidental casualty, received relief to the extent of a few shillings.

9. Male and female children are bound indifferently, and when the master has more of the latter than he requires for domestic employment, he sends them habitually into the farm-yard and fields to work with the men and boys.

10. The Poor Law Commissioners' peremptory order prevents the binding of the children of the able-bodied, and Guardians are disinclined to the partial application of a coercive law.

11. To be "treated worse than a parish apprentice" is a proverb, and were not proverbs held to be founded in truth, I could support the verity of this in a variety of instances, of a *general* as well as particular character.

No. 29.

James Lyddon, Esq., of St. Thomas's, Exeter, Surgeon, one of the Medical Officers of St. Thomas's Union.

I am a surgeon and general practitioner, and am one of the medical officers of St. Thomas's Union. As such officer I attend the poor in an agricultural district, extending over 29,629 acres, and comprising a population of 10,183. In this district we have some of the best agriculturists in the county, and all classes downwards. We have also some of the finest land in the kingdom, as well as some of the poor sort.

In this district the employment of women in farm-labour is very common. I see them at work in the fields frequently, and I also hear in the cottages that they are so employed. Their principal employments are picking stones, weeding corn, &c., hay-making, harvesting, pulling turnips, picking up apples, digging potatoes.

I am not aware that they ever reap, but some few will perform the more laborious operations, such as leading horses at plough ; this is rare, but still there are such cases ; and where it is done the labour is great, especially where the soil is stiff, as they must continue on foot a great length of time, walking perhaps 10 or 12 miles a-day. One of the most common occupations for them is digging potatoes, which is also extremely hard work, and at which they will work when paid by the bag, as they often are, 10 hours, or even longer, daily.

The hours during which women work, are in winter from eight till four, and at other times of the year from seven till five, except at hay-making and the corn-harvest, when their hours are longer according to circumstances.

Women labour in the fields from the time they are grown up till they are 60 or 70 years old ; they work at all ages, beginning hard labour about 16 or 17. Girls under that age are not employed regularly in the fields ; they pick apples, assist in hay-making, and other light work. Young girls of 11, 12, or 13 years old, are seen about at times in the lighter occupations about the farm-house, collecting wood, sticks, &c., about the premises. Young women are likewise employed in domestic affairs, in attending to the dairy, to the poultry and pigs in the farm-yard. Women generally work six days in the week. They are not so much exposed to weather altogether

as men in their out-door employments. Their work is not so various, and moreover is of a description which requires fine weather. I have not observed any ill effects upon the health from any of the kinds of employment I have mentioned, either to girls or grown-up women. Nor do I think that out-door labour of the kind they perform is at all injurious to girls at the critical age of 15 or 16. I do not think that rheumatism is produced more by such work than by other occupations. I have seen quite as much of that complaint in women who never leave their cottages. Washer-women are much more exposed to rheumatism than women working out of doors. Pregnant women work as well as others, but the work is not injurious to them. Sometimes an accident may happen to a woman in that state during her work, such as slipping or falling down perhaps; I have known four or five such cases, which were followed by pains about the sides until labour took place, but without further ill consequences. I have also known cases of women during menstruation going out to work in bad weather, insufficiently clad, who have been hurt more than if their work had been in-doors; but generally out-door employment is extremely conducive to regular habits of body in women, and from the want of such regularity, women in the same class of life in towns, or at service, &c., and who do not work out of doors, suffer a great deal. I have not observed that women employed in out-door labour are at all more subject to colds; and, in general, I should say that such labour is healthy than otherwise.

I observe that boys are employed very early in life; generally when seven or eight years old. They begin by getting in wood for the house, gathering turnips together for cattle, then driving oxen or horses at plough, harvest work, assist in getting in hay for stable, straw for cattle, then ploughing, then general work; hedging, ditching, &c. They are busy at every age; there is always something for them to do; they are continually on their legs. Their work, however, is favourable to their health; it seems to have the effect of establishing it. Chilblains appear to be the only things boys suffer from, which might be avoided if the farmer would take care and provide proper things for them; but the spring always cures them. I have never observed flat feet amongst the agricultural labourers, produced by their walking too much when driving horses at plough. I am inclined to think that boys have a great deal to contend with amongst their fellows, until they become old and strong enough to defend themselves.

I have frequently had occasion to observe that women who go out to work are not such good managers in their cottages as those who stay at home. I have perceived it in the want of cleanliness in the children, both in their persons and dress. Their clothes are left unmended, and the children are brought up in general habits of disorder and dirt. The cottage is nearly always dirtier and ill arranged. It often happens that the morals are wholly neglected.

I do not think that the food which the agricultural labouring families get is deficient in quantity. I am inclined to think that other classes eat and drink too much generally. The kind of food is also not inconsistent with health. The labouring classes regulate their meals badly; out of the present materials they might make a greater variety of dishes. But the diet of women and of boys, who work in the fields, which is bread, cheese, vegetables, and a small quantity of cider and tea, is quite sufficient for them to perform their work, and keep them in good health. The women generally drink cider; they have a pint or a pint and a half a-day, as part of their wages, which they drink. I do not think it does them any harm, nor do I think that that quantity, drunk at such times, at all tends to introduce habits of drinking. I know of no intoxication amongst the agricultural women of this county.

I have had occasion to visit many apprentices in the course of my practice, but never observed any appearance of their being ill or under fed. I have often made inquiries into the condition of apprentices, and am inclined to think that at times corrections rather too severe are inflicted. I have seen

marks on the backs of boys, and improper bruises, but never on girls. There is frequently a stubborn ill-conditioned temper on the part of an apprentice which provokes the master, who then perhaps neglects him, and does not give him sufficient clothing; and, moreover, behaves towards him with a general want of kindness. But I think that apprentices, on the whole, are better attended to than other boys employed by the farmer, but who are fed and clothed out of the house. There are two kinds of protection to the apprentice; the natural disposition of the high feeling agriculturists, and the restrictions of the magistrates, who are ever ready in the neighbourhood to redress the real grievance on the part of the apprentice. A servant must be at his own expense for medicine, or apply to the parish; but in the case of an apprentice, the master would not like the discredit of not properly attending to him. This afternoon (December 27), I attended an apprentice of Mr. May of Dunsford, six miles off, who had been kicked by a horse. Mr. May immediately sent a servant on horseback, and requested my prompt attendance. The boy I know to have been an ill-conditioned lad, behaving ill to his master. The boy is also diseased, having the scrofula, which has already entailed considerable expense on Mr. May. I think that in general masters would behave in a similar way.

I have always found apprentices lodged well; boys' bed-rooms separate from those of the girls. I should certainly say that children apprenticed are better off in all respects, in lodging, food, and clothing, than those who live with their parents. I have never known of any authenticated case of cruelty to an apprentice of late years. The chastisement, perhaps, is a little too severe at times; but all boys, whether apprentices or not, have to undergo that on a farm.

No. 30.

Mr. Edward Troode, of Exminster, near Exeter, Farmer, examined.

I am tired of apprentices; I find it answers better to pay regular wages; you have no control over apprentices; you can't dismiss them; they are a mere plague; but you can dismiss a paid boy or girl when you like, [if they don't do their work properly.

Living near Exeter, when the girls are getting up to be girls, they will have their relations come over to see them on a Sunday; and some smart girl will soon make her ashamed of feeding pigs, and girls must feed pigs.

Unless you can chastise apprentices, they are up to all sorts of bad conduct; and if you have to take the horsewhip, that is unpleasant. I have had boys say to their mistress, when ordered to do work, "that they would be d——d if they would," and then I have been obliged to give a cut or two with the whip. They are a great plague to their mistresses. Some sort of girls are much better as servants at wages. They must do their work properly, or they are dismissed, and then they are called to account and punished at home.

Apprentices are indifferent to work; if they don't like things they spoil them; there's no depending on them. They are so much trouble, I will never have another. I have paid 10*l.* not to have one more than once. People about here won't take them. Servants won't live with apprentices.

I think the increased facilities of getting magistrates to interfere works badly. I think moderate chastisement, in the hands of the master, better. I had an apprentice who, I found, did not go to church though sent, and was out late at night. I applied to a magistrate; the boy was sent to the treadmill for a week, and whipped twice; but that only made him worse than before; nothing hurts a boy like punishment of that kind. I had another apprentice, a girl, who stayed out all night; nothing could be worse; Mrs. Troode scolded her, and the girl threw some potatoes at her; I came in at the moment and struck her with the horsewhip. The girl's parents applied

to an attorney in Exeter, and the case was brought before magistrates; I was fined 1*l*. Upon this I ordered all my apprentices out of the house, for I found I could not have the proper control over them.

It is a difficult question, I dare say; magistrates cannot interfere properly; they never can know the facts of a case, when they are not very important; there may be a long course of harassing ill conduct on one side that is not the subject of interference, whilst the slightest act of retaliation may expose the master to unpleasant complaints and observations. But without the power of going to a magistrate, the apprentices' places, I think, would be very bad to what they are;—that would not do. But the matter between master and apprentice is not fairly understood by the magistrate; and distorted accounts get into newspapers. I have had 50 apprentices and more, and not one-half have turned out well. The apprentices think they are always put upon. They don't find out their error till too late.

It is a very responsible thing to have so many children put upon you to bring up. Apprentices are much more independent than they were. The parents find they can get to the magistrates more easily; and they interfere more than formerly. Parents will tell their children that their masters are not to do this and that. "If they do, I'll bring him before his betters for it."

At 18 or 19, young lads, when they begin to get useful, will think it hard they are not paid for their labour, and they won't do their work, and they try to do you petty injuries. I have had horses misused by them, and if I have spoken about it, have been answered, "D——n the horses, what do you put me to 'em for?" I have known of incendiary fires by apprentices, to revenge themselves upon their masters.

If apprentices behaved properly, it was a better thing for them than now when they work for wages. They were under control. Parents find that at the age of 16 or 17, their children are no longer under their management. Parents, when I hire a boy now, will tell me to correct him, and not mind giving him a cut with a whip. And parents advise their children to behave properly, for unless they are employed they must maintain them. Children formerly were bound out at seven.

Girls don't like going out to work—they like being at home, and in-doors better. But I don't know what they will do. Formerly, when apprenticed, they were forced into the fields; for if the mistress had not always work enough in-doors, of course they went out of doors. Still I think it better for girls not to go into the fields. They can't be looked after, and that is a bad thing in apprenticeship; they get with the boys, and there are opportunities for the worst mischiefs.

I think the small farmers were best for apprentices when they worked with them. The apprentices fared worse altogether, but it was a better school; they saw work well done, and were obliged to do it themselves.

Apprentices are now always much better off than if they remained at home with their parents, in everything, food, clothing, and lodging. If you have many apprentices, you are sure to have one bad one at the least, and he, like a bad sheep, affects the whole flock. The poor regret binding out, for their children are not supported for them.

I don't employ any young women in my farm-work. I like married women better. I have six or seven now, and they are all between 40 and 60. Here the women work all the year round; in winter they are employed in digging up turnips, and in the threshing. I pay them half men's wages, My labourers earn 12*s*. a-week, all things taken into account.

No. 31.

Mrs. Tuckett of Dunsford, Devonshire, Farmer.

My husband farmed the farm I now occupy. We have had 17 apprentices who have served their time with us; I have now an 18th, who is just

ishing his time, with five others now in the house. Of the 17, '5 were girls, the rest were boys. We never had anything wrong happen with any of them; I mean we never had any serious misconduct, no breaking of indentures, no complaints of any kind. When my husband died there were six apprentices in the house; they could have been all assigned, if they pleased, but they all chose to stop with me.

My house is conducted in the old-fashioned Devonshire way. Myself, the servants, and apprentices, all get meals together, and all have the same things; breakfast, dinner, and supper. Between breakfast and dinner the boys and girls always have luncheon; boys take it out with them into the fields,—bread and cheese, and cider in their kegs. Every boy has his keg of cider.

I always made it a point not to let apprentices keep out after seven o'clock, except on particular occasions, and then never later than nine. As a rule, I never let them, particularly girls, go to fairs and wakes; there are no places so dangerous for girls. The girl whose time is now about expiring never goes but at one fair in her life. I always have them to regular reading on Sunday, and to say the catechism and prayers; the little ones I always take care are at their books on that day. They can't go to the Sunday-school, it is too far off, and too early, as the boys must look after the cattle on Sunday as well as on other days.

They get little sums at times; people coming to the house want their horses held, and they get 2*d.* for it. When their money gets to 2*s.* 6*d.*, the rule is not to break it without my leave; when it reaches 5*s.* the same rule, and so on; so they always have a little money in hand when their time is out. The last girl that left me went into a place, and had a small sum saved in this way, and had no occasion to draw wages till they were due, as is often the case. When their time is out I give them a certificate of good conduct; that helps them to get good places, particularly girls.

I give them five days holiday in the year; three at Christmas and two at Easter; and I give them little amusements then, and at other times. It keeps them cheerful, and makes them like the place; and they always enjoy themselves. At those holidays they go home sometimes for the day, but I never allow them to sleep out. Their parents come to see them when they like, and there's always something to eat and a glass of cider for them. I have watched my apprentices in after-life, and never had but one that got into any difficulty; that was setting a wire for a hare. All the rest have done well. One, whose time was out 26 years ago, has always been to see me regularly every Christmas-day since. The young men have not married before 27 or 30, and the young women not till a proper age; not like the young girls who are lazing about the village without anything to do.

I think 'apprenticing, with a premium, a bad thing. There are many little farmers, who take them merely to get the money, and have no proper work for them, and don't care what becomes of them. It can't be wondered at if these apprentices turn out bad. I know a case where one took three years at the same time for the premiums; they were badly treated; the girls were driven into the fields, and were left to get on as they could. The magistrates interfered. This system of apprenticeship, in such cases, drives girls into the fields, which is a very bad thing. In some places the parents set the children against their masters. Children are induced to take meat, &c., home to their parents, and it makes them thieves. I hav'nt a lock in my house where victuals are kept. Everything is open.

I always keep up one system; the children learn it directly they come, and soon like it. I always look after them myself, and never let anything wrong be done without checking them. I never let the girls be with the boys; they are not allowed to go into the fields or the stables; when that's allowed bad consequences must follow. Girls who work in the fields cannot work in-doors; they get into all sorts of bad habits, learn bad language, and very bad things often happen. That is so with girls who are not ap-

prenticed, and who are under no restraint; a big girl don't mind her parents when she has been brought up to do nothing regularly. This happens also when apprentices are not strictly looked after; when farmers, who are gentlemen, have them, then the girls and boys are mixed together, and everything follows that's bad.

I think that apprenticeship makes boys and girls much better able to conduct themselves after they grow up. A girl in a cottage, living at home, and working in the fields, can learn nothing; the girls in my house do all the house-work, and at one-and-twenty are fit to go to service, as they generally do. If they choose they have plenty of useful experience, and learn habits of order. I am afraid the doing away with the apprenticing of girls, for girls won't be taken as now though boys will, will be a bad thing for them. It will force girls to keep at home with their parents, and the life they lead there is very bad; there is no control over them, and they are at fairs and wakes, and in all kinds of mischief, and they soon get into difficulty, and are obliged to marry to hide it, whilst they are still children.

I think that apprentices are better off in all respects than children at home; especially in their moral habits. I am certain of it.

Under the old system, girls were driven into the fields to work, because their masters had not enough for them to do in the house. That was bad; I am certainly against girls going into the fields; sometimes, perhaps at hay-time, my girls have been out, but I always kept them in a little set, away from the other people, not to hear their talk.

No. 32.

The Rev. *Peter Benson*, Vicar of *Witheridge, Devonshire*, Vice-Chairman of the Southmolton Board of Guardians, examined.

What are the kinds of labour that women perform?—In early spring, as soon as the weather will permit, women are employed to gather stones, &c. from grass-lands which are intended to be mowed. From the middle of March to the middle of May, planting potatoes affords constant occupation. To this succeeds cleaning and hoeing the potato-crop, transplanting Swedish turnips (a system annually on the increase), the hay-harvest, the corn harvest, and lastly the raising and storing potatoes. These are kinds of labour chiefly performed by women.

What wages do they receive?—Women's wages vary from 1s. to 7d. per diem. Potato-digging is the hardest work; and with a prospect of early frost, farmers are anxious for their crop. An able woman, so employed, receives in addition to the 1s. her dinner, and in some cases her supper.

What are their hours for working?—From eight o'clock until noon. One hour and a half rest, to get the family's dinner and clean the cottage. Afternoon's work from half-past one to six.

What is the effect of such labour on their health?—I rather think good. They can afford to feed the better, and I am of opinion are really more healthy than those who do not work constantly.

What is the effect of such employment on their morality?—I think generally speaking, not bad. Most women who are constantly employed in agriculture have ceased child-bearing. They cannot bear the fatigue whilst suckling an infant. Besides, in most cases they work apart from the men. The harvest is an exception.

Are they generally married or single, and of what age?—Almost without exception married, or widows with families, partially maintained by the parish. It may be, though I remember no case at present, that a woman by these means supports her bastard child. The demand for domestic servants in this neighbourhood far exceeds the supply. In consequence women without encumbrance prefer that method of gaining a livelihood. The ages may range from 28 or 30 to 60 and upwards.

What are the kinds of work about which boys are employed?—Until of late the principal employment of boys was to lead horses at plough; but this, the Scottish system, has very much abated. They feed the cattle during winter, run errands, frighten birds from the crops, pull weeds,—in short do what their strength admits of.

At what ages do they begin work?—Several I have known in place at 7 years of age. The greatest number exceed the age of 9, being of little use before that period.

What wages do they receive?—They commence probably with bargaining for meat and clothes, and the wages are raised according to what they can earn.

What are their hours of working?—If they reside with their parents, their hours are from seven to twelve, and from one to five; but this is rarely the case. In farm-houses they work as long as the light serves.

What is the effect of their work upon their health?—I know of no perceptible effect, unless it be that in consequence of beginning to work early they are stunted in growth.

What obstruction is such employment to school education?—Very great indeed. In some cases parents allow their children to continue at school until they have learned all we can teach them, but in general the burthen of their maintenance is heavy.

What obstruction is it to their religious and moral instruction?—In this particular, the evil is almost as great as in the case of apprentices. I think the occasional change of service is beneficial in developing a degree of mental activity. In other respects I know of no difference.

As to apprenticeship?—In the parish of Witheridge there is not a single loom, nor any lace-making; it is purely agricultural. The rent of cottages is as high as 3*l.* 10*s.*, or 4*l.* a-year, without a garden. This is owing to a great many old cottages having been pulled down, some for the purpose of cutting a turnpike road; others have been replaced by houses of a superior quality. Shortly after the Poor Law Amendment Act came into operation, the farmers, thinking the labourers could not support their families on the wages they were receiving, assembled in vestry. I took no part with them; a resolution was adopted (to evade the law, I suppose), that any farmer might pick out any child from the labouring families, at any age, and take it till it was 9 years old, in order to relieve its parents. Some of the farmers took children according to this agreement, who in course of time were apprenticed, but others did not. After a while the overseers were about to proceed to bind some children, and called upon the farmers who had not taken children under the resolution of the vestry to submit to the ballot. Their reply was, if the best children are already taken under that resolution, we will not consent to take the rest as apprentices. In consequence of this, another vestry meeting was held to restore matters to their old state. The question was much debated, and finally, a resolution was unanimously come to to let things remain as they were. The consequence is, that those who like take apprentices, whilst others do not; and that practically, therefore, there is over parents no compulsory binding.

I am opposed to apprenticeship. One great objection to the system of compulsory apprenticeship is, that a child is taught from its earliest infancy to look to the parish to provide it with work. Parents also seem to lose all natural feeling towards their children, and profess to think it the business of the parish to provide for their family. I understand that the Poor Law Commissioners can put an end to the system at once, under the powers of the Poor Law Amendment Act.

I consider the consequences of apprenticeship to the children as extremely bad; they are left entirely without the management of money, or anything else, till they are 21; they are kept in a state of tutelage; everything is done for them, for some years after they are grown up to years of discretion, as if they were children. The consequence is, that at the end of their time,

though men and women grown, they are perfectly ignorant of managing their own concerns. Some two or three masters in my neighbourhood (one in particular), give a potato-ground to a boy-apprentice; the master in such case provides seed and manure; the apprentice, at his after-hours, attends to the cultivation of the crop; at the potato-harvest the master buys the produce. This is done with the view to accustom the boy to the management of his own concerns, and has answered exceedingly well in the case I allude to.

A great objection to the apprenticeship system is, the immoral effect on the apprentice; it deadens his hopes and fears, and deprives him of ordinary motives to exert himself. He knows he can't stir—he must keep in his situation till he is 21, happen what may, provided that his master behaves tolerably well, and does nothing to attract the interference of the magistrates. I think also that apprentices are invariably discontented; they are suspicious of their master's kindness, even when it is sincere; they think he wants to get as much done by them as possible for his own purposes.

In our immediate neighbourhood the master is now obliged to find his apprentice with proper clothing (not a very definite expression); and, in fact, proper clothing is not very common. The rule is rags, the exception is the other way; and generally the apprentices don't go to any place of public worship, owing to the want of proper clothing.

In almost every parish in this part of the country there is a parochial school, and children are in many of them taught writing and arithmetic, in addition to reading. But unfortunately, just as children get into the way of learning something they are apprenticed, which of course puts an end to schooling. Sometimes there is a little teaching in the farm-houses, but very rarely; and then only reading,—nothing to compensate for the loss of the education they would have received at school, had they remained there. Boys don't go out as servants so early as 9 generally, as is seen in our school, where all the children who do us credit are above that age. After apprenticeship, the moral education of a child is almost entirely put a stop to, as is also his religious instruction, except in very rare cases. Farmers for the most part are indifferent to the religious improvement of their apprentices; moreover, they don't like to send ragged children to church. I have constant complaints from parents of the entire neglect by masters of the religious welfare of their apprentices.

Parents, generally, are anxious not to have their children bound; I attended a poor man who had the rheumatic fever; in consequence of protracted illness, he was very poor, and had three children; in order to receive parochial relief he was obliged to consent to have his elder child bound. This was before the operation of the Poor Law Amendment Act. He recovered, and the master and child, by mutual consent, discharged the indentures. The three children (all boys) have done well; the eldest has been indentured with wages to a smith, for four years past: the second is a baker's servant, and the third is equally well placed.

A man in my parish with eight children, seven girls and one boy, has never consented to have a child apprenticed. The consequences were, that he was not allowed any relief before the New Poor Law. He would have been entitled to draw 1s. 6d. a-week for three of his other children, if he had put out the eldest; but he could not make up his mind to take such a step. There are but few places where a labourer would like to place a child; his objection is, that the child would be ill used.

Of late years, I think that the ill treatment of apprentices has been confined to beating; and I think that such ill treatment is more by the servants and other apprentices about the farm than by the master. I have known of two cases of boys running away, on account of being beaten by their master. I don't mean to say they were severely beaten, or beyond what was proper, but they went away. Other boys, who are not apprenticed, I believe, are beaten in the same way. I don't think that farmers generally would treat

apprentices worse than other boys. After all, the beating is very little; I think apprentices are much better used than formerly was the case, owing to the easier access to magistrates, and also to the softened manners of everybody.

Generally speaking, I should say that the male and female apprentices have no improper intercourse together. The interior of the house is in most cases regulated to prevent anything of the kind; magistrates are extremely careful to prevent such a state of things, and make a point of inquiring, upon any question of misconduct, respecting the internal arrangements of the farm-house.

I don't think the three boys (Bulled, Hodge, and Clapp) being in the Union-house proves anything in favour of apprenticeship. In the cases of Bulled and Hodge, the Guardians granted out-door relief of 1s. a-week for a year, and the parish put them with different farmers for that period; the 1s. a-week was to have been paid to the farmer by way of premium. Bulled lost or embezzled 1s. of his master's, and ran away to Exeter; Hodge also turned out a bad boy, and so stupid that the farmer would not keep him upon any terms. Bulled's father kept a brothel, and Clapp's father was a notorious thief; and to have apprenticed either of these three lads would have been a very great hardship on the person to whom he would have been allotted.

I do not think that women are demoralized by working in the fields. Very few unmarried women work in that manner; they are mostly married; unmarried women are generally employed in household service, or as semstresses. I know not one who works in the fields, except in harvest. I should say that they are more correct in their conduct than the other women of the same class. They work hard, and have neither time nor taste for bad conduct.

I do not think that discomfort or disorder are produced in a cottage by the woman working in the fields; she does not go out till after her husband in the morning; he takes his dinner (a crust of bread, and sometimes, though rarely, a slice of cheese or cold bacon) by the hedge-side, or in his employer's out-house, and she is always back in time to get his supper ready. The husband, therefore, does not suffer in any way. Where there is a family, probably the children are not so well attended to as if the mother were at home. The eldest daughter, perhaps, is kept at home (who might be at school), to look after the younger children. Perhaps at hay-time the work may tend to a little immorality; the women then get cider, more than is proper, which may excite them, and lead to misconduct.

No. 33.

J. E. Cutcliffe, Esq., of Southampton, Surgeon, and one of the Medical Officers of the Southmolton Union.

Effects on women working in farm-labour.—Women are seldom employed in agricultural labour so as to injure their health. On the contrary, they are, generally speaking, the most robust and healthy females we meet with. In the spring they are employed in weeding in the corn-fields, picking stones in the meadows, &c. &c., and later in the summer in the hay and corn harvests; and in the autumn they assist in getting in the potato-crop, which, when the weather is bad, is the worst work they have to perform. Their hours of working are from eight o'clock in the morning to five in the evening, except in the harvest season, when they occasionally work later. Their wages I believe to be about 8d. to 1s. a-day. They are generally married, as most of the single women get into service, or are employed in the manufactories and lace-work. There is nothing in agricultural labour having a tendency to injure their morals.

Effects on boys.—Boys are now generally employed in farm-yards in looking after the cattle, and doing other light work about the farm. They

used to lead the horses at plough; this in bad weather was a very laborious employment, and from which they frequently suffered much, and, I believe, in some instances, were very ill treated by the ploughman; but since the new system of ploughmen driving their own horses has been adopted, this kind of labour is entirely done away with, which has tended much to their comfort. (Girls were also sometimes employed in this work.) Young boys, I believe, have no fixed hours for working, but when they arrive at a sufficient age to plough they work from eight in the morning till about five in the afternoon, being allowed a sufficient time for their meals. Those who are not apprentices are at first provided only with meat and lodgings; but as they grow older they get some wages, which increase according to their capabilities. Their work is in no way injurious to their health or morals. They have no opportunity of attending any except the Sunday schools. They are seldom employed until they are 9 or 10 years of age.

Effects on girls.—Girls are now seldom employed, except in the harvest season in out-door work, but in the domestic concerns of the house. In consequence of the number of girls employed in the lace-work and manufactories, farmers find it difficult to get female servants. Those children employed in the lace-work and manufactories are not so strong and healthy as the agricultural children, as their working together in numbers, and in small rooms, breathing an impure atmosphere, tend much to impair their health; and by thus congregating a number of females from 6 to 20, or 30 years of age, we find their morals also much worse than those of girls brought up to agricultural employment.

Apprenticeship.—I have lived in this neighbourhood nearly all my life, and for the last 30 years have practised the medical profession. From my experience, I should say that apprentices, generally speaking, have been for some years past, and now are, very well treated. Amongst the lower class of farmers, where the family is not too large for them to be attended to, they are treated in the same way as their master's children; sleeping and living like them; the boys generally sleeping in the same room with the sons, and the girls with the daughters. If the farm is larger, then the boys sleep with the men servants, and the girls with the female servants. That is generally the case.

Formerly instances of extreme ill treatment of apprentices by their masters and even mistresses were not unfrequent; but of late years, within the last 15 or 20, the opportunities for such ill treatment have nearly entirely vanished. The magistrates immediately interfere upon the slightest complaint, and if anything like a case of ill treatment is proved, the apprentice is discharged from his articles at once. The magistrates attend much more than they did formerly to complaints, and immediately take up any matter that arises. I think apprentices are most decidedly better off than they were 25 years ago, as regards feeding, clothing, lodging, and morals. This beneficial change is to be attributed partly to the prompt interference of magistrates, as already mentioned, and partly, in my opinion, to the general improvement in education. It is very rarely now that we hear of a complaint of the description in question; and when it does arise, and relates to ill usage, the magistrates generally require the report of a medical man, and therefore, as to the frequency of such cases, I, being a medical man, feel fully competent to speak.

The ill treatment that occurs now is never that of starving the apprentices, nor is it the improperly clothing or lodging them; but when it happens it is that they are beaten, which, however, to an immoderate degree, is very rare. I don't call a farmer a bad master who occasionally uses a stick or whip for the purpose of fair correction. I seldom find any deficiency of clothing; the apprentices are quite as well clothed as the young people who are not apprenticed; nor do I think that their work is at all harder. Generally speaking, apprentices are better lodged, and certainly better fed

and clothed than boys and girls who work for wages and live at home. In the churches which I attend, as is my custom when riding about the country on my professional business, I generally see the apprentices looking well and healthy, quite as well as the boys and girls who are not apprenticed.

Sometimes amongst the apprentices there is a bad boy or girl, and sometimes amongst masters there is a bad master. When things go wrong between master and apprentice I think it is generally to be attributed to the latter having bad parents; parents not unfrequently set their children against their masters on any little provocation. I have found that parents who are steady, or who have been apprenticed themselves, and have turned out well, prefer apprenticing their children; such parents know the advantages of getting their children well placed. I think the farmers generally like taking apprentices. In this neighbourhood, owing to so many girls being employed in the lace and woollen manufacturing, the number of apprentices may be small, and the farmers consequently not overburthened, which may perhaps be a cause for their getting on better with their apprentices than in some places that we hear of.

I think that it is the best system that can be adopted for children out of the labouring class, and that the earlier the apprenticeship begins the better. I think that, in the majority of cases, seven years old would be better than nine. If children are not put out till nine, there are two years during which they escape from under their parents' eyes, even where their parents are well-behaved people, and are running about without much looking after, and acquiring bad habits, which would not be the case if they were subjected to the regular system of a farm-house. A child at seven cannot have contracted any bad habits, but at nine he may have many which cannot be eradicated, at least without considerable difficulty. I certainly find the morals much better amongst those persons who have been apprentices; they are more useful members of society.

Bastard children, amongst female apprentices, do not happen so often as amongst girls not apprenticed. In this respect female apprentices are superior to other girls in the same class of life. During the last three years not more than three apprentice girls have been in the Southmolton Union-house with bastard children. Apprentice girls, however, are not so numerous as girls not apprenticed; and, moreover, apprentices are not employed in lace-making. But I think the better conduct observable amongst apprentices is attributable to the greater restraint they are under. In a farm-house, besides the other regulations, the rule is general and strictly adhered to, that boys and girls are kept apart.

I do not think the compulsory binding of children a bad thing for the parents. The master is known to them, and lives in the same parish. The children, consequently, are never far off their parents. If the farmer to whom the child is allotted has been already guilty of ill-treating an apprentice, the magistrates will seldom allow the child to be apprenticed to him. Magistrates always investigate every matter alleged against a master, which inspires the parents with confidence that their children will be well used. I never heard of a case of a master ill-treating an apprentice to get rid of him.

We have now in this union one parish, Witheridge, where apprenticing has been discontinued for years, the parish authorities being opposed to the system. The number of boys above nine years old, in the house from that parish, exceeds that from the rest of the union. The population of Witheridge is not more than 2000, whilst that of the union is 30,000.

A week seldom passes without our having to witness the marked difference in this respect. The master who has an apprentice has an interest in his health; he therefore, as soon as his apprentice becomes ill, or meets with an accident, immediately calls in medical assistance, and he is attended to with the same care as any member of his own family. Not so with the servant boy or girl in whom he has no interest beyond the time they can do

his work. If any illness befalls them, they are generally sent home to their poor parents, who in most cases are incapable of affording them medical assistance or the comforts they require.

I think that in some instances where a farmer has as many apprentices bound upon him as will do the work he requires, this may prevent him from employing the children of other labourers.

I find upon inquiry that the children who have been in the Union-work-house for some time, and have had the advantage of instruction in the school, and have been taught regular habits, make better apprentices than those who are bound immediately from their parents, and have not received those advantages.

No. 34.

James Flaxman, Esq., Surgeon, Southmolton, Devonshire, one of the Medical Officers of the Southmolton Union.

In this immediate neighbourhood, it is a very rare occasion to see a woman employed in agriculture, except during the hay, corn, and potato harvests, and on those occasions only when the weather is fine; when wet they are generally employed in the house. The same observations will serve as relates to girls; only I may add, that in cases where they are employed, it is generally in the presence of the master or mistress of the family: and as regards boys, it is of very rare occurrence that their employment proves injurious to health; generally speaking they are well fed and clothed. In this locality, farms generally are very small, so that the servant girls and boys are treated just in the same manner as the children of the masters are.

As to medical attention, I consider that the apprentice is much better provided for than the child of the agricultural labourer not apprenticed, the former being almost invariably treated as any other member of the family. And in those cases where an apprentice is ill used, the master is, either by the parents of the child, or by the parochial authorities, summoned before a magistrate, and, if convicted, is dealt with with great severity.

The morals of women, girls, and boys, are generally well attended to, and in most establishments are treated as other members of the family; and it is generally found that those children who serve apprenticeships, in after-life make better and more useful members of society. In this vicinity we are placed rather in a manufacturing neighbourhood, so that a great number of females and children are required; amongst these medical aid is more frequently requisite, and very frequently the seeds of disease are sown. The persons there employed are generally very immoral.

The lace-makers also very frequently, from confinement, and from the low wages they procure, entail on themselves diseases which would not otherwise occur. From the small quantity and bad quality of food they take, diseases of the eyes and chest amongst this class are very often met with. After marriage the houses of these people are generally filthy, and their families much neglected. In reality the agricultural labourer lives with his family quite in a state of luxury and comfort compared with that of the man who happens to be united to either a woman employed in a manufactory or in lace-working.

No. 35.

Mr. James Huxtable, of Kingsland Farm, Southmolton, Devonshire, Farmer, examined.

Women are employed here, and in the neighbouring parishes, in picking stones, weeding corn, digging potatoes, picking apples, hay-making, binding

corn in the corn-harvest, digging turnips, threshing, winnowing, and also about the machine. They are not constantly employed, their employment generally requires fine weather; and if the weather is bad, boys are often employed instead.

I can't get so many women to work for me as I should like, owing to the lace-making and wollen manufactory in the neighbourhood. Last spring I had to hire a man to weed corn.

I give 7*d.* a-day to women, with a basin of broth at their dinner, or a pint of cider, which makes their wages 8*d.* without anything besides. But in some of the parishes further off Southmolton, such as Chittlehampton and Walkleigh, women get 7*d.* a-day, or 6*d.* with cider or broth, equal to 7*d.* a-day. In those districts they are not so much wanted for manufacturing as here, where we are so much nearer Southmolton. In the corn-harvest I give them 6*d.* a-day and as much as they like to eat and drink.

Women work from eight in the morning till six at night generally, except just at this time of the year (Christmas), when they don't work later than four o'clock. They have an hour for dinner.

I employ six men, three boys, and two women, and sometimes a third; but have not so many women as I should like to employ; they can't be got. Women who make lace can't work in the fields, nor can women who work in the fields make lace.

I have had in my time boys apprenticed, and I also hire boys as servants. In the latter case I take them generally about ten years old; they don't get much at first. I take them entirely into the house, lodge and feed them, and they clothe themselves. I pay them at first 6*d.* a-week, and that sum goes on increasing till they get to be men, and capable of doing men's work. I have now a boy, 16 years old, in my house; he has 1*s.* 6*d.* a-week. In the lime quarries there are a few boys employed, and there they go as early as 8 years old. They are employed to drive the ponies carrying the lime to be burnt; those boys get 2*s.* a-week. Boys work the same hours as men generally; sometimes more hours; they have to attend to the cattle early in the morning, and again in the evening when they come home, and afterwards before they go to bed.

These boys and the apprentices live alike in all respects, and do the same kind of work. They are lodged in the same way; if anything the apprentices are a little better clothed. As to their eating and drinking they live as I and my family do. I always sit at the head of the table and carve for the whole; we are 16 every day.

I think it is a good thing for boys to be apprenticed; they make the best men. If a boy is a stubborn boy, it is much better for him to be apprenticed, though not so good for his master. If he is not apprenticed he never gets on; he goes from master to master, leaving his place as soon as he does not like it; but if apprenticed he can't do so, and must learn to get on. A great deal depends on the master, and a great deal depends on the boy; but I think apprentices always turn out the best, generally speaking. When boys are bad, it is nine cases out of ten the fault of their parents; and when parents are bad I think the earlier the boy is apprenticed the better; it takes him out of bad hands before he has learned to be bad himself. When the parents are well behaved themselves, I don't think it signifies so much whether their boys are apprenticed or are hired as servants. If a boy is well looked after by his parents, perhaps it is better than being apprenticed, as the farmer cannot always be looking after his apprentices, though he wishes to do so, and to keep them in order. Boys and girls will be getting together at times. I think though it is better to apprentice a stubborn boy.

I think a boy is not too old at ten to begin to work; he can by that time have some schooling, which I certainly approve of. When a child has schooling, it shows that the parents are better. I lay a great stress on a boy's parents being well-behaved people; nearly everything depends on that, whether the boy is apprenticed or hired as a servant.

I think girls, after serving an apprenticeship, make better servants, and also better wives; they learn useful things, and are willing to do everything necessary. A girl not properly brought up to know her work does not know what to do if she marries; if she has a family everything directly is in confusion.

I think generally farmers like apprentices; for if they turn out well they are very useful; I find it so in my own case. Apprentices are not treated as they used to be; formerly they were only half clothed and half fed; such things are never heard of now. Sometimes, perhaps, when a farmer is very poor, he can't afford to clothe and feed his apprentice as well as he is in other places; but there is no ill treatment; there can't be, with the activity of the magistrates in looking after the matter. I remember formerly when girls turned out regularly with the boys to plough, &c., and were up to their knees in dirt, in the middle of winter, in all kinds of employments. Now you never see a girl about in the fields.

No 36.

Statement of Mr. John Gould, Poltimore, near Exeter.

I beg to say that for many years past I have been a most strenuous advocate that the able-bodied man should be paid in money for his work sufficient to give him the opportunity of maintaining himself and family without parochial assistance; and to prove this fact, as much as 11 years since I subjected myself to be brought before a bench of magistrates at Exeter because I would give the labourers in this parish 9s. per week instead of 7s., and not to receive any parochial aid, for which I received from the Bench their thanks as well as their support, and up to this time this is the wages I pay, and which have become tolerably general in this neighbourhood ever since, or for the greatest part of three or four parishes, the men receiving three pints of cider per day.

Women are paid 9d. per day, with one quart of cider. Boys are employed after nine years of age (by me and some others) at 1s. 6d. per week, with a quart of cider per day, their wages increasing as they grow in years, and according to their conduct. Girls are but seldom employed in early years in agricultural pursuits. At this season of the year [Christmas] women are employed by me and others in taking up the Swedish turnips for the cattle or housing, and for which they receive 1d. per peck, and by this work they can earn 1s. a-day; the roots of the turnips are cut off, as well as the green, and deposited in heaps ready for cartage.

I strongly adhere to piece-work as much as possible, so that all may earn what they are enabled, and it is far less trouble to the master or his hind. The hours of labour are in summer from seven to six, in winter from seven to five. I am a strong advocate for allotment gardens for the labourers of all classes, taking care that it be rendered to them of the best land, as near as possible for convenience to their cottages, beginning from 20 perches and not exceeding 40, according to their families. The poor are generally healthy, and all well provided for in moral and religious instruction in this parish and district.

Parish apprentices are altogether done away with in this neighbourhood; I myself was the first to oppose this improper mode of unpleasant servitude, having often known all three parties equally unwilling, viz. the master, the apprentice, and the parents of the child.

No. 37.

Statement of Abraham Smith, Esq., of Treastear, near Exeter.

Women are generally employed in the spring in planting peas and beans, weeding corn and grass fields, then in hay-making, after that in the harvest-

field, in the autumn in apple-picking, collecting acorns, afterwards in preparing turnips for housing, which lasts great part of the winter, when the weather is mild. Male children are principally employed in driving horse and ox ploughs, attending to cattle, and frequently in the same way as women. Female children are very rarely employed by us in the fields.

Women generally receive as wages from 7*d.* to 9*d.* a-day; those at 7*d.* get a pint of cider, those at 9*d.* none. Children from 4*d.* to 6*d.*, increasing as their labour becomes more valuable; they also generally get cider in small quantities.

Women for the most part work from eight in the morning till six in the evening. Boys from seven to six, taking two hours for their meals, and occasionally refreshing themselves with their cider.

They [women] are generally remarkably healthy, and I think their morals for the most part are tolerably good; but there certainly are frequently committed by them petty thefts, such as stealing wood, turnips, and apples.

Children begin to work about 10 or 11 years of age. Their health is extremely good. I do not think they have much time for religious instruction or school tuition, except on Sundays, when many of them attend Sunday schools.

As to the binding parish apprentices there is a great diversity of opinion: I am decidedly of opinion that it is the very best mode of bringing up a robust, honest, and industrious peasantry; for with the farmers (I mean those who take their meals with their families and dependents, and work with them) they are well fed, clothed, and are brought up in honest and industrious habits; whereas with their parents they are too frequently encouraged in those petty thefts I have before named, which initiates them in crime. I know that many think that giving labourers cider in their work is wrong; but I am convinced it is the means of keeping them from those pests to society, the beer and cider shops, where the worst crimes are matured and brought into action.

No. 38.

Communication from *J. H. Matthews, Esq., Bradninch, Devon.*

Women are very little employed in agricultural labour in this neighbourhood. During the season of harvest they are engaged in binding corn, making hay, &c.; and sometimes also in weeding, and picking stones. Boys are employed from nine upwards in driving horses at plough, tending cattle, and driving them to and from their pastures. Girls seldom work out of doors, but are chiefly employed in domestic labour; they milk cows, and feed pigs, &c.

Women earn from 7*d.* to 8*d.* per day, with a quart of cider; boys, from 9 to 16 earn from 3*d.* to 9*d.*

Women work from eight A.M. to six P.M., an hour being allowed for dinner. Boys work rather longer.

I think the physical condition of agricultural labourers of both sexes, with large, or even moderate families, is impaired by the small quantity of animal food which, with their small wages, they are enabled to obtain. The wages of the generality of able-bodied labourers does not exceed 7*s.* per week, with three or four pints of cider per day. Some masters give their servants opportunities of larger earnings by task-work.

The moral condition of children is not much attended to after they leave the school. They generally have opportunities of attending some place of worship on the Sabbath, and in some families read some little of the Bible; but generally speaking, their moral and intellectual attainments are less at the age of 20 than at 9.

Boys generally begin to work at 9 years old; girls at 10.

I do not think their health is injured by work in cases when they have sufficient food.

Children employed in agricultural labour generally have as much opportunity for moral and religious instruction as is afforded by the opportunity of attending public divine service, and the Sunday school.

Parish apprenticeship, if with the consent of all parties, is beneficial ; if compulsory, it generally proves injurious.

No. 39.

Charles Medway, of Doddiscombleigh, Devonshire, Farm-labourer, examined.

I was born at Bridford. My father and mother were farmers' labourers. I am 39 years old. I was apprenticed to Mr. Smallridge, of Bridford, a farmer : he had a farm of 230 acres.

I was first put out at six years old to a place to fetch cows, water, &c. I was afterwards, between seven and eight, apprenticed. My master died one year before my time was out ; I served the rest out with his widow. There were three or four other apprentices at the same time ; two of them girls. It was a very good place, as good a place as a person could wish to be in : plenty of meat and drink. As for work, why people must work, and there was plenty of that. The boys lodged with master's sons, in the same room ; the girls slept in another room with master's daughters. There were 21 of us in the family all at one time. I was clothed pretty well : I had two suits, one for Sunday and one for week days. I always went decent to any place on a holiday. There was never any serious disagreement between master and mistress and their apprentices ; a few words, perhaps, but none of them ever went before a magistrate. I was living much better in the farm-house than I might be at home.

I married at 28. I have got four children ; the eldest is a boy of 10. He lives in a farm-house ; he works for his meat, drink, and clothes and lodging, but he is not apprenticed.

I think it is a good thing for boys to be apprenticed. They used to be beat sometimes where I was ; a stick or whip was used. We didn't like it, but now I think it was necessary. Where there are several young people together they must be done so to keep them in order. My young boy is now beat in the same way, but I don't think it is a matter to find fault with. He always tells me of it ; if I thought it serious I would take him away directly.

I learned to read in the farm-house. Master took care we should read of winter nights, on Sundays particularly. All the apprentices were brought to the reading in the same way. I went to church twice on Sunday generally. I said my catechism every Sunday to my master ; he made his sons and daughters attend to us. I was confirmed : master was always anxious about that with his apprentices.

My wife was an apprentice at Bovey Tracie. I never heard her say that she was badly off in any way. She was 27 when we married.

I think apprenticeship a good thing : a labourer gets rid of children, and the children are better off, if in a good place. I was in a good place, but I was lucky. I know many places where I should not like a child to be sent to : the children in such places have no clothes to wear ; they are beat and half-starved. There are many such places ; but, generally speaking, places are good.

No. 40.

Mary Puddicombe, Wife of Samuel Puddicombe, of Exeter, Labourer, examined.

My father was a farm-labourer at Bridford. I am 41. I cannot read or write. I was apprenticed to Matthew Coleridge, of Bridford, when I was nine years old. My master died when I was 14; I was not apprenticed afterwards. When I first went, there were two boys and a girl apprentices; when my master died, there were three girls and four boys apprentices. The girls slept in our master's daughter's room, the boys in another room. We had to go through the boys' room to our room. Three of us slept in one bed: the four boys slept in one bed.

The family got their dinner all together, and supper too. There was no difference in the meat, and we always had wheaten pudding. There was wheaten bread ready, if anybody came in. I lived much better there than I should have done at home. We might go to the bread and cheese whenever we liked, any of us. We were not clothed very well. I didn't go to church for a long time, not for three years, and then because the clergyman interfered: then we got better clothes for Sunday. We were never taught to read prayers, and we never said our catechism: people were not so strict in those days as now. It is a good thing for children now that they are brought up to education. It is a good thing for children to read and write; it keeps them out of mischief. Most all my children go to school.

I used to be employed when I was apprenticed in driving bullocks to field, and fetching them in again; cleaning out their houses, and bedding them up; washing potatoes and boiling them for pigs; milking; in the fields leading horses or bullocks to plough: maidens would not like that work now. Then I was employed in mixing lime and earth to spread, digging potatoes, digging and pulling turnips, and anything that came to hand, like a boy. I reaped a little, not much; loaded pack-horses; went out with horses for furze. I got up at five or six, except on market mornings twice a-week, and then at three. I went to bed at half-past nine.

I worked more in the fields than in the house. When my master died, I went as servant at Blackiston for two years. I was treated very bad there: the people beat their servants. I used to be beat black and blue. The servants beat me; my master used to bang me. I never was much hurt. I never complained to a magistrate. I told my father and mother, and they told me to be a better maiden next time. Apprentices were treated worse: two, without fathers to look after them, were beat with a stick for anything that happened. One maiden had her arm cut to the bone with a stick the young master cut out of the hedge at the time, for not harrowing right, for not leaving enough for a harrow to go back again. That went to a justice: master was fined 5*l.*, and had to pay the doctor's bill. The 5*l.* was given away in bread to the poor. The parish did not bind any apprentices after that.

I married at 19; my husband was 24. We have got six children; the eldest a boy of 22. He was apprenticed when nine to Mr. Emmens, of Bridford, until he was 21. It was a very good place indeed: the boy was always comfortable; he liked being with his master.

I worked in the fields many years after I married; lately I have done washing. I think washing is harder than working in the fields.

I think it was a good thing for young boys and maidens to be apprenticed; now they are not brought up to learn anything. If they are bound out, and get good places, they can't do better; but bad places are very bad. Apprentices were not so well attended to as they are now; they were sometimes very badly treated.

No. 41.

Mr. *George Palk*, Farmer, near *Exeter*, examined.

My father has six or seven apprentices. The best labourers have been apprentices, and the girls that are apprenticed afterwards make the best wives.

We first set boys, apprentices, to drive horses at the plough, harrow, &c. They then hold the plough, drive the cart, reap, mow, sow, shear sheep, &c. We very seldom send girls into the fields; they attend to the poultry, dairy, feeding pigs, &c., and at the end of their time they are fit to go to service.

One advantage of apprenticeship is, that you always have the apprentices under your eyes, on Sundays as well as other days. They are brought up in the way they should go; but you never know what becomes of the boys you hire after their work is over.

My father never made two tables in his house: that is still the case in many parts of Devonshire. That system should be kept up. My father's house is well regulated. My father is an old-fashioned man: he always sits in the kitchen, if there is no stranger there. All our family sit together. You may depend upon it that where farmers sit in parlours, apprentices are not so well looked after: opportunities for mischief happen, and there is room for boys to tempt girls. I think it a pity that some farmers have got so toppy that they don't like apprentices; they have no business with farming when they get to that.

When our apprentices leave us, they have a complete suit and a Holland shirt given them. We allow them to do job-work at after-hours, at which they can earn a few shillings. When they go to a fair, a little money is given them. I don't think there is any objection to girls going to wakes; they like to have a little dancing, and they enjoy themselves for the evening.

We send our apprentices regularly to church. We bring them together regularly on a Sunday; they say their catechism and read: the eldest teach the youngest. Our apprentices are always confirmed.

Young lads of 17 or 18 work very willingly. Sometimes we have a stubborn boy, and we then pick his work for him; we keep him away from the others. We very seldom find apprentices doing any mischief; the older ones have a little and proper control over the others.

I think it much better for a girl to be apprenticed than to be loitering about the village with nothing to do. I know many persons who were formerly apprenticed to my father: they are very steady people. I never knew my father with more than two hired servants in the house; we always got on with our apprentices. Girls are as well behaved as boys. I never knew anything wrong on the part of the apprentices in my father's house. They are treated well, they eat well, and have good clothing and good lodging.

I have seen cases where apprentices are not treated so well. Perhaps the master has been ill-tempered, or may drink a little. Boys like a good master, and if the master is bad the boy is bad.

In general, apprentices are well behaved, and masters are fair. In the church you may see the apprentices strong and healthy; other boys, though rigged out, don't look as if they had enough to eat.

The condition of the apprentice does not depend on the size of the farm. Some small farmers make good masters; they work with their apprentices; and on some large farms the farmers are just as good masters. The cases of bad conduct are, according to my opinion, uncommon. I don't think, where they happen, that the fault is generally more on one side than the other; masters are liable to get bad boys, and boys are liable to get bad masters. We have had many apprentices who, after their time was out, stopped with my father as servants.

A girl who has been apprenticed is much better qualified for a labourer's wife than one who has not been apprenticed, and I believe female apprentices

get places as servants sooner than others; they know more, and are not so difficult to please. We don't let our apprentices go home to see their parents; parents who have been apprenticed never like their children to run home much. It is a strict rule with us that apprentices sleep at home; also that boys and girls are always kept apart. We always contrive to keep girls in a through room, if possible, so as to keep them in order, and we never let them go into the stables. Girls see boys only at dinner, and at night, when they all sit down in the kitchen together; the girls are there at needlework.

My father and myself don't strike a boy once a year; now and then, perhaps, I give one a smart switch with a stick, but a sharp word is generally enough.

No. 42.

Mrs. Cozens, Wife of ———— Cozens, *St. Thomas's, Exeter*, Farm-labourer, examined.

I am 37 years old. I have worked in the fields a great deal, many years. I was always rather the better for it. I think digging potatoes is the hardest work, but it is better paid. I would go out now if there was work to do. I like it.

I was an apprentice from nine years old till twenty-one. I had a kind master and mistress; I lived well and lodged comfortably. I think it is a good thing for boys and girls to be apprenticed, more particularly now they have no allowance [from the parish as a premium to the master]. But I would rather a child should be able to be kept at home if it could earn its living than be apprenticed.

The wages of women are, for

Stone-picking, 1*d.* a seam, or 1*s.* a-day, without cider.

Apple-picking, 7*d.* a-day, and a quart of cider.

Potato-digging, 1*s.* a-day, and a quart of cider.

Clover-picking, 8*d.* a-day, without cider.

Hay-making, 8*d.* a-day, with cider.

Harvest, 10*d.* a-day, with cider.

Women do not always drink their cider; they bring it home and give it their husbands.

Boys, not apprenticed, go to farm-labour between seven and eight years old. They live in the farm-house, and are found in living, but they find their own clothes. They get about 6*d.* a-week wages at first.

No. 43.

George Moxey, of *Shillingford*, near *Exeter*, Farm-labourer.

I was born at Shillingford, and am 42 years old. I am a farm-labourer. I was apprenticed soon after I was nine years old. My master had a good deal of land; he had four or five apprentices besides me, two girls, the others were boys. I had a good place; I never was beaten, and never ill-used by my master; but I was badly used by the other apprentices; apprentices always beat each other, go wherever you will.

I had plenty to eat and drink. My master and mistress and family and all got dinner together. We had meat every day, generally boiled pork; sometimes we might have mutton. We had broth for breakfast sometimes, at other times fried bacon and potatoes. I always had a bellyful; if short one day I made up for it the next. The boys and men, eight or nine of them, slept in one room. The girls did not often work in the fields with the men,—sometimes one might occasionally. The girls were not allowed to

mix with the men and boys; that is a rule in farm-houses. I was clothed pretty well, in a common way, like other apprentices.

There was a day school, a charity school, at Whitestone. I went there before I was apprenticed, but not afterwards. Apprentices cannot go to school. There was a Sunday school to which I went before I was apprenticed, and continued to go about six months afterwards, but I was obliged to give it up; I had to attend to cattle. On Sunday nights we had to say catechism, and to read the Testament; I was confirmed whilst I was an apprentice. What I learned at school I kept up by reading to my master. I can now read a plain chapter in the Testament. I went regularly to church twice a-day in summer, and once a-day in winter, on account of the cattle. I was always kept to going to church by my master.

I had nothing to complain of whilst I was an apprentice; I was better off than if at home. I have a boy now 11 years old; I wish I could apprentice him, for I must maintain him. I have got six children; my eldest girl is a little more than 12; I can't get her out. I should like the apprenticeship system back again.

I think my place was a very good one. I don't think other places in general were so good. I have heard other apprentices speak differently of their places to what I do.

My wife always works in the fields; she does stone-picking, weeding, apple-picking; she binds corn; she can't reap, she is not strong enough; she has done potato-digging, but not now. I should think driving plough too hard work for women, but I have seen them do it; I think it is too hard work for young boys. Women always get half men's wages; 8d. a-day for everything, and a quart of cider; in corn-harvest they get meals at the farm-house.

No. 44.

Mary Rendalls, Wife of Patrick Rendalls, Exeter, Labourer.

I was born at Shoobrook; my father was a mason. I am 41 years old. I was apprenticed between eight and nine to Mr. Thomas Nicholls, farmer, of Lower Woodrow. It was a small farm. There were farm-servants kept, sometimes two men, sometimes a couple of boys; he worked himself upon the farm. I stopped with him till I was 16. He had a wife, three girls and a boy, the eldest a year older than me. Generally we had good food, better than many apprentices had, as I have heard them tell; other times not so good. For breakfast we had broth, meat boilings, sometimes made with roasting fat, sometimes with flour and butter, and bread. According to master's temper we got a piece of bread and cheese. For dinner sometimes we had peas, a basin of broth, a rasher of bacon, sometimes boiled mutton, sometimes boiled pork, sometimes potatoes and milk, sometimes apple-dumplings,—in such cases no meat. For supper we had a basin of broth, sometimes a fried piece of bacon and potatoes. We always had wheaten bread. When afterwards I went to service near Bridport we had nothing but barley-bread; there is nothing like wheaten bread. I always lived better than if I had been at home; I always had a bellyful.

When I was an apprentice, I got up as early as half-past two, three, four, or five, to get cows in, feed them, milk them, and look after the pigs. I then had breakfast, and afterwards went into the fields. In the fields I used to drive the plough, pick stones, weed, pull turnips, when snow was lying about, sow corn, dig potatoes, hoe turnips, and reap. I did everything that boys did. Master made me do everything. I took a pride to it, when I used to reap, to keep up with the men.

My mistress was a very bad temper; when bad tempered she treated me very ill; she beat me very much; she would throw me on the ground, hold me by the ears, kneel upon me, and use me very ill; I used to scream. This has happened several times a-week. I have not been free from sore

from one week to another. I have still marks upon me from kicks. At other times she treated me pretty well. When she was violent, we had not enough to eat.

My master beat me, and I went home to my father's house. My father was afraid to let me stop, as he might be summoned, as I was an apprentice. My brother took me to Chedworth, about 16 miles off, to prevent my going to Bridewell. I then got a place.

There were many bad places in the same parish; people used to dread the time when the children were to go out. Apprentices were often badly used at that time; not so bad now, things are more looked into.

No. 45.

Jane Bowden, wife of Thomas Bowden, of St. Thomas's, Exeter, Sawyer.

I was born at Ideford; I am 30 years old, and have been married seven years. I went to a farm-house at Cheyford, at seven; I was bound at nine years old. I served 12 years, and stopped in the family a year afterwards as servant. The farm was about 100*l.* a-year rent. We sometimes had two apprentices besides me. At the beginning part of my time I was employed in out-door work, in all kinds of work, leading horses to plough, dropping potatoes, digging potatoes, hay-making, harvesting, pulling turnips, feeding cattle, feeding pigs, &c. The work never did me any harm. When I was about 16 I was kept entirely to the house, except at harvest-time. House-work includes attending to the dairy, and feeding pigs, and all in-door work. After my apprenticeship I was servant of all-work at Mr. Hooper's, Exeter, chemist; I was there 16 months; I was not quite up to work at first, but soon got in the way of it, and satisfied my mistress. I married away from that place.

My master and mistress where I was apprenticed were good people. They, servants, and apprentices dined together. The whole family got supper together. We generally had boiled pork for dinner, and for supper fried potatoes, &c.; the men had cider to drink; the females had tea twice a-day. We always had enough to eat, and were clothed pretty warm. I had a change of clothes fit to go to church in. I was comfortably off. When quite young I slept in master's and mistress's bed-room. It was a rule of the house for apprentices to sleep at home, and also to keep the boys from the girls. The place was a good one. There were many places not so good; it was reckoned the best in the neighbourhood. Apprenticeship is a good thing when the apprentice is treated well, as I was; but that is not often.

I never went to school, but I learned a good deal of reading whilst apprenticed. Every Sunday night we read to mistress, and said catechism. We went to church regularly. I was not confirmed, but master and mistress wished me.

No. 46.

CASTLE OF EXETER.

3rd January, 1843.

At a Meeting of the Committee appointed at the present Sessions, to inquire and report upon the state of the law relative to the Compulsory Binding of Parish Apprentices,

Present,

JOHN SILLIFANT, Jun. Esq. *in the Chair.*
The Honourable NEWTON FELLOWES, M.P.
Sir JOHN T. B. DUCKWORTH, Bart.

GEO. SYDENHAM FURSDON, Esq.
 J. BULLER YARDE BULLER, Esq.
 HENRY STUDDY, Esq.
 C. P. HAMLYN, Esq.
 JOSEPH CHICHESTER, Esq.
 J. H. FURSE, Esq.
 Rev. ROBT. TANNER.

With a view to the modification and amelioration of the present system of Compulsory Apprenticeship, the Committee submit the following points for the consideration of a future Meeting:—

1. Whether the present mode of allotting Parish Apprentices to their Masters is not productive of evil, and if so, whether any, and what, better practice can be substituted.
2. Whether, as the present law stands, the *nominal* discretion vested in Magistrates, of approving the Binding of Parish Apprentices, is calculated to answer *practically* the end for which it is intended.
3. Whether a Tenement of the annual value of 10*l.* is not too small to take a Parish Apprentice.
4. Whether any system of classifying tenements might be adopted which would cause the burthen to be more *equally* distributed.
5. Whether the age at which children (male or female) may at present be bound, and the time at which the apprenticeship expires, are, under all circumstances, the most eligible.
6. Whether any, and what, better means can be adopted, of providing more effectually for the Religious Instruction of Parish Apprentices.
7. Whether it is desirable to exempt from taking Apprentices those Persons who voluntarily, and in proportion to their liability, take into their employ children belonging to the same Parish, who would otherwise be subjects of Parochial Bindings.
8. The system of Binding being different in different parishes, whether it is desirable that one general and uniform system should be established and enforced.

Resolved, That Copies of these Resolutions be printed and supplied to each Member of the Committee, accompanied by a communication from the Chairman.

That the Committee do meet here again on Thursday, the 24th instant, at twelve o'clock, and also on Friday, the 25th instant.

JOHN SILLIFANT, Jun., *Chairman*.

No. 47.

CASTLE OF EXETER.

20th March, 1833.

At a Meeting, this day, of the Committee appointed to inquire into the Law of Compulsory Apprenticeship,

Ordered,

That the following Report be forthwith printed, and addressed to every acting magistrate in the county, previous to its presentment at the next general quarter sessions.

To His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the county of Devon, assembled at their Easter General Quarter Sessions, 1833.

The committee appointed "to inquire and report upon the present state of the law relative to the compulsory binding of apprentices, and to accompany their report with any remarks which may suggest themselves on the

operation of the law, and with any proposals which they may see fit to make for remedying such evils as they may find to exist," having duly examined the subject submitted to them, report as follows:—

On making a full inquiry into the state of the laws relating to apprenticeship;—on investigating the operation of those laws as exhibited in this county;—and on comparing the results with such information as could be obtained from the counties in which the system of parish bindings has not so universally obtained,—your committee have been led to think that it would be desirable rather to propose an amendment of the existing law, under which parochial bindings are made, than the abandonment of the power, which it supplies, of making a provision for such children as cannot otherwise obtain labour, instruction, or support.

Your committee, however, before they offer any suggestions for an amended system, would remark, that the provisions relative to apprenticeship are distributed through a variety of statutes, from the fifth year of the reign of Elizabeth to the fourth of George the Fourth,—a period during which society has undergone a most material change, not only in respect of that portion of our population from which bindings are made, but in the character and circumstances of those classes who are at present liable to bear their due portion of the parochial burthens.

In order, therefore, to obtain an uniformity in the law upon the subject, that it may be adapted to the present state of society, and improved by the adoption of such provisions as shall be suggested by the results of past experience, your committee would strongly urge the benefit which may be anticipated from the consolidation of the law, as well as its amendment.

Your committee also feel that this suggestion may be most opportunely offered to the legislature at a time when its attention is so anxiously and expressly directed to the state of the labouring classes; and, connected as apprenticeship is with the interests of those classes, it is much to be desired that it should keep pace with the improvements sought for in all matters connected with the parochial system.

Your committee would remark in the outset, that, however the law of apprenticeship may be changed or modified, it should still remain optional with parishes to adopt it, or not, as they shall consider it to be most advantageous for their respective interests.

In carrying bindings into effect, the parties demanding the most attentive consideration are, the master and the child; the master, that he may share the burthen in a just proportion with his neighbours;—the child, that he may be put forth at such an age, and under such circumstances, as may be most favourable in training him to habits of usefulness and industry in after-life;—and, both for master and child, that they may be brought together in the manner most likely to render the connexion acceptable; and your committee would state it as their decided opinion, that these objects are mainly to be attained by rendering the binding voluntary in every practicable instance.

The chief feature which has been observed in compulsory bindings, as practised in this county, is that of distributing the apprentices among the several masters by lot, without regard to the wishes of the master, either as to the sex of the apprentice, or his opportunity of employing one at all; and too often will it happen, also, in opposition to the wishes of the parents, in a just anxiety for their child.

It is to remedy these defects that your committee would further urge the propriety of giving the utmost encouragement to those bindings which are voluntarily arranged between the parent, the master,

and the child; whilst compulsory bindings will then take place in those instances only where the child has no proper guardians, or where the parent is unwilling to fulfil his duties to his child, it would tend much to generate a kindlier feeling between the employer and the employed; and the parent, sensible how much the future comfort and welfare of his children would depend on his own character, would be doubly anxious to maintain a fair reputation among his neighbours in the parish.

As regards the parties who are now held liable and compellable to take apprentices, your committee would offer the following suggestions, with a view to the amendment of the law on the subject:—

1st, As to the circumstances of the taker—That no occupier of less than (say 20*l.*) per annum (unless he shall be otherwise of sufficient ability) should be compellable to take an apprentice. That the occupiers of tenements under this value should be arranged in classes, each contributing his share toward such a sum as shall be requisite to provide fit places for the apprentices falling to his share, such sum not to exceed 10*l.*; and that if no person in the class be of sufficient ability, the sum so raised shall go to the parish fund, to be applied to the like purpose.

2nd, That whenever a master or mistress shall have been convicted before magistrates in petty sessions, of ill treatment of an apprentice, and such conviction shall not have been quashed, as often afterwards as it again comes to the turn of such master or mistress to take an apprentice, the magistrates shall have power to levy a fine in lieu of binding, in the manner set forth in 32 Geo. III., cap. 57, sec. 12, where it is limited to cases of previous indictment before the court of quarter sessions.

3rd, Your committee would suggest the expediency of allowing such parties as are liable to take apprentices, but who are either unwilling to take, or who have no employment on which to occupy or instruct them, to commute the burthen by paying a sum to the parish of 10*l.*; and that both in this and in the previous instance, the payment of such sum shall exonerate the parties from taking an apprentice, until it next comes to their turn in due course to do so.

Your committee would also suggest, that it should be imperative on magistrates to make all bindings at the General Petty Session of their division.

The age at which children are at present liable to be bound, and at which the apprenticeship expires, occupied much of the attention of your committee; and it has been their anxious desire to ascertain the most favourable point for the commencement and termination of the service. In respect of boys, your committee are of opinion that the present age of nine needs no alteration for the commencement of the service; but in the case of girls, whose natural constitution is less able to bear hardship and fatigue at the same age, it seems most desirable that they should not be placed out until they have attained the age of ten. In their case, therefore, your committee would suggest, that the year from nine to ten might be well employed in placing the child, at the parish charge, in a school, at which she might be instructed in sewing and knitting, with the various branches of moral and religious instruction, wherever there might be an opportunity for so doing. Such a course would render the female apprentice more valuable in her future place, and she would be better able to bear the exposure incident at certain seasons to the necessary avocations of farm-service.

As to the termination of the apprenticeship, your committee have found strong reasons for recommending that both for males and females it should be fixed at 18.

They have then arrived at an age to be occupied at men's and women's work, and thereby to gain a livelihood for themselves. Under these circumstances, if industriously inclined, and sensible of their own capabilities, their apprenticeship becomes irksome, their minds restless and discontented, and their master experiences the discomfort, as well as the loss, arising from an unwilling service. It is further to be remarked, that from 18 to 21 the great bulk of disputes arises, and during this period the evil-disposed apprentices, both male and female, have too frequently recourse to the most immoral means, by which they may get freed from the master's control. The only punishment which remains is imprisonment, which seldom, if ever, operates to the correction of the evil.

Your committee therefore feel assured that benefit would result from fixing the age for the expiration of the apprenticeship at 18 instead of 21. They would further suggest as a reason, not less important than those which have gone before, that the responsibility of their own support should be devolved upon this class at the earliest possible period at which they are capable of obtaining it. To arrive at the age of manhood, without experiencing how immediately the influence of character, or the habits of industry, affect their daily interests, has a tendency to slacken exertion, and not unfrequently to operate most injuriously in future life. Whilst this is the necessary tendency of apprenticeship, your committee are of opinion that by terminating it at an earlier age, this evil, incident to the system, might be cured, and a moral benefit would result of the highest consideration.

The last point to which your committee would advert, in recommending such amendments as might be beneficially adopted in apprentice law is, the insertion of a clause in the indenture, under which the master shall be bound to afford his apprentice full opportunities for religious worship, as well as for such instruction as the parish may afford. The words of this clause might be adopted from the form ordered in respect of apprentices to chimney sweepers, (28 Geo. III., cap. 48,) and the breach of such covenant met by a penalty of not exceeding 5*l*. To ensure this important object as far as possible, it would be well that churchwardens and overseers should be required, either of themselves or at the request of the officiating minister, to lay a complaint before the magistrates against any master who shall not fulfil this part of his covenant.

Such has been the result of the consideration which your committee have been enabled to give to this deeply important subject. It has been their endeavour to embrace the several interests of the master, the apprentice, and the parish—not without a due regard to the best feelings of the parent.

Your committee, in concluding their report, would express their assurance that much may be done to raise the character of our labouring classes, by affording them fuller opportunities of instruction during the apprenticeship,—by giving them motives to exertion at an earlier period,—by enabling them to feel the duty, as well as the comfort, of self-support;—nor is it necessary to add, that it is to an increased attention to their moral and religious culture that we must mainly look for the gradual and hoped-for improvement in the circumstances and character of the rising generation.

(Signed on behalf of the committee,)

JOHN SILLIFANT, Jun., *Chairman*.

No. 48.

Letter from the Rev. J. S. Toogood, Vicar of *North Petherton, Somersetshire.*

North Petherton, Feb. 22, 1843.

MY DEAR SIR,—Of myself I know but little on the point you are inquiring into, but I have consulted one of those persons in this place most conversant with agricultural matters, and find the case to be as follows:—

In the spring of the year women are employed in bean-planting, taking up roots, dressing of land; in the summer in weeding, hay-making, putting in potatoes and other vegetables, and in the turnip-field; in the autumn they take up potatoes, assist in the lighter work of the harvest, in apple-picking, and gleaning; in the winter they take up roots, and clean land.

The wages average from 7*d.* to 9*d.*, with two pints of cider; but sometimes they do task-work, and can then get from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 4*d.* in bean-planting, &c., per day.

The hours of work, exclusive of meals, are about eight hours and a half.

Work has generally a beneficial effect upon health, but exposure to wet occasions rheumatism. The general complaint of the labourers is a chill, as they call it.

The effects upon their morality are similar to those produced upon mankind wherever they congregate in bodies; but, as in agriculture, persons work in small bodies, for the most part, their morals suffer but little from that cause; although the black sheep, as in other cases, will do much injury.

It is an understood thing that women come later to work than men; they stay at home to provide breakfast for their family, and to send their children to school; and then they go out; and as the principal meal with the labouring classes is the supper, their domestic comfort is not much interfered with.

All women who are in good health, and are not obliged to stay at home on account of their families, get work if they can, but I cannot tell the number.

With respect to boys:—

They are employed in keeping birds, following pigs, driving oxen, and leading the horses. They are generally engaged in helping the men.

Their wages are from 2*d.* per day to men's wages, as they grow older and larger. Their hours are the same as the men's hours.

Work has a good effect; but sometimes they suffer from the wet weather when keeping birds.

Working in the fields very much interrupts school instruction; and in some cases, if it were not for the Sunday schools, the boys would scarcely have time to learn to read; but I think that education is more valued than formerly, for the average attendance in my daily school, where they pay 1*d.* per week, is of boys more than 60.

The case differs somewhat with girls; they are not engaged so early in the fields, and do not so soon get wages; the girls' school is always larger than the boys'.

Compulsory apprenticeship is not the custom in this place and neighbourhood—it was formerly tried, but it was found not to succeed. The farmers object to apprentices, feeling that the children of their own good labourers are the proper children for them to employ. It discourages the good labourer to put his children aside and take the children of profligates.

It would be much for their good if the large landowners would build cottages on their estates for those employed on their farms. Now they congregate in villages, and spend their evenings at the beer-houses. But

of all the curses that the country at present labours under, one of the greatest seems to be the beer-house—it is impossible to say the extent of evil they do.

Yours very faithfully,

A. Austin, Esq.

J. S. TOOGOOD.

&c. &c.

No. 49.

Mr. Richard King, of North Petherton, Somersetshire, Farmer,
examined.

The principal occupations of women in agriculture, in this neighbourhood, are hay-making, digging potatoes, hoeing turnips not much, planting beans, weeding land, and in harvest gathering the sheaves, but they do not reap or bind corn. The hardest work they do is potato-digging, and it is generally job-work. In grazing-farms they are not much employed; there is nothing for them to do. I am inclined to think that women are not so much employed as formerly; men are more employed. Old men are employed in weeding; this, perhaps, may be partly to keep the able-bodied labourers off the rates; and the increasing population is an inducement for men to work at anything. Women generally get 7*d.* a-day; but some farmers pay them better than others; in summer, a pint of cider is given in addition, sometimes, but that also depends on the farmer. Job-work is better paid, but it is difficult for a woman to earn more than 1*s.* a-day. Their wages the whole year round are not more than 8*d.* a-day, except in the case of some particular farmers, perhaps. On the whole, women earn about half what men earn, if at work every day of the week; but a woman with a family must have one day at home to see after her family, &c.

In some places, women breakfast before they go to work; in other places, they go to work before breakfast, and stop to get it. Generally, they leave about five o'clock; in winter, they work whilst it is light. I cannot say what proportion of men to women are employed in agriculture, it is so irregular.

I do not think that anything like half the boys, of the age of 9, of this neighbourhood, are employed; but I am of opinion that a boy, to learn the business of an agricultural labourer thoroughly, should be put to it when quite young. All the best labourers, who, consequently, get employment, are those that were taken young into the fields. A good labourer will take his young boy into the fields with him when at work, and the child soon learns enough to induce the master to employ him. And a child, if placed to the sort of work early, takes a liking for it, which older boys never get. A boy taken out as early as 8 or 9 by his father, likes to imitate him, and he wants to do what he sees done, and he is in good hands all day long for being taught, and for everything else. About this neighbourhood we have light soil, a light sand, and also a heavy clay soil, all in this parish. On the heavy soil there is always a man and a boy to the plough, the boy driving; since Christmas this is the case on the other soils. On the grazing farms there is not much to do for boys.

Boys generally work about the same hours as men, but of course their work is light generally. They work from seven till four when driving the plough. Their employment is later in the day when about other work.

They generally earn about 1*s.* a-week, with a pint of cider a-day; after that, 2*s.* 6*d.* a-week, and so on increasing; but it depends on the size and strength of the boy more than his age.

This parish is purely agricultural; the brickmaking at Bridgwater takes hardly any labourers away. The increase in the population during the last ten years has been 200. The wages paid to the labourer are 7*s.* or 8*s.* a-week, and three pints of cider, worth from 1*s.* 3*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* more perhaps.

It is possible that instances may occur of apprentices being improved by being brought up in the farm-house. But it must be remembered that that is not the whole of the question relating to apprenticeship. Farmers generally like to employ the children of the good and well-conducted labourers, and the children of such labourers should be employed,—it is a reward for good conduct. Under the apprenticeship system, a farmer cannot do this; he is obliged to take the children of parents who are certainly not always the best characters, and to make room for them he must discharge the boys of honest industrious parents. The system operates badly on the farmer, and on the deserving labourer, for the advantage of those who, through their own misconduct, not unfrequently are a burthen to the parish.

No. 50.

Mr. Somers, of Othery, Somersetshire, Vice-chairman of the *Bridgwater Union*, examined.

The parish of Othery contains 1800 acres of land, and there are 52 occupiers. Some of these occupiers hold land out of the parish, as much, perhaps, as 400 acres altogether. On the average, the farms round me, therefore, are not larger than 42 or 43 acres. There are pasture, dairy, and arable farms; the last, perhaps, comprising between a fourth and a fifth of the parish.

On the pasture or grazing farms women are employed from six weeks to two months in the year in the hay-harvest. In the dairy-farms women are not much employed, these farms being small hereabouts, and the wife of the farmer performs all the important work, which is also the most laborious. Females that are employed, are employed in part of the dairy-work, therefore, and also in household work. The wages of such servants are about 4*l.* 4*s.* a-year.

Women employed in the hay-harvest generally work from 8 till 7; they like the work; it is not very laborious. Women of all ages are employed, and as many of them as men. They get during that time 4*s.* a-week, and two or three pints of cider a-day.

Boys are less employed on pasture than on arable farms. On pasture-farms they do little odd jobs, but on arable lands they keep birds, drive the plough, see after the cattle morning and evening, and plough according to their ages. They are generally employed at 9 years old; their hours are from six to six, except just in winter, and then from between seven and eight till four or five.

At first they get 3*d.* a-day and a pint of cider, then 8*d.* a-day with three half-pints of cider, and then the regular wages of men. Between these periods the wages go on increasing pretty regularly; but it depends upon the boy and sometimes the master; a younger boy is sometimes worth more than an older. At first their work is always light, not at all calculated to do them any hurt.

About 16 years ago, a meeting of the rate-payers in vestry agreed to revive the old system of apprenticeship, which had been disused some time, thinking it would relieve them and the parents of the children, and also be beneficial to the children themselves. In three or four years there were 28 children bound. The system of binding to occupiers in classes in rotation was adopted, something similar to the plan at Bridgwater. The first operation of the system was the depression of the respectable labourers. Their children were turned off by the farmers to make room for the apprentices they were obliged to take. This discouragement to the good labourers drove them to seek for employment for their children in other parishes, and also to remove themselves. The parish, therefore, lost the best part of its labouring population, whilst the paupers remained. All stimulus to good

conduct was removed. It was in the next place found that the apprentices were generally the worst characters amongst the boys; they were commonly the children of parents who did not take any care about them; for the best parents were those that kept themselves and their children off the parish. The apprentices in most instances turned out badly; that was the rule. Those apprenticed rarely served out their time; they ran away when they reached 16 or 17. There was hardly anything but discontent between the apprentices and their masters; the apprentices behaved badly, and their masters felt that there was a sort of injustice practised towards them in their being compelled to take servants that they did not want, or that were of no use to them.

A practice affecting the condition of the labourers, and which cannot be too much condemned, is the paying part of the wages of the men, women, and even boys, in cider. It is generally said by the farmers that the work cannot be done without cider, but I can produce practical proofs to the contrary. I, myself, have totally abstained from cider, beer, and all other spirituous drink, for the last six years, and during that time have worked as hard in farm-labour as any of the men I have employed. I have some labourers who have also abstained from such drinks for some time. They work quite as well as the men who drink, and in all respects are quite as well in health. They and their families are much better off also, in consequence of such abstinence. I give them the regular wages in money paid by other farmers; but instead of the cider I give them a potato-ground of about half an acre, from which are got 120 bags of potatoes, of 120 lbs. each, per annum. I dress the land for them, and haul the potatoes when dug up; the labourers find and plant the seed, they keep the ground clean, and dig the potatoes. It is nearly all done, however, by their wives and children. Thus, instead of consuming a part of their wages in drink, as is generally the case, my labourers I am speaking of at the end of the year find themselves with a large stock of potatoes on hand, which, in addition to contributing very much to the support of the family, enables them to keep and fat a pig, which again pays their rents. These are clear and practical proofs of the benefit to the labourer of abandoning the system of paying or making up his wages in cider. He, himself, his wife and family, are all much better off; in a physical point of view very much better off; and in a moral point of view there is no comparison to be instituted between a sober labourer and one who drinks. If no more cider were drunk than that in the fields, and allowed by the farmer, the consequences are bad enough; but the habit of drinking, so general amongst the labourers, arises out of, and is in a great degree fortified by, this practice of the farmer paying wages in the manner mentioned. As soon as a boy begins to work at 9 years old, he is encouraged to drink by the farmer; and from that time the habit gains ground, and it is nearly impossible to eradicate it afterwards. I consider the practice of giving a young man cider in lieu of higher wages to be the great cause of the prevalence of the vice of drunkenness in these counties.

No. 51.

Statement of *Horatio Nelson Tilsey, Esq.*, of *North Petherton, Somersetshire*, Surgeon, and one of the Medical Officers of the *Bridgwater Union*.

I have been engaged here for the last 17 years in my professional capacity; my district is purely agricultural, and my acquaintance with it is one of great intimacy. The able-bodied labourer is at this moment in the receipt of 7s. a-week, but there are instances of its being no more than 6s., out of which he pays house-rent of at least 1s., and frequently 1s. 6d. a-week.

Occasionally, at task-work, he can earn 10s., and even 12s.; but all are not thus favoured, and many pass through the year without the smallest addition to the standing wage. There is invariably an allowance of liquor of from three to five pints a-day, most generally of cider.

Children of both sexes commence frequently at seven years old, by keeping birds from the corn-fields, and whilst so engaged will frequently kindle fires, and instances are not wanting of their having been severely and fatally burnt. A little in advance of this age, boys drive the team, and do other light work, such as carting turnips, &c., and attend to the horses under the superintendence of the carter. For this they get from 3d. to 6d. a-day, working in short days from sunrise to sunset, then from six to six, and during hay-making and harvest perhaps longer, but they *then* get an allowance of food, which, with this exception, is for the most part confined to bread and potatoes.

Women are a good deal employed, and if industrious, and their family permitting, may work from half to two-thirds of the year. Their hours are the same as those of the boys, and the general wage is 8d. a-day. The morality of the women thus engaged is mostly at a low ebb, and when congregated in the field their language is often most filthy and disgusting. It may be easily believed that there is no great disposition among them to attend to religious instruction, and when an exception happens it is frequently frustrated by want of proper clothing. There is but little distributed in this neighbourhood in the way of charity; but during sickness, there is for the most part a good deal of sympathy exhibited by the employers, who are not backward in the supply of comforts to their dependents. There is a great want of cottage accommodation on many farms, so that the labourers are driven to the villages, and often congregate to the injury of their morals, many of them resorting to the beer-shop, who would, under a different system, be better members of society. What cottages there are, are generally badly arranged, badly ventilated, and badly drained, occasionally all ages and sexes sleeping in one common room. As a class, these labourers—men, women, and children—although, perhaps, sufficiently skilled in all matters relating to their own particular calling, manifest the most complete and perfect ignorance in all that regards school instruction.

On referring to my books, I cannot find that there is any disease peculiar to boys or women engaged in agriculture; but, on the contrary, they both seem to be remarkably exempt from illness. For the most part, they possess a ruddiness of countenance, and a firmness of fibre, which I believe to be wholly attributable to the exercise and the exposure consequent on their occupation.

No. 52.

Statement of Mr. *John Evered Poole*, Surgeon, *Bridgwater*, one of the Medical Officers of the *Bridgwater Union*, and Coroner of the town of *Bridgwater*.

Women, as far as I have observed, are employed chiefly during the hay-harvest, corn-harvest, and bean-sowing. I have had no reason to suppose these employments injurious to their health.

I cannot give any authentic statement as to the employment of girls; but from inquiries, I understand young girls are never, or but seldom, employed in out-door work, excepting in company with other members of their family. I am not aware of any case where their health has been injured from agricultural employment.

With regard to boys, they are generally employed, I understand, as soon as they are capable of keeping birds, driving the plough, getting in cows to milk, and other such employments.

The hours of work vary according to seasons. In harvest-time, for instance, I believe they work early and late; then, I am informed, they are paid accordingly, and have dinners and suppers, with extra allowance of liquor. So far as I can judge of their usual food at their houses (which is only from my visits in sick cases), I think their food chiefly consists of dried fish, bacon, potatoes, and other vegetables, which are generally grown in their own little gardens. I of course order, in my official capacity, any change in their diet I may deem necessary for the sick.

No. 53.

George Small, of Othery, Somersetshire, Farm-labourer, examined.

I am a farm-labourer, am married, and have six children. I am 39 years old. I work for Mr. Somers. I left off drinking cider, beer, and all other strong drinks about five years ago. At the end of 12 months I took to drinking again. I soon left it off again, and have never touched anything of the kind since, now more than four years.

I have always done all sorts of farm-work. I have laboured hard, but I find my health now just as good as when I used to have cider. I don't find any difference; I can work just as well as those that drink. Last summer I mowed with two men from four in the morning till eight at night; it was job-work. They drank: I did not. They drank a gallon and a half each, but I did my share of the work the same as theirs, quite as well as they did. We were paid in money 3s. 4d. each a-day during the mowing. They drank their cider, and I had my potato-ground at home. I have gone on in this way for four years. They call me all kinds of names, and laugh at me for not going to the cider-shop; but I laugh at them, and ask if they have paid their rent as I have.

Mr. Somers pays me as much as other labourers get, only, instead of cider, he lets me have half an acre of potato-ground. He dresses the ground, and I put in the seed and dig up the potatoes; my wife and family help. Mr. Somers draws them. I wish all masters did as Mr. Somers does; for I think if the labourers didn't drink so much, they and their families would get more to eat. I generally get 1 lb. of bacon a-week; sometimes a little bit of meat, but seldom. We drink tea and coffee, and at dinner treacle and water. I keep two pigs now; sometimes when I kill a pig, I keep a piece for myself.

It is eight years since I had any relief from the parish; if I had been in the habit of drinking, my family would have been in rags. I am sure the liquor would have been doing me no good, but without the potato-ground we could not have gone on. I think the liquor is a matter of form.

I went to work when I was nine years old; I had 1s. a-week, and three cups of cider a-day. If I had a boy out at work, I had rather the cider was turned into cheese. It is a bad thing for the young boys to learn to drink as they do; it is as bad with girls nearly. My eldest daughter is 18 years old. The summer before last she went out to harvest, and had half a gallon of cider a-day. The farmers think people work harder with so much cider; I don't think they do. Women are often intoxicated at the end of the day, and young men and women, in drinking all this cider, get together in a very improper way.

No. 54.

Daniel Cox, of Othery, Somersetshire, Farm-labourer, examined.

I am a farm-labourer. I am 40 years old. I am married, but have no children. I work for Mr. Somers; he gives me no cider, but 1s. a-week

i instead. I don't think cider averages to the farmer more than 1s. a-week for a labouring man, but it costs 1s. 6d. to buy at the shop, and the farmers reckon it at that. The 1s. a-week in money I think much better than the drink, which is soon gone. I never buy cider, and only drink it if given to me at odd times, but very rarely. I used to have cider for part of my wages, but since I worked for Mr. Somers I have not had any. Next year Mr. Somers is to let me have half an acre of potato-ground; that will be instead of the 1s. a-week he now gives me for the cider. That will give me 100 bags of potatoes; that will be enough for myself and my wife, and a pig, and also for seed.

I can work now just as well as when I used to drink cider; I find no difference. This summer I mowed without cider: it was task-work, and I mowed as well as any of them that drank. We all mowed an acre and a half a-piece a-day: it was task-work. They drank as much as 9d. in cider; I saved that every day. I ate just what they did. Labourers drink much more than they want generally.

I now live a little better than I used to do. Of course I am better off than a man with five or six children. I have a better cottage to live in; I pay 5l. a-year rent; but there is a little garden in which I grow a few potatoes and cabbages.

Boys get their half-pints of cider a-day nearly always; it certainly helps them to swallow their crust, but I think a piece of cheese would be better, and do more good with bread than half a pint of cider to a boy. It would perhaps cost the farmer a little more; cheese to the farmer is dearer than cider, but not if cider is bought at the shop.

No. 55.

Letter from Mr. *Watts*, of *Over Stowey*, *Somersetshire*, Manufacturer.

SIR,—I have to apologize to you for not having before replied to your letter of the 5th inst., which has arisen in some measure from my being unusually occupied during the past week, and partly from a feeling that I am unable to furnish you with any information on the subject of your inquiries at all likely to be valuable to you.

The women and children in this neighbourhood having, in addition to their domestic engagements, scarcely any but agricultural employment, the farmers are able to obtain their services at very low wages. Women get very little employment from November till April, and during the other months they are paid from 6d. to 8d. per day. In some of the heavy soils they are employed a short time in February planting beans, and earn perhaps one-fourth more than their ordinary wages. There is no agricultural employment for female children, who therefore generally go to school much longer than the boys, and are generally well instructed in reading, writing, and needlework, qualifying them for domestic employments in early life. Such employments are, in my opinion, much more favourable to the moral condition of females than agricultural occupation, though I am not aware that the latter is ever carried to an extent here at all injurious to their physical condition. I should say that women employed in agriculture seldom labour more than ten hours in the day. Boys are generally taken from school when about ten years old, if they can obtain employment from the farmers, and earn about 2d. per day till they are 12 years old, 3d. per day from 12 to 14, and 4d. per day for the two following years. Those who attend the Sunday schools pretty regularly keep up what little knowledge they have gained at the daily schools before they could get employment in agriculture; but I fear that the low wages earned by their parents frequently prevent their children from obtaining any education except what they get at Sunday

schools. Men employed in agriculture generally earn at present from 6*s.* to 8*s.* per week; perhaps 7*s.* per week is the average amount now paid to men employed only six days in the week, and 8*s.* are paid only to the best workmen, and those who are employed a large portion of Sunday in attending to the cattle and horses.

Parish apprenticeship existed to a very considerable extent in this neighbourhood 40 years ago, but appears to me to have ceased almost entirely since the beginning of the present century. Although from 1812 to 1838 I was employing several hundreds of the female children and adults of this neighbourhood in throwing silk, I cannot flatter myself that my observation of the condition and habits of the labouring population has been so extensive as you suppose. What experience I have obtained has given me, on the whole, a very favourable opinion of them in comparison with those immediately above them; and considering the scantiness of their diet and their insufficient clothing, their health and strength of body, their activity of mind and contented cheerfulness, are to my mind very surprising.

I remain, Sir,

A. Austin, Esq.

Yours, &c

&c. &c.

No. 56.

Memorandum received from a Dairy-Farmer in *Worcestershire*.

I have a farm of 360 acres, about 80 of which are occupied by the dairy-cows during the summer, and 70 or 80 mown to supply them with hay.

I keep from 40 to 45 cows.

From April to November there is most to do in a dairy-farm; May and June the busiest time.

As far as the woman superintending the dairy is concerned, the first thing done in the morning is to skim the milk, empty the skimmed milk into the cheese-tub, and prepare the milk vessels for the new milk, which is brought into the dairy by five or six o'clock; after which, with the assistance of her servant, she prepares a portion of the skimmed milk for the calves, and makes the remainder into cheese. Two days a-week she has butter to make, two days she goes to market, and the other two she is occupied in the cheese-room. These different matters occupy the middle of the day. In the evening the milk is to be skimmed, and the new milk put into its proper vessels, and the calves to be again attended to.

She is occupied about 12 hours, not including meal-time.

The work of a dairy-woman is considered laborious, but I believe there are no servants more healthy.

Her age is between 30 and 40; her wages 55*l.* per year for herself and servant, including maintenance.

She has two bed-rooms and a sitting-room, and is supplied with coals, vegetables, milk, and beer.

She is assisted by one servant, or dairy-maid, whose whole time is occupied in the dairy, excepting two hours for milking. There are three women employed two hours a-day each in milking.

The dairy-maid's age is from 20 to 30. She is employed from 12 to 14 hours a-day; her work is even more laborious than the superintendent's, but without any bad effect on the health.

The wages of the dairy-maid is from 8*l.* to 10*l.* a-year, with board and maintenance. The wages of the milking women 2*s.* 6*d.* a-week, besides which they gain 3*s.* or 4*s.* a-week by other work on the farm.

I also employ one or two boys for two hours a-day to assist in milking, according to the number of cows in the dairy.

Their ages are from 14 to 18.

The share of their wages for milking is about 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* a-week.

There is no schooling for lads at that age.

Nor any opportunities for religious instruction except going to church, of which they *very* seldom avail themselves.

There is also a cow-man, whose whole time is engaged in attending to the cows and pigs, which are fed with the whey, &c., from the dairy.

His wages are 12*s.* a-week. During the winter there is a boy under him at 6*s.* a-week.

Both these assist in milking.

MR. VAUGHAN

ON THE COUNTIES OF

KENT, SURREY, AND SUSSEX.

To the Poor Law Commissioners.

GENTLEMEN,—I proceed to make to you my Report upon the employment of women and children in agriculture, in the district offered to my investigation. I visited the counties of Kent, Surrey, and Sussex, in pursuance of your instructions, which directed me to examine into “the sorts of labour at which women and children are respectively employed, the wages which they receive, the hours of work, and any other similar facts tending to throw light upon their physical and moral condition;” and which desired that I would “particularly inquire into the ages at which the children begin to work, and the effects which their occupation in labour may produce upon their bodily health, their opportunities for obtaining school instruction, and a moral and religious education.”

It may be observed that each of these counties presents a great variety of external features, when taken by itself; but that when collected and compared together, they exhibit a remarkable unity and sameness. The great formations of the wealden, the sand, and the chalk, belong to each and to all. In the core of the district lies the wealden, comprising the weald of Kent, the weald of Surrey, and the weald of Sussex. This large and central tract of country is girt with a belt of chalk hills, which, rising from the sea about the Isle of Thanet, range in a westerly course over the north of Kent, and, passing through Surrey, return in a circular sweep along the south of Sussex to the Channel. A fringe of sand forms the union between the chalk and the wealden.

The varied cultivation of this district, consisting mainly of arable land, hop-grounds, orchards, and forest, and furnishing in various degrees and at different seasons agricultural occupation to women and children, attends in some measure these main distinctions of the soil. The wood-land is the great feature of the wealden. The sand, as it rises into the chalk, furnishes some of the most celebrated hop-gardens and orchards. The most

highly cultivated arable ground is found upon the chalk of the Isle of Thanet. As youthful and female labour, as applied to agriculture, depends mainly on the produce, I visited one or two localities on each of the natural divisions which I have mentioned, and examined witnesses on the subject of the investigation, as disclosed in each kind of agriculture.

My attention was given particularly to the cultivation of the hop by women and children, as a species of husbandry very much confined to this part of the island. I examined witnesses on this subject on the weald of Kent, near Tunbridge Wells; on the sand at Maidstone, in Kent; and Farnham, in Surrey; and on the weald of Sussex, near Rye. The application of the same kind of labour to arable land I inquired into, also, on the weald of Kent, at the same place; on the weald of Sussex, at Cuckfield and at Rye; in Surrey, at Dorking; and I obtained evidence from a large land occupier in the Isle of Thanet to the same effect. The orchards about Maidstone, and the woodlands in the north of the wealden below Dorking, furnished materials for inquiry as to the garden and forest ground.

As I believed it incumbent on me to take the evidence as to the actual employment upon oath, I examined the witnesses personally, and took down the testimony by way of deposition—a course which necessarily consumed some time, and narrowed the space over which my inquiries could extend. But I am inclined to believe that the principle of my selection, aided by the prevailing similarity of practice, will give a general applicability to what has been collected on this head, and that the mode of taking it will not diminish its authenticity. A few written communications, where I was prevented from a personal interview, I have subsequently received upon parts of the subject of a more general nature, and involving less detail.

I confined my inquiry to the agricultural employment of women and children, and to such effects as their actual employment might have upon their condition. The education of the young I have also considered with the same limitations.

In consideration of the general similarity observable in the features and cultivation of these counties, I propose to report my observations on the suggested topics generally, and in the following order:—

- I. Causes of the employment of women and children in agriculture.
- II. Sorts of employment.
- Hours of employment and meals. } Given in a separate table.
- Wages of employment. }
- III. Effects of the employment of women and children in agriculture on their health.
- IV. Effects of the employment of women and children in agri-

culture, upon their economy and command of the means of subsistence.

1. Circumstances tending to diminish the productiveness of their labour. Shops, &c.
2. Arrangements intended to increase the productiveness of their labour.

- a.* Remuneration without wages. Allotments.
- b.* Combination of earnings. Clubs.

V. Effects of the employment of women and children in agriculture on female morals.

VI. Effects of the employment in agriculture on education of girls.

VII. Effects of the employment of boys in agriculture on education.

1. Its effects as preventing attendance.
 - a.* A concurrent cause with poverty and indifference.
 - b.* An independent and necessary cause as a part of education.
2. Its effects from the nature of the education, and the nature of the employment in agriculture.

Apprentices.

I. In many cases where the labour of the woman or the child has been thought directly prejudicial, the causes themselves that have called such work into existence have also indicated the probability of mischief. Sometimes, for instance, the small and pliant forms of children have brought upon them labour impossible to adults, but possible to the young; and, perhaps, the more unfit from the very circumstances which make it possible—a growing and undeveloped frame. Necessity here, real or apparent, has been the cause of the practice, and has fulfilled its common character of knowing no law but the conveniency of the end, and the possibility of the means to it. In other instances, the unlimited nature of the demand, and the unlimited means (if labour could be procured) of supplying it, may have forced the child prematurely into the character of a workman, or tasked too severely his life and time by unremitting exertions in an occupation not of itself improper; or, last of all, severity of competition, and the consequent jealousy of expense, may lead to a substitution of those labourers for the more costly toil of males and adults, and this substitution act in the end to impoverish their condition, as well as injure their health. But in respect to the agricultural employment of women and children, such causes seem partly excluded by the natural circumstances of the case, and do not, in any instances, exercise a practical influence to their disadvantage. There is no kind of work in the fields to which

they are compelled by the physical difficulty of applying other labour to the same purpose. No analogy exists on this head between any agricultural occupation, and such work as climbing in chimneys, and hurrying in mines. In most out-door work weight and strength are an advantage. They are seldom dispensed with as superfluous—hardly ever rejected as disqualifications.

Again, from the limited nature of the material on which all agricultural labour is expended, and from the slow and gradual process by which its capabilities of rewarding labour are increased, it is not probable that the adult men should for ordinary purposes be exhausted, or that a sudden expansion of demand should force the young into hard and untimely toil.

We may here notice a distinction which offers itself, on reviewing the several kinds of labour in these counties, on which women and children are employed. In some cases their industry is hired and remunerated directly by the occupier of the land; in others it is obtained indirectly, and through the labourer himself. In the one case, they are principals in the contract with the original employer; in the other, they are mere assistants in aid of the contract of another, who commands their labour either by money, which is rare, or by his social claim on their services.

In the cases of direct hiring by the occupier of the soil, the following causes seem to encourage the employment of women and children on the land. The first is the nature of the soil, which, of course, invites a congenial mode of cultivation; and as this varies, the opportunities of employing different kinds of labour are changed also. So the hop-grounds furnish employment to women and children more generally than corn-land, and some kinds of corn-land more than others. In most parts of these counties, except in the case of the hop, this cause acts comparatively to check the labour of which we speak. The turnip and potato, both of which furnish much occupation to women and children, are sparingly produced.

It might be supposed, indeed, that poverty in the occupier of the soil would be another element to call the same kind of labour into existence, as being cheaper in cost. Such, however, does not appear to be the case. On the poor lands, where the smallest capital is embarked, there seems to be no perceptible encroachment of this means of cultivation upon the ordinary proportion of adult workmen. This is not without reason; for besides that a heavy social burden must devolve on the occupier of the soil if he were to supplant the adult male by the child or woman, and deprive him of his means of subsistence, on the cold and stiff lands of this district, on which the smaller capitalists are generally found, the application of the weaker labour for the stronger would be in a high degree inexpedient or impossible.

The work, indeed, of women and children, where directly hired,

is not generally a substitute for the necessary labour of men, but is supplemental to it, indicating its abundant rather than its deficient application. It consists frequently, though not universally, in acts of neatness and economy, which might be dispensed with altogether, and which, as they involve some outlay before profits, are a part of the economy of wealth and not of poverty.

The work, indeed, is created in many instances with a view to the *workmen*. In this case they are not adapted to the task, but the task itself is undertaken because they are fit and ready to perform it. The employment of women and children is involved in the process as a part of it, and a condition of its expediency. The spirit of the farmer is in action here no less than his thrift. The one gives existence to the labour, the other prescribes the character of the labourer. While he seizes the slighter rewards which can be obtained by the outlay of industry, the slender amount of advantage gained, and of profit returning, confines the task to weak and inexperienced hands, whose services can be purchased upon easy terms.

Another cause acting to produce the same effect, though but slightly prevailing in these counties, is the use of farm-machinery. Strength and skill are both supplied by the mechanism: all beside the address or power required to direct it, where it is of a complicated kind, consists in a light kind of attendance which these are capable of supplying; although, had the work been done by hand, the full force of the man would have been necessary. The woman plies at the threshing machine, and the boy at that for cutting turnips. Handwork would have required men at both.

The peculiar nature of all agricultural produce, too, has a strong influence in the same direction. Unlike the process of manufacture, which deals generally with an organized material, and is carried on for the most part independent of the weather or time of year, all occupations in agriculture have their seasons more or less general in their condition, and more or less transitory. There is a favourable and unfavourable state of the weather, a condition of the soil unfit or convenient, and often in addition to these there must be a peculiar state of the plant itself, which makes the season for labour critical and momentary. According as these opportunities occur and disappear, the work of course increases and diminishes, so as at one time to suspend some portion of the adult men from their occupation, and at another to crowd the field with women and children. The hop must be picked at the moment when it is ripe, or lose its condition. The harvest must be got, or exposed to all the casualties of weather: as the amount of labour required at such critical moments is out of all proportion to that which can be bestowed at other times, the fields necessarily borrow such resources as domestic life can supply. These critical moments of agriculture are a great call on such labour.

Here, indeed, we recur to the distinction lately remarked between the occupation furnished to women and children in the field by the owner of the land, and that which they perform in subordination to the labouring man. The greater and the most toilsome portion of their employment is of the latter kind—both in the corn-land and in the hop-gardens. In all these counties the favourite mode of hiring labour is by the task, and not by the day. In the eastern parts of Sussex, where the land is well cultivated, and labour in good demand, the working day is two hours shorter than in many other places. Such a practice could hardly have established itself, and continued, if the day's length had been the usual measure of labour. In fact it is not—and the opposite method is in itself perhaps the most equitable and convenient. Not that the time measure is universally excluded anywhere; in many parts, and for some purposes, it is carefully preserved. So where the nature of the work calls for heed and minute attention, the want of which is not likely to betray itself to the eye, but will be discovered in the effects, a farmer will prefer to pay for the time rather than the task. In common cases where the work speeds sufficiently with ordinary care, it is thought better to reward the actual labour which is measured by the work than the mere opportunity for labour, which is all that is involved in the payment of time. This custom is one main cause of the employment of women and children. It is the interest of the labourer to obtain all the assistance which he can command without direct personal expense; and he naturally has recourse to the members of his own family for assistance. By such means women and boys are led to share in the severest labours of the field. "At eight years old," says a farmer in East Kent, "a boy is fit to help his father in the barn a little at threshing; as his father is paid by the quarter, he gets his son to assist him."—"Boys of all ages, from six years old and upwards, will do something in the way of reaping, and earn something for their father."

This sort of work, indeed, naturally brings into operation all the motives which can influence a parent to send his child into the field, which are of very different and sometimes indeed of a most opposite description, varying according to his character and circumstances. If he be poor, or have a large family, he seeks every means of adding to his earnings. If his own work be regular, he has fuller opportunities which he is disinclined to forego, of connecting his son with the same service. If his employment be irregular and uncertain, he makes the most of the occasion which offers—and wife and child are called in, to add to the profits of the hour. If he be provident, he may think it right to realize all means for bettering his lot, or early inuring his family to a life of toil. If improvident, any expedients to procure himself bread must be snatched at.

The supposition of these various motives is the natural way of reconciling the very contradictory answers which questions to different persons and in different places have produced, some assigning the practice chiefly to habits of irregularity and improvidence, others considering the early occupation of the child as the best proof of the industry and good manners of the whole family.

It would perhaps be incorrect, however, to attribute all the early labour of the child at the more laborious work entirely to the parents' desire of making money. Much, doubtless, depends on the boy's own inclination. It is very common for the flail and the sickle to hang in labourers' cottages, where they are seen by the young, and looked at as implements of manly labour, which the more active and playful may be ambitious of wielding. They are sometimes carried, partly as a toy and partly as a tool, by the young husbandman to the scene of labour, which he soon fills seriously and for life.

Custom, too, which by perpetuation of other causes becomes a cause in itself, is not without its authority in determining the degree and manner in which this kind of labour is applied. In the small tract of country here spoken of, slight differences are observable, and steadily adhered to. So about Tunbridge Wells, women are rarely employed in opening the hills in the hop-grounds. At Maidstone and Farnham it is their common occupation. At Maidstone, again, the woman opens the hills, and the man cuts the plants; at Farnham the man opens the hills, and the woman cuts the plants. In some places the woman does not bind the corn, but only makes the bands; in others the binding is generally assigned to her. If these variances, whether in smaller or larger localities, are to be attributed to custom as an arbitrary influence, they show that the application of this kind of labour is not settled merely by momentary convenience, but is under the control of the common opinion that regulates the other decencies of life. If, on the other hand, they arise out of such slight differences in the soil or produce as make the several practices reasonable in the several places, this implies somewhat in the allotment of labour pliant and tractable to the suggestions of propriety and good sense. The female dress does not appear to be anywhere habitually altered or shortened by the habit of field-labour, and this is a fair general test of the degree and spirit in which the labour is used.

III. The effect of field-labour upon the health of women and children seems generally beneficial. It would have been natural to anticipate that an occupation which cannot, from the necessity of the case, outstep the order of nature—which must close with the shutting in of day—must (usually) be suspended in foul weather—must attract those who are engaged in it into the air and light—unless requiring great muscular exertion, could not be physically prejudicial. Now the ordinary labour of women and children is

the lightest known to agriculture; in which the works of skill and the works of strength are not separated, as in many other arts, but united—the skill consisting in the economy and management of strength. The easiest labour, therefore, falls to the most inexperienced. The boy is seldom employed alone; and whether he works with man or beast, the smallest exertions devolve on him. He lends his modicum of strength to assist the man, and his modicum of superior intelligence to direct the beast, or, if necessary, to annoy him. This seems the account of the team-boy and cow-boy's occupation, as well as of crow-keeping, stacking, wood-cutting, hop-opening, hop-poling, skimming, bean-dropping, potato-picking, &c. He is nearly always under human guidance, except at two occupations,—bird-scaring and cattle-keeping; but his natural genius for indolence or mischief are not entirely without room for exercise in these services.

The work of the woman is in some respects the same as that of the boy, whom she often accompanies and directs, as in turnip-dressing, hoeing corn, &c. The labour commonly assigned to her is suited to her character as having more discretion, greater strength and pliancy of hand, with a worse footing on the soil, owing to her shape and costume. She stands between the boy and the old man, whose place she occasionally fills; less expert, but quicker and stronger than the last; stronger and more heedful than the former, but less versatile. Her most regular and most natural occupation is in the hop plantations. There is, perhaps, no produce in the country that requires so much or such varied human labour as the hop at the different periods of its progress. The ground is at one time of the year a field, at another a garden. Great outlay of force must be expended on the soil, as on the corn-land; but the force is that of the human arm, not of the beast of burden, which into some plantations, as those about Farnham in Surrey, scarcely enters. Unlike corn, too, and other produce, which, when the soil has been prepared, and the seed committed to the ground, is left in the main to the course of nature and the order of the seasons to bring to perfection, it must be trained and tended from its first shoot to its ripening. Then it is not gathered like corn, and stored upon the stalk, but is culled at once by the finger. It thus levies its tax of labour upon all ages and either sex. The soil is handled and subdued by the man; the plant is tended and trained by the woman; in the gathering are united all,—man, woman, and child. By the task-work of the man, however, both woman and boy, and sometimes the girl, are engaged in the more laborious treatment of the land. The practice varies in different places, as before observed. The woman shares much of the man's labour at task-work, the boy all of it, even to the digging, which is the most severe of any. Of this a boy says,—“I am 12 years, and have been four years at work; I work now at hop-

digging. Yesterday I strained my wrist.* I can move my wrist to-day. I have never hurt myself before in the hop-gardens. Driving the horse at harrow is harder work than driving the horse at plough. Driving the horse at plough makes the legs ache; driving the horse at harrow makes the legs ache more. Hop-digging is a good deal harder than harrowing; it tires the back."

The share, however, in the hard muscular tasks of the grown man does not affect the health and strength of the boy as might be expected. In a physical point of view it throws an additional burden on the man. In the execution of the most laborious work there is generally some lighter part which, when the man works with the boy or woman, he assigns to his companions. *Their* toil is so much lighter than if they worked alone; *his* so much heavier. So J. Smith, Esq., of Rye, says:—

It is the lighter parts of the ground usually which boys turn up with the spade: the boys dig what are called the slips, *i.e.*, those spaces between the hills which the man leaves in digging the panel down, and which are cut by the plough in order to drain the surface water off.

So in poling and opening hops, and in wood-cutting. The changes of posture and the relief given to each muscle by the different acts and attitudes which the mixture of lighter and heavier work produces, and which considerably lessen the day's toil, the labourer is apt to lose by an unequal assistant. But this division of the work, into its lighter and heavier branches, is not always practicable, as at reaping, at which the boy plies for the whole day the same work with the man, and the day is exceedingly long. To none of these cases, however, have I heard any distinct evils attributed. Such work as reaping lasts for a short time, takes place in the fine weather, and is done under the influence of some excitement; and as the boy and woman are generally helpmates to the father of the family, their exertions may depend upon their strength and inclination. The general evidence of the medical profession, with slight exceptions, speaks favourably of the effects of field-labour. Mr. Yate, surgeon to the Dispensary at Tunbridge Wells, and for some time medical officer to a district of the Tunbridge Union, says:—

In both these capacities I have attended the poor in town and country. There are no diseases, so far as my experience goes, to which women and children employed in agriculture are liable in a higher degree than those occupied in the trades and employments of a town; and the diseases to which both are subject do not attack the agricultural population more violently than those in the towns. In this neighbourhood there are no manufactories. I never met with any case of disease, either in a woman or in a child, which I could attribute to excess of work. There is much rheumatism, both amongst the children and amongst the adult women, but no more in proportion amongst the agriculturists than amongst persons engaged in trade, and artisans. The latter are, I think, more liable, from living and working in hot rooms, to take cold. I seldom or never meet

* The surgeons in this district state that they have never met with any serious sprain produced by labour in the hop-ground.

with accidents, sprains, or ruptures, amongst agricultural women and children which I can attribute to labour. The diseases of the poor are to be attributed to poor living and want of cleanliness, chiefly.

Mr. Ottley, medical officer to a district of the Maidstone Union, says :—

I never met with any diseases, either in women or children in the country, which I could attribute to excess of labour; nor with any disease which I could attribute to the peculiar nature of the work. The constitutions of women and children in the country contend with diseases more successfully than those of persons in the town. Both rheumatism and ague are common in town and country. In the town, where it is more common than in the country, I attribute it partly to situation. The people in the country live better than those in the town.

The evidence of Mr. Curtis, of Dorking, is to the same effect as regards the comparative healthiness of country population.

On the corn lands, however, it seems necessary to make an exception, where the soil is heavy, and the dress consists of tight weighty boots and leather gaiters. The early age at which boys go upon the plough land with the team is not without evil effects. Mr. Lovell Byas, a surgeon and apothecary of great experience at Cuckfield, says :—

I have not been able to trace any disorders amongst the female part of the lower class to their occupation in agriculture. Boys are more frequently called upon to labour in the fields between the age of nine and twelve years; and although their general health is good, yet I have frequently witnessed, in consequence of their being thus early employed, from the conjoint causes of their wearing heavy nailed boots, necessary for their occupation, and walking over rough and deep grounds, great weakness about the ankle-joints, as is evinced by the great running out of the feet. I have rarely met with any instances where the constitution has been depressed or disordered by excess of labour. The men are often the subjects of chronic rheumatism late in life.

Mr. Waters, a labouring man and farm bailiff, had said of the same kind of occupation—harrowing—“It is hard work; for the boys are young and the land is rough.”

These partial evils, however, are not confined to the hard work only. Bad effects are sometimes to be traced to the lightest and most pleasant occupation of the field—hop-picking.

The hop loses its condition if it is not gathered when ripe; and in wet weather it spoils more rapidly than when it is fine. Exertion must therefore rather be increased than otherwise in bad seasons.

As the weak as well as the strong are attracted to this work, and like it, and as the muscular exertion is but slight, exposure to the seasons is likely to have worse as well as wider effects. Mr. Newnham, of Farnham, says upon this subject :—

There is no work performed by women or children, in the hop plantations, calculated to produce disease, or to which their disorders can be fairly traceable, with the following exception :—If the hop-picking season proves

a wet one, they are exposed frequently to become wet, and to stand for many hours upon the ground, saturated with moisture; and when this happens to be the case, disorder of the digestive functions ensues, commonly showing itself in diarrhœa."

It should here be mentioned, that at the picking season in all the larger hop-districts, a new population of men, women, and children, is poured into the neighbourhood. The crowd is motley, and differently composed in different districts. There resort to Farnham, according to Mr. Payne's evidence, about four or five thousand strangers.

They come chiefly from the towns and villages within twenty miles of Farnham; some few are from a greater distance, and others are labourers who have no settled home; amongst these last are gipseys. Various means are provided for their reception; part are admitted into barracks constructed for the purpose; others into spare rooms in cottages, which are specially reserved from the tenants. It is not uncommon for the same labourers to come from the neighbourhood to visit the same hop-grounds for labour during many successive years. The children and wives come commonly without the father.

The effect of a wet season on this class of the population, is spoken of by Mr. Newnham as rather more severe under the same circumstances.

With regard to the imported population at this season, they, of course, are exposed to the same causes of disorder, aggravated by their being lodged in very crowded and ill-ventilated apartments, and by their great want of cleanliness, and generally improvident and dissolute habits. Even here, malady is not of a severe character; and a death among the imported population is scarcely ever heard of. It is not the employment of picking which is injurious, but the common causes of disorder to which I have referred.

About Rye, in Sussex, a similar influx takes place at the hop-picking season. They, too, are persons from the neighbouring villages, or Irish, received into the cottages or out-buildings. Mr. Harris, of Northiam, a medical gentleman in large practice, speaks of the disorders of the imported population in that district in stronger terms.

In this district (he says), which is not generally healthy, disease is much increased during the hop-picking season by the influx of strangers, who come partly from Ireland and partly from other places in this country. They frequently arrive in a bad state of constitution, and fall ill, sometimes of contagious and other disorders. Scarcely a season passes without some case of small-pox appearing, though, by timely precautions in removing the patient, it has been prevented from spreading to home-dwellers, to whom, however, hooping-cough has been frequently communicated, and sometimes measles. To the home-dwellers, too, wet picking seasons are frequently productive of disorders arising from exposure to the cold. In fine autumns the hop-picking is not at all an unhealthy occupation, and is even recommended to the weak sometimes by medical advisers.

Mr. Bankes, a medical officer of the Union at Rye, "says that the town population who go out to the picking in wet seasons are liable to be attacked by ague, and influenza in consequence. That he has not been called upon to attend any contagious disorders."

That boys in a few cases are worked too early, or too severely for their years, I should collect from general expressions; but such instances are exceptions, have not attracted the attention of medical men, and do not represent the general character of their occupation. The labour of adult agriculturists, tested by an abstract standard of health, certainly exceeds (in common with all unremitting occupations of hand and head) the measure of what would most contribute to the long enjoyment of the powers of life; still they are comparatively healthy: The first observation applies to children in a much lower degree, the second in a higher one.

IV. The amount of pecuniary benefit which the boy can derive from his own earnings in labour, apart from all consideration of his means of laying them out to advantage, may admit of question. The least favourable view of his position is that bearing on the work which he performs in common with the man. If it is remunerated to its full value, he is a competitor in the market against the adult labourers, and against the parent whose earnings and whose disadvantages he must equally feel. Unless there be a demand for labour much above the supply of it, his appearance in the general market must tend at once to make it more difficult to obtain, and to lower its remuneration when got. Thus, so far as his own physical comforts depend upon the reward of his father's toil, he is diminishing them, although directly he may be adding to their amount; his own earnings are in such case taxed to the degree to which his father's are lessened. At the same time that he is a competitor in this sense against his own father, he is so to the same degree against all adult labourers, single as well as married.

In this way the father's interests are to a certain degree impaired, and to a certain degree furthered by his son's exertions. All that the son can contribute to his own support he gains, while he loses all that he would have earned had this class of labour been excluded from the market. But the single man suffers the same disadvantage without the same recompense. The employment of the child, therefore, does tend to raise the position of the married above that of the single; to make a family an aid as well as an encumbrance, and an aid in the same degree in which it is an encumbrance, by giving him who has the most claimants for support the greatest number of assistants for the purpose. It was more than once observed to me, "that the young man who has not yet attained much skill, and yet works without superintendence, finds it a harder matter to obtain employment than the boy who is directed by the man." Two cases, however, which claim the same assistance, it leaves in a worse position than before,—the family unfit for labour from extreme youth, or from consisting chiefly of females, who, except in those districts where the hop is extensively cultivated, are little used for agricultural purposes. Where, however, the child does a kind of work which would in no case fall to the man, or when more hands are wanted than

the adult population can supply, the benefit to the child and family is still clearer. The degree of this must of course depend upon the nature of the work and size of the child. That this is in some cases very substantial is clear. A child of 12 years may, it is said, in fair seasons, earn more than 1*s.* in the day at hop-picking, while the season lasts. In the more regular services of the farm, from this age to fifteen, 6*d.* a-day is the common payment; at nine years a boy can earn 3*d.* or 4*d.* by his day's work. The real economy practised by such labour becomes more doubtful as the age is tenderer, from the increased outlay of clothes and food necessary to meet the exposure and fatigue. These last, indeed, where the strength and age are sufficient, are rather additions to the comfort of the boy than otherwise, and may be considered as a part of the gain effected. But it is not so where the money is hardly enough to supply the wear and tear—where the boy is weakened and dispirited for after exertions at a more advanced age, as seems to be the case in some few instances.

The pecuniary advantage brought to the family by the labour of the woman is naturally different from that realized by the child; as the wife is an in-door labourer by her situation and the performance of her domestic duties, any new occupation may be only a transfer of her exertions from a more to a less congenial scene. How far, therefore, the general economy of the house is assisted by her field-earnings depends upon her character, the age and condition of her family, and the means at hand to manage the house and children in her absence. In most places her good will to go a-field is considered in the married woman as a mark of her activity and general providence, and not as a trespass upon her home duties. In others the same is spoken of as impairing the habits of the housewife and destroying the "home" of the poor man, and converting it into a mere covert of nightly shelter. Perhaps, therefore, it is not a leading cause, but one subordinate to the general character, testing it and bringing out its qualities, and producing its effect one way or the other on the physical condition of herself and family. In the hop-counties this kind of exertion is universal; and the wife's skill in tying, a task which the husband never performs, and her rapidity and adroitness in picking, in which she commonly excels him, add most considerably to the income of the family. 1*l.* 10*s.* in the tying season, and 1*s.* 8*d.* a-day as long as the picking of the hops lasts, in addition to the profit arising from aid given at other work to her husband, is no extravagant estimate of her earnings.

In the hop-grounds, where the labour is very much suspended during the winter months, the brisk moments must be seized by the whole family to supply the want of activity at other seasons. On this subject Mr. Payne says, (Farnham)—

Owing to the peculiar nature of the hop cultivation, a great part of the parishioners are thrown out of employment during the winter; and those

among them, who in the busier seasons did not find work for their families as well as themselves, invariably seek parochial relief in some shape or other from the beginning of November to the beginning of February.

The precise amount of wages paid to woman and child for their agricultural labour, is given in the table following the more general part of the report. The practical reward, however, which their employment secures to them, depends upon two other circumstances, which occasionally much influence and alter their value—the mode of payment, and the opportunities which they may have for laying it out. On this latter head the agricultural family is placed at considerable disadvantage. The nature of their employment obliges them to dwell often in secluded villages, and at a distance from large markets. All which they buy, therefore, is burdened with the intermediate profits of a petty trader, accumulated upon the town price. Even where there is a disposition to deal fairly by them, the effects of this must be felt; but a general ignorance of value on the part of the purchaser, and an absence of competition to adjust the price without the purchaser's interference, offers some temptation to sell at rates inordinately high: and as the profits, too, are realized upon each bargain, the small earnings and petty outlay of the poor agriculturists necessarily expose them to the same evil. In aid of these special disadvantages comes the general one of poverty, which tends to make all the practical relations of the poor relations of dependency, even those which give to the other classes of society a position of influence and command. When the poor man exchanges his labour for money, he is in the same situation as the generality of those in a higher class of society; as he requires the money more urgently than his employer desires his labour, he is dependent on his employer. When, on the other hand, he exchanges his money for the necessaries of life, the common relation of tradesman and customer is reversed, and for the same reason;—he can less well afford to be denied the goods, than the wealthier shopkeeper to refuse them; and in the course of the year, too, the moment arrives when the money is not forthcoming, and he buys upon credit and as a favour. Till he can clear off his debt, every purchase has the same character; and while he consents to the high price for the benefit of delayed settlement, the seller recompenses himself for the uncertainty of his debts by heavy charges. In places, too, where small farms are common, the shopkeeper in course of time occupies or buys a farm, and, instead of wages, pays by the goods taken at his shop. Such as are free from these shackles are not able to raise a competition upon the spot. They have their choice of going to an inconvenient distance after a hard day's toil, or submitting to the evil. A general conviction prevails that the charges of village shops are exceedingly high, and the articles very often inferior. The Rev. Thomas Harvey, of Cowden, in Kent, inti-

mately acquainted with the rural life of the county, holds the following language on the subject :—

One great and oppressive misfortune to the labourer is the difficulty of expending his earnings to any advantage. Confined to the limits of his small circle, and perhaps only late in the evening receiving his wages, he deals solely with the village shop. In these shops are sold articles of but moderate quality, at very high prices. There are numerous instances of large fortunes being made in the places where the farmers and labourers are the only customers—such fortunes as could only be accumulated by excessive profits and want of competition. A labourer (it is considered) is allowed credit for a small amount, and then obliged to deal under a fear of having his debt called for, and thus of being left destitute for the time. It may be true that the shopkeeper, by deaths and other causes, loses money; but with such large profits the effect is slight; and as he knows everybody he has generally good tact, and avoids a bad creditor. Millers commonly pursue the same system. The labourer, in consequence, finds himself ill off, and complains that he cannot live on his earnings, when, in fact, he cannot lay them out to advantage. Averages and quotations serve little purpose. Deal here, or pay your debt, is the practical argument. I believe one great cause of the bad condition of the poor is to be found in this.

It is not an uncommon thing for the families who are in a condition to do so, to purchase six or eight miles from their own homes, rather than at the village shop. Henry Duppa, Esq., of Frimingham House, near Maidstone, in answer to a question upon this subject, says :—

There is just cause for the statement about the dearness of village shops. I can hardly give a better idea of my opinion on the subject than by stating an alteration which I made about a year ago in my hour of paying the workmen. My former hour of payment was seven o'clock on Saturday evening, which I have changed to nine o'clock on Saturday morning. My people are enabled to purchase their goods at the market town in consequence, at the distance of six miles. They have all quitted the village shops for the better and cheaper shops of Maidstone. My opinion is not ruled solely by this circumstance. I am certain there is great foundation for the complaint.

In some places the shops are represented as 25 per cent. dearer than the town shops; in others as 20, in others as 10 per cent. dearer; in all, the articles as inferior; and in most, the practice of giving credit used as a means of exaction.

The mode by which the wages are paid, in some few instances, very much aggravates the evil. In* some of the villages towards the north-east of the county of Sussex, above Battle (a district about which women and children are more employed than any other in which I instituted inquiry), it is a practice for some farmers to pay, not directly by money, but by checks drawn on the shopkeeper or miller.

“The cause of articles in this neighbourhood,” says the rector of Brede, in Sussex, “being dearer at the village shops, arises from the infamous system of giving checks upon shopkeepers, instead of paying the labourers in money, as adopted by farmers, I fear, too generally. The hardship which has been experienced in this parish has been excessive through the pre-

* About Brede and Sedlescomb.

valence of the above system, which, by making the petty shopkeeper the farmers' banker, at once exposes the labouring poor to whatever exactions their paymaster may think proper to impose upon them; for, under such a system, they have no alternative but to take his goods at his own price or starve."

The practical effect in such cases is not only to force upon the poor family articles of an inferior description at a high price, but sometimes to deprive it of its earnings for weeks together. The whole weekly wages cannot, of course, be reasonably expended in a shop offering a limited class of articles, and difficulty is often experienced in obtaining the money over and above the price of the goods required. The reason of this may be as follows:—The tradesman is content to increase the amount of his custom by the patronage of the farmer; the farmer practically sells his patronage for the interest of the money which the tradesman is required to advance, and which it is his interest to diminish, by delay or otherwise, as long as possible. Whatever may be the real motive amongst such farmers as follow the practice—whether, from some supposed benefit to the labourer which is not obvious, or to obtain the interest of the money which the tradesman advances, or to secure the village custom to some relation embarked in the trade, or to procure an opportunity for trading with advantage themselves, the upshot of the arrangement is not only to restrict the labourer's choice of goods, but to force him into unnecessary expenditure, or deprive him of the immediate benefit of his earnings. I had an opportunity of seeing in the possession of a labourer's wife (to whom I resorted for direct information on the subject), three checks given in lieu of payment for the wages of the last three weeks. The whole sum drawn for amounted to 1*l.* 10*s.*, about 1*l.* of which she had vainly endeavoured to obtain. It is too easy to see how such circumstances must operate to destroy not only the comfort of a family, but the roots of its comfort—its power of distributing its means over the general wants of its condition, and maintaining itself independent, even when its state is most thriving.

I have no knowledge of the extent of country over which this system prevails, nor have I reason to think it considerable. In three contiguous villages which I visited, the system was spoken of with censure. I had demonstrations of its bad effects in one case only, but it does not appear to be a custom worn out, and on the decline.

I would not confuse with this limited and circuitous mode of payment a practice not unknown in most places to many occupiers of land, of selling their corn directly to the workmen on their farms. The cases which I have happened to meet with have not involved any compulsion, originated in times when prices were high, and have been sometimes spoken of as, upon the whole, beneficial to the purchaser, though liable to abuse in bad hands.

Such difficulties, however, in employing and remunerating the agricultural family to their best advantage, are met by many artificial arrangements for their benefit. Two of these may be mentioned as especially bearing on the subject of the inquiry: the first tending to protect it against the necessity of exchanging either its labour, or the money which it may have realized, to disadvantage; the second tending to ensure the general productiveness of such labour against the casualties of life.

Allotments may be looked upon as an attempt to aid the industry of the man by that of his wife and child, to divert both from a closed or unprofitable market, as well as to exempt their money from the toll of village prices. They especially affect the wife and children, both as employment and as wages, giving them a light and profitable agriculture, and furnishing them with articles of common consumption untaxed by any intermediate profits between the soil and the cottage larder. They are also reported to give a more active character to the woman's household employment, and to call out her skill in cooking vegetable food, which had fallen into disuse in many places owing to her dependence on shop articles of a different kind. In some parts there are allotments especially devoted to children.

There are few districts in which they have not been tried to some extent, and few in which they can be said to be general. The manner and spirit of management varies: in some places they are held at a fair rent; in others, at a rent merely nominal.

About Maidstone, where they are not general, but adopted by some proprietors, they are spoken of as employing the wife and family in spring, and as adding to their profits. Where consisting of pasture land, they give much occupation to the wife and daughter in tendance of the cattle and management of a dairy.

About Reigate, in Surrey, they have also a partial existence in different forms, sometimes as an occupation of ground by the labourer, occasionally as a potato cultivation of the farmer's land. Near Farnham, Horsham, and in the east of Kent, they are spoken of in similar language as employing chance hours of the labourer in autumn, his family in cropping season; as furnishing unbought food, and sometimes produce for sale. An agriculturist, in the west of Sussex, mentions their effects as an industrial occupation for the family:—

They have been of great use in teaching the children of both sexes to work, to understand planting and clearing crops; likewise enabling the wife to improve her cookery, and the use of vegetables, which she had well nigh lost from having so many years eaten little but bread and butter and cheese from the village shops.

Whatever may be the effects of this system in stimulating and directing the industry of the family, and in raising it to a certain degree above the need of purchasing, it cannot entirely exempt it from such a necessity. The arts of weaving, spinning, and knit-

ting, have left the cottage, and most of the necessities of life are still commanded by money alone. These natural occupations for the wife and child have by their departure not left the family unclad, but have made them more dependent on wages and on the market. To assist them against the inconvenience arising from small gains, precarious earnings, and uncertain capabilities of labour, means are applied which stand in some contrast to the allotment principle. If, in order to provide food as a reward for the united labour of the agricultural family, an artificial step has been taken backward (by means of allotments of land) to the condition of a simpler social state, to supply them with clothing (once also produced by domestic labour), the resources of a more advanced and artificial state have been slightly called forth. For this purpose, organization and combination of means are commonly made use of, though not in their most independent form. The clothing club is partly an economical combination, partly a charity; but the benefit club, which meets not the common necessities, but the casualties of life, is based on the former principle, and is generally unassisted by other aid. The character of these schemes is of course well known, and they are chiefly worth mention as reminding of the principles which are already at work in these districts, and which may hereafter give more effect to the labour of the poor family,—saving, which gives a new value to small earnings, whether of the wife, child, or man; and combination, which meets their casualties, and gives their money such command in the market as would naturally belong to means less limited. The benefit clubs, which act as an insurance of the fruits of labour by allowance in sickness and a premium on death, have been partially extended to the wife in many instances—in some cases, entirely: in all, a boon to the wife and children is the great object of the institution, as their labour is also an available source for its support.

But with a general similarity in the professed end and object of these societies, the greatest difference is observable in their other circumstances:—the amount of present means sacrificed and future good secured; the decrease or otherwise of subscribers, and the hardy or imperfect maintenance of the first purpose of the institution. Some ensure 20*l.* on the death of the husband, and 10*l.* on that of the wife; some only 5*l.* on the first contingency, and none on the second. In some the subscribers are increasing; in many they have within five or six years been reduced by half their numbers; others have altogether failed. In these various degrees of success we have to remark not only the principles by which the good is effected, but also the difficulties by which they are thwarted of their influence. This is the more to be regretted, as they are often occasioned, in a great measure, by the circumstance which would otherwise speak most hopefully of their usefulness—self-management. When uncontrolled by some one in a higher

rank of society, they are apt to degenerate either into opportunities of convivial meeting, or yearly banks, or into a kind of lottery, offering advantages which they cannot maintain.

In neither class of failure can there be matter for much surprise, when we consider how destitute the poorer classes are of any means which could educate them to conduct such schemes with prudence, and to resist the temptations which they must offer to seize the fruit of their savings before it is ripe, or to waste it on some temporary gratification.

In their daily life they have little intercourse and no convivialities, and they are, in fact, formed into these artificial societies for prudent ends, having scarcely tasted, except in the beer-shop, the more natural and immediate gratifications of society. It is hard for such artificial organizations to succeed, while the simpler social instincts remain unsatisfied. In the least successful attempts of the kind some good is at least achieved by the rules of good conduct, humane language, and temperate indulgence, which they prescribe to themselves.

The desire, too, of immoderate advantages is equally natural in persons who, unused to thrift, form extravagant claims upon its efficacy in the particular instance in which they exercise it. To this they are led not only by their personal inexperience, but, to a certain extent, by the ample advantages which the charity of their superiors has secured to their other combinations. The clubs generally established for clothing and fuel, and which in their direct effects add so largely to their comfort, at the same time reward their economy so far beyond its own natural fruits as perhaps, in a slight degree, to heighten and confuse their notions of its efficacy where they have not the same assistance.

In spite, however, of these internal inconveniences, and the occasional losses which robbery or the failure of banks produce, it is satisfactory to hear that a substantial benefit is, on the whole, generally conferred upon this class of society through the women and children for whose independent support they are specially instituted.

V. The effect of labour upon the moral character of females is not such in the ordinary course of agriculture as to call for peculiar attention. It is not an uncommon occupation for single women, whose characters for chastity are blemished; but such a taint, where it exists, is less the effect than the cause of their employment. Finding it impossible from their doubtful characters to obtain admission into service, where their habits and intercourse might prove mischievous to others, they are still in a condition for work which cannot bring them into very close contact, or very definite relations with their own sex. The younger girls, when called to take part in agricultural labour, do so usually in aid of their mother; and the same task frequently groups both father, wife, and child, in a scene of domestic labour neither dangerous

nor ungraceful. So far as they are withdrawn for awhile under such protection from the crowded cottage to the open air, they are submitted to the free and bracing influences of air, light, beauty, and occupation, which must re-act favourably on the mind. On the loss of this natural protection, however, a clear difference arises, and in some districts, and at some seasons of the year, it is virtually lost by the number of unknown characters who are permitted to take part in the work. In the picking season, as before stated, a vast influx of stranger population is poured upon the hop-districts, which willingly receive them for the benefit of their labour; although, in addition to the confusion which their very number produces in a small town or village, they often bring with them habits of life and language calculated to degrade, if not to pollute, their companions. Farnham is thronged with a temporary population of country people, vagrants, and gipseys; the last of whom are, indeed, in some very few instances, preferred to the others, from their active and wild habits, which speed the work during the day, and are content with any lair to rest in at night. The intercourse between them and the population is the more complete, because it is the custom for the mother of the family to take the very youngest into the hop-gardens, where the children pick, and the infants rest and play while the work goes forward; and at night many are crowded into the inhabitants' cottages, out of which there is a room specially reserved for them. The Rev. R. Sankie, curate of Farnham, says:—

I think that the parish stands under considerable disadvantages from the peculiar nature of the labour which is employed at the hop-picking. There is an influx of strangers of all kinds, who are partly admitted into the cottages of the inhabitants. I have seen the cottages crowded with strangers and their families at this season, who so much disturb the order of the household, that provisions are bought for the day instead of a longer period, lest in the confusion of the establishment they should be lost or made away with. Such, at least, is the statement of shopkeepers, who justify the opening of their shops on Sunday upon that ground. The crowded intercourse, both on the hop-grounds and cottages, must be productive of mischief, especially to the young. There is very little uproar until the close of the hop-picking. The labour of the day, and, as is commonly alleged, a soporific influence from the hop itself, disposes them to quiet. At the close of the labour in the grounds, when the workmen are being paid off, the scene changes. There is much drinking, fighting, and bad language. During the whole season church is but slightly attended, either by strangers or natives.

A church service had been established for the express benefit of the imported population, but had not been taken advantage of.

The rector of the village of Brede, in the neighbourhood of Rye, speaks of the same influences in a different part of the country.

I am of opinion, that the imported hop-pickers do much to demoralize the parish, as they are generally persons of the lowest characters, in both sexes, the very effect of whose manner of living, while employed here, is sufficient to

produce the worst feelings and consequences. It is by no means uncommon to see from eight to ten, or more, sleeping under one shed, without any other partition between them than that which the darkness of the night may provide. It is also a common practice for servant girls, at this season, to give their employers notice to quit their service, assigning no other reason, than that they wish to go hop-picking.

Of the comparative refinement of those who frequent the neighbourhood of Maidstone in Kent, for the same purpose, it need only be said, that they are described by a witness moving in a different class from the two quoted above, but likely to represent the popular sense of propriety, Mr. Tapsfield, relieving officer and acting overseer of the poor, in the parish of Farleigh, says:—

The hop-pickers come from all parts of England and Ireland, and amongst them may be found many unfortunate members of various classes. A great number of the English come from St. Giles's, Saffron Hil., Whitechapel and Kent Street, and they are the most vicious and refractory. The Irish, who are most numerous, are extremely dirty, both in their persons and habits, and are very indelicate in their conduct and appearance. They frequently bring contagious disorders. They are, however, controllable, and on breaking up are much less troublesome than might be expected. The Irish are generally here a week or ten days before hop-picking commences, during which time depredations are hourly committed in destroying fences, robbing orchards, and turnip-fields. The first of these offences is really a serious one.

The owners of the hop plantations, almost without exception, give a good character to these migratory hop-pickers for industry, obedience, and contentedness; notwithstanding which, however, their numbers, their vagrant and barbarous habits, seem to have a degrading effect on the usual inhabitants, as tending to lower their notions of domestic propriety, and to coarsen their language and ideas even where the intercourse between them is least familiar. That the state of female chastity, however, is not well spoken of in these districts, as well as in others, cannot be ascribed in a principal degree either to the common effects or extraordinary incidents of female labour in the fields, unfavourable as these last occasionally may be. There are many circumstances which expose such a virtue to hazard, one of which bears immediately on the present topic of inquiry. The employment of the male children in agriculture no longer separates them from the rest of the family; and the instinct of personal shame, which, though distinct from chastity, assists so mainly in constructing it, is in many cases much disfavoured by the mode of their domestic intercourse. The old custom of admitting labouring boys into the farm-houses, which for many years has been obsolete, was more gradually disused in some parts of Kent and Sussex. Here the remnants of the farm apprenticeship system were preserved up to a late period by a practice of quartering children upon the farm-houses for a year, with a small annual premium furnished to the farmers in addition to the profits of their labour. Now that the clear im-

policy of this custom has destroyed it, the working boy is paid by wages instead of food and clothing. The youth, therefore, though old enough for labour, and steadily employed, is still an inmate of the cottage. The undivided state of the larger families acting upon the scantiness of house-room and general poverty, or high rent, often crowds them together in their sleeping apartments, so as seriously to infringe on the decencies which guard female morals. A keen sense of moral purity would, of course, do much to prevent the material causes from having such an effect, and does, doubtless, often act to enfeeble their operation, and produce better domestic arrangements. But this very moral delicacy is in itself organized in part from material elements, which a low material condition does much to dissipate. The urgency of grosser wants, which supplants the attention to comeliness and order,—the necessity for shifts and expedients, which poverty adopts to obtain its ends,—the scantiness of room, which hardly keeps apart the proprieties of life from its humiliating needs,—all concur to produce an apathy to outward order and purity, such as deprives the moral and social sensibilities in a great part of their natural nourishment. Thus the social or moral habits have not only yielded to the material causes, but have so far been formed by them, as now to subsist independently of their continuance.

Cottages are held under various tenures in the rural districts; some belong to farms, and are sub-let by the occupiers to their own labourers and others who may apply for them. But it is very common for tradesmen and builders to erect tenements in the villages, for which they are enabled, owing to the demand for house-room, to obtain a higher rent than that which is taken by the larger proprietor of the soil. In some places, too, the poor have encroached on waste ground, and built cottages for themselves, proportioned to their means. In either case there is occasion for the evil: in the latter by physical necessity; in the former, if the house is convenient and roomy, and the rent in proportion, a part is commonly let off by its occupants, and the family confined into quarters as narrow as though it were of meaner description. Even a liberal house-rent will not remedy the mischief, for the habit is formed, and the money of the lodger preferred to the comfort and seemliness of living alone.

Great pains are taken generally to improve the home of the agricultural family, as well by furnishing opportunities for proper habits in the erection of good cottages as by the direct encouragement of prizes for neat cottage interiors and gardens. These influences, even if effectual, cannot reach all nor act rapidly. Professional gentlemen who visit the poor in emergencies, speak of the condition of many families, where the youths are nearly grown up, in unfavourable terms,—as to their own neighbourhood.

Mr. Hart, a professional gentleman at Reigate, says—

The great difficulty is to say at what age brothers and sisters do not

sleep together in the same apartment, but generally until they leave home, be that at ever so late a period ; many cottages have but one room, and the whole family sleep in one bed. I have often, when taking the examination of a sick man with a magistrate, an occasion which has more often taken me into a cottage than any other, observed upon this, and I consider its effects most demoralizing.

In the neighbourhood of Cuckfield, in Sussex, it is said to be common for children of both sexes to use the same sleeping-room and bed, up to the age of 12, and even 14.

The Rev. W. Sankie, the curate of Farnham, in Surrey, mentioned a case within his own knowledge where two sisters and a brother, all above 14, habitually slept together. In cases where the habits are less offensively alarming, it is still clear that the common sentiments of personal shame and personal respect may be so impaired as to leave no natural security but such as hardy principle or deep religious feeling may give. The admission of strangers, too, into the cottager's home produces an effect of a kind sometimes similar, occasionally the same. Where a family is admitted the same evil is increased. Where the letting of a room to a whole family is prohibited, as in some cases by the owner of the house, and a single lodger only is allowed, the danger strikes more directly at the chastity of the family.

Mr. Rammell, a farmer on a large scale, living at Sturry, near Canterbury, says—

Cottage-rent is very high. Cottages, with two rooms, are sometimes let for 1*s.* 6*d.*, without a garden ; sometimes, though not commonly, for 2*s.* ; 2*s.* 6*d.* and 3*s.* are paid for four-room cottages. It is common for persons in roomy cottages to let off a room to a stranger. The benefit of an airy abode is thus lost ; and other evils follow, from the intimacy between a stranger and the grown up-daughters.

The same system prevails with regard to lodgings generally throughout the counties, and is spoken of in similar terms. Along with this close domestic intimacy it must be mentioned, too, as a circumstance prejudicial to the purity of relations between the two sexes, that they have no public and social intercourse. They meet indeed at church and chapel, and at the fairs ; but distinctions of sex are lost at divine service ; and the crowd and confusion at fairs produce a privacy which is not beneficial, and is spoken of as in some instances ruinous. Whatever may be the cause of this,—whether or not it be inseparable from poverty, which can afford no convivialities, it must be unfavourable to the general purity of manners that such rare opportunities exist for intercourse under circumstances where the natural instincts of the sexes would at once be gratified and controlled.

In this point of view the occasional meeting of men and women at the gayer seasons and lighter kinds of field-labour is not perhaps without some utility. Their demeanour is open to public view, the intercourse is general, and the mind is pre-occupied by labour from very criminal or dangerous indulgences. Entire se-

clusion fosters sensuality ; and it must not be forgotten that there are other immoral, cruel, and inhuman habits of mind to which it is known to contribute. Criminalities are not traced to female labour in the fields under ordinary circumstances, as to a real cause. The cases open to exception have been mentioned.

VI. In most parts of these counties the education of girls is not very seriously affected by their employment in field-labour, as in earlier years they are rarely engaged in it. Their attendance for instruction is proportionably steadier, and their stay at school longer than that of the boys : in two or three instances in which I took a note, it appeared that four-fifths or five-sixths of the school were commonly present, where two-thirds or three-fourths constituted the usual attendance of the boys. Whether their education is upon the whole more successful is questionable. The sphere of a woman's occupation in the lower classes of life is limited. Domestic service is the general lot—for the greater part service of a coarse description, though domestic, and requiring a combination of active and robust, clean and quiet habits, for which a special discipline seems peculiarly necessary. Such discipline is not given in agricultural work, which, if habitual, accustoms the whole frame to action upon too broad a scale for domestic life ; the eye becomes regardless of precision and cleanliness, the habits undomestic and unfavourable to personal subordination. It seems agreed on all hands that much field-work in early life is a bad exercise for a woman's future duties. This feeling is carried so far in some districts, that leave of absence from school is not granted on the plea of earning money by such means ; and where the practice is more common and inveterate, it sometimes turns out a serious obstacle to domestic service, especially if it offers any inducement of an attractive kind. It is not uncommon in the eastern parts of Sussex for the servants to quit their places at the hop-picking season, merely for the purpose of joining the field-labour. That the general complaint, especially amongst the class of farmers, of the difficulty experienced in procuring good domestic servants, is not to be attributed in a high degree to the prevalence of out-door labour, is clear from the circumstance, that where this habit prevails least the evil is also spoken of in strong terms. There is little to practise either the bodily or moral habits required, especially for the hard service in the families of farmers and tradesmen, to which the greater number who would be useful and industrious must submit. It requires some bodily, as well as mental, discipline to set the hand readily to all kinds of hard in-door work, to obey cheerfully the command and reproof of those moving in a class of society at a less distance from themselves, and to whom they owe the same duties as are required by the higher orders, without the aid of those feelings which greater rank, and wealth, and education naturally awaken. In the families of gentlemen, too, they help to form a separate order and society in the establishment with their

own customs and mutual intercourse ; while the small farm-house, or tradesman's establishment, furnishes few social inducements to leave their friends for hard service. Neither the education nor the employment of the cottage are calculated to give a good training in this particular. In most districts the school instruction of the girls is interrupted or discontinued by the need which the parent may have of the daughter's assistance at home. It results, therefore, more often from the agricultural, or other employment of the mother, than of the child ; but if the general instruction ceases, the special instruction for the duties of life can hardly be said to begin. The occupation to which the girl is called, is, at home, neither active nor steady ; and the scene and circumstances are not of a nature to implant good habits of order and neatness, and the control and discipline is very feeble. As no domestic manufacture is plied at home, a desultory kind of employment is given to the daughter in the management of the younger children, often in the mother's absence—an occupation which may give scope, indeed, to the exercise of activity and good sense, where they already exist, but which is not so well calculated to produce them. In sharing, too, or watching the ordinary occupations of cottage housewifery, her advantages are not great. The cottage family has need both of economy and industry, for their means are small, and the kinds of service to be performed numerous ; but the very circumstances which produce the need are not the most likely to call forth the habits which should meet it. The effects of economy are most felt where the disposable means are smallest, but they are best seen and observed where the means and outlay are on a greater scale. If poverty requires economy the most, sufficiency illustrates it the best, and independency inspires it the most heartily,—a feeling which is said not yet to have established itself amongst the members of the labourer's family. The small farmer's wife is represented as more industrious, as “working harder, and having more cares by far,” than the wife of the agricultural labourer. The domestic labour of the cottage, therefore, while it more commonly checks and interrupts the general instruction of schools than agricultural employment, does not seem to furnish a practical discipline of much value for the future domestic life of the young female.

This inconvenience has been seen and met in some places by Girls' Friendly Societies, and similar institutions, offering prizes for prolonged stay at school, followed by persevering service in the same family. In the present state of education, however, the instruction communicated in girls' schools furnishes but a partial training for the special duties of practical life, and no remedies for the ill effects of an imperfect home education in this particular. The manual exercises commonly confined to the use of the needle, however useful, involve no robust labour, and disincline the scholars for any but dress-making, and the lighter

kinds of domestic service. This want is now perceived not merely by those who feel directly the failure of a hardy race of female domestics—the farmer and tradesman—but by the immediate superintendents of schools, who, from their position, are likely to set the chief value rather upon general ends of school instruction. Desultory attempts have already been made in some places, but without much success, to engraft a hardier industrial training on the school occupations. In more than one instance which fell under my observation, one day in the week was set apart for the training of children in domestic service, in the families near the site of the school. This arrangement is said to have benefited the scholars, but to have failed owing to their want of adroitness, and the trouble and expense occasioned by their unwelcome assistance.

VII. To the regular and prolonged education of boys, labour in the fields is a serious obstacle, interrupting the attendance of the scholars, and early withdrawing them from school, even where the opportunities of instruction are afforded most cheaply. That these opportunities do not exist everywhere in the same degree, is the natural result of circumstances. The greater number of villages through which I made inquiry have the benefit of a school, endowed or supported by subscription, and generally of recent origin. The spirit for instruction seems so much awakened that concentrated wealth, or a moral influence to direct it, commonly ensures the existence of such institutions. Where, however, a person is wanting to represent this spirit, or where it has only a poorer class of tenantry to work upon, and where the small or scattered character of the parish offers slight prospect of a remunerating attendance, such disadvantages generally prevail; the instruction in such cases is left to dames and private establishments, dearer in their terms. In most cases the liberal assistance of particular individuals is so necessary that, in some instances, even the erection of the school-house has, by exhausting the bounty of the chief subscriber, destroyed the school: this is the case with a school in the neighbourhood of Farnham. These opportunities, where they exist in their most liberal form, are commonly foregone for the sake of obtaining work, which withdraws nearly all at the age of 10 or 11, and some much earlier; and during the time of instruction, especially the latter years of it, they are frequently absent for the sake of earnings in the fields. In most rural districts permission is given for the purpose; in many where it is disallowed the practice exists in spite of the rules; the rules have in others been altered in compliance with the inveteracy of the practice. One school only which I met with, superintended by the Rev. Mr. Pope, of Tunbridge Wells, carried the regulations to the contrary into effect, and that was in some degree assisted by the mixed character of the scholars, who were partly mechanics and partly agriculturists, as well as by the remarkable

excellence of the instruction afforded ; in this instance it is common for the agriculturist children to quit that line of life. From a school in the hop-district, near Maidstone, it appeared by the books that one-third of the boys were commonly absent on leave, and according to the schoolmaster's statement the absentees sometimes amounted to two-fifths of the whole number. In this case the proportion of scholars to the whole amount of the population was greater than usual. At a school in the neighbourhood of Farnham, in Surrey, the proportion of attendants is commonly about two-thirds. Where the school is in a larger village or town, and the scholars consist in any large proportion of artisans as well as agriculturists, the attendance is rather better. At two such schools, one in Sussex and the other in Surrey, three-fourths of the boys are represented as habitually present. When the absences for labour occur at a very early age, as at that of seven and eight years, they seem of themselves sufficient to check the pupil's progress, even in the manual exercises learned at school. A schoolmaster in the hop-district said, that in some cases the hands become so chapped and stiffened by work, that their writing tasks can hardly be continued, and that the sense of their own backwardness after repeated or long absences so discourages them that they make slight exertions, become unmanageable from being disheartened, and so a serious hindrance even to others. This is a cause, however, which does not act alone even in hindering a regular appearance at school hours.

The poverty of the families, which precludes them from obtaining the stouter kind of clothing, and the distance of their houses from the school, in parishes which contain waste ground and are much scattered, frequently keep the children from their opportunities of instruction. On one day of very bad weather, forty-two, out of a total number of fifty-two, failed to present themselves at a school so situated. The same poverty and its attendant indifference acts in many cases to prevent their seizing the opportunities for instruction at all, even during the intervals between the periods of employment, in themselves of slight profit.

Great ignorance, if it does not prevail, is at least to be met with, where no special pains are taken to discover it. It is quite common to meet with boys engaged in farms who cannot read or write. The unity of God, a future state, the number of months in the year, are matters not universally known. These instances, not occurring in neglected districts, but about large villages and in the agricultural population near towns, where opportunities for instruction existed, show not only that there are those who do not seek education, but that they are the persons to whom the ordinary knowledge and convictions of society do not find their way, unless imparted by the regular method of school teaching, and who, in consequence, if they do not obtain such direct

instruction, are not taught and humanized by the numerous influences which act upon others. Where the children, however, are sent to school, the same spirit of indifference exaggerates the effects of all real hindrances, as it leads to any excuse for non-attendance—the most trifling profit or inconvenience. It is said that it is a matter which requires much care and attention to obtain a regular attendance even at Sunday schools. In this respect the lower orders are situated very differently from those in the middle and upper classes of society, who see clearly the benefits and necessity of an education, and oblige their children to pursue it steadily, though, of course, they cannot enforce earnestness and real application. This is naturally the case with a class in society who have had an education, know from experience what it produces, and are, besides, directed by a steady public opinion, which commands them in this as in other matters of life. But the poor, who have perhaps had no education themselves, have no individual conviction of the degree and kind of benefit which it produces, and for public opinion amongst their own class, as, from their isolated mode of life, it has a feebler effect, comparatively speaking, on all points, so on this it has scarcely an existence. It could arise only from definite views of life or common hopes of social advancement and success, such as those who live in doubt as to to-morrow's bread hardly attain to. As they exist from hand to mouth in the ordinary needs of life, they are not likely to be very prospective in their weighing and providing for its advantages. They are directed, therefore, mainly by the casual influences which happen to surround them; in some cases, the influence which arises from personal respect—the influence of their superiors; in other cases, that arising from personal affection—the influence of their children. This last consideration explains the statement of many schoolmasters, that those who are most averse to learning obtain the most frequent leaves of absence for labour. It is a consideration of some importance, because, in point of fact, it shows how much depends upon the scholar's own inclination, and the interest or weariness which he may feel in the acquisition of knowledge. Mr. Sankie, the curate of Farnham, says—

It is very difficult to retain the boys of the agricultural labourers at school after 11 or 12; and before their attainment of that age they take frequent leaves of absence in order that they may labour. It has struck me, however, that the regularity of the attendance depends much upon the inclination of the children themselves, and their interest in what is taught, and in the manner of teaching. Where they come irregularly and are withdrawn early they soon forget what they have known. Until within the last six months I should have made the same remark with respect to the difficulty of retaining the girls at school as I have now offered with regard to the boys, but at present the upper class in the girls' school consists chiefly of pupils 13 years old; this has not been the case for six years. The present schoolmistress has but recently held that situation; she is effective and intelligent.

The shorter the period which necessity will allow for the education of the agricultural child, the more important does his degree of interest and co-operation become from the earliest moment. Such as can prolong their education to a later period of life, may outlive the effects of the preliminary indifference or disgust which they may have felt towards their instruction; but the poor have hardly time to repair a single step over which they have loitered or been misled. It cannot be doubted, however, that it is a part of the good teaching to engage and amuse the attention, and so far as indifference is a cause for the premature desertion of the school, and unnecessary interruption, even though on the plea of employment, labour itself can be regarded as a secondary reason, brought into operation, in part, by causes on the part of the pupil, or by some inefficiency in the education itself.

It is not on this account to be inferred that agricultural employment does not, to a great extent, and without any concurrent influence, either from poverty or lack of interest on the part of child or parent, limit the time and opportunities for instruction. It not only does so, but that it should do so, is necessary in a pecuniary point of view, and indeed in an educational one also; for labour is the agriculturist's special education, as school is his general education. That such discipline is needful from an early period, seems undeniable, when we consider the accomplishments which he must possess in after-life, as well as the manner in which, at present, he is obliged to acquire them. We know the skill and exercise required to make a good swordsman,—to give the masterful use of a single weapon, either for war or amusement; none acquire this without practice; some, in spite of practice, never attain it. But the agriculturist, before he can claim work throughout the year, as an able-bodied labourer, must, especially in these counties where the cultivation is so varied, honestly profess the use of very many implements, which require a peculiar mode of handling, and, in spite of their more vulgar form and purposes, no inconsiderable skill to manage with effect. The spade, the scythe, the hoe, the axe, the sickle, the flail, the beck, the bagging-hook, and the other implements of husbandry,—all require a cunning and handicraft of their own, not exceedingly intricate nor finished, but differing from each other, none to be attained without practice, and all, if possible, to be possessed by one able-bodied man. The materials, too, upon which he is called upon to work, and the process of labour which he must perform upon them, differ in kind and number as much as the tools themselves. With all these there is the best and the worst way of dealing,—a right and wrong method,—so that their familiar accomplishment requires much practical address and discrimination. I was told by a very intelligent occupier of land, that the general skill of an able-bodied man decidedly increases so long as his strength lasts. For a man to turn his hand to all the works of the varying seasons, he must be

versatile and accomplished; and without this capability his occupation is not secure and steady.* As population increases, the labour of the field, in a purely agricultural district, becomes more and more a subject of competition, and consequently an exercise of adroitness, as well as of honesty and steady habits. When we add the peculiar manner in which all this ability must be attained, the necessity for an early apprenticeship becomes still clearer. The use of the different implements of husbandry in the most effective manner depends unquestionably upon general rules as much as the use of the sword and the musket. There is in the nature of things a flail exercise, and a scythe and plough exercise, as real though ruder than that of less peaceful weapons; but as the use of these instruments has never been analyzed, the novice is not drilled and instructed in their management; he must learn entirely by experience,—by his own mistakes and success. The knowledge which he obtains, too, is of the same nature,—not imparted generally and together, but snatched up piecemeal and imperceptibly, resulting entirely from familiar intercourse with the subject, and inured so directly into his practical habits as to take often no intellectual form at all. His powers of imitation are much needed; and as these last are in their fullest perfection at the early years of life, it is not entirely without reason, even as a matter of training, that he begins his labours as soon as the development of his bodily strength will permit him to do so.

In addition, however, to the effect which employment in labour may have in withdrawing the children from their education, or limiting the period of its continuance, there are perhaps other influences which, from the nature of the instruction on the one hand, and that of the employment on the other, somewhat increase its operation.

The secular education of the clown, where it proceeds beyond reading and writing, is often of a highly abstract kind. The worldly knowledge imparted at schools consists frequently of arithmetic only, an abstract science in itself, and as little as any which can be named imparting concrete or collateral information. If digested and understood, it involves accurate and consequential reasoning, and has a value apart from its applicability to the after-course of life as a discipline to the reasoning faculties. But in proportion as the technical rules which are based on this reasoning are accurately known, in the same degree can the reasoning itself be added and the discipline sacrificed. Its very perfection

* From a small tract, not published, I extract the amounts of the yearly earnings of two labourers in Sussex, as kept by themselves, and preserved by their employer.

The earnings of A. were	£43	9	5½
The earnings of B. were	49	13	6

The employer explains the difference by adding—A. is a fair specimen of an agricultural labourer, and was some days ill. B. was the best workman in my employ, physically strong, and could turn his hands to all kinds of work as the seasons drew round.

as an exercise of the faculties furnishes a temptation to shrink from it ; and its perfection as an existing science, embodied into rules, offers an opportunity of doing so. It must be a skilful master who will seize the rule as an opportunity to disclose the *rationale* of the process, and engage the faculties of the pupil instead of using it as a *memoria technica*, by which an act of reasoning may be converted into a trick of recollection. For this reason it is perhaps more liable than any other subject to be learned imperfectly ; and on account of the imperfect learning, to be rapidly forgotten.

This danger, arising from its abstract nature, is highly increased if the practical course of life do not so harmonize with the nature of the education as virtually to assist, while it seems to interfere with it.

Now the employment in agriculture, *i. e.*, the special education of the agriculturist, is of a purely practical and material kind, and furnishes a discipline the most opposite to the formal education of school. Here he lives in a world entirely material and sensible, acts upon it by material means, and receives from his conversation with it an education of the muscles and senses, and to a certain degree of the understanding and imagination, but in the most unconnected and least intellectual form. There is nothing in the practical occupation of the youth to give new animation to the knowledge which he may have acquired, or even to sustain it in the shape in which it may have been imparted, or to keep it in exercise as a mere practical instrument for the purpose of life. The employment of the artisan is different ; he is engaged in scenes of commerce, and opportunities recur hourly for the use and application of what he has learned. Education, spreading, as it has done, from the town to the country, has transferred its subjects from the mechanic to the agriculturist, but it has not met with practical interest so congenial to its character. The employment of the agriculturist does not in the same way invite the application of the knowledge which is imparted. It gives, therefore, no new interest to the instruction while it is going forward, and it often overlays it instead of expanding it when it is over. Interruption of school instruction by labour so becomes a pure hindrance instead of a relaxation and a zest ; and its discontinuance, except in very uncommon cases, is disuse of what has been imparted. There is such a distance between the school education and the education of life that it is not to be wondered at if, in the absence of steady teaching, or the most earnest perseverance on the part of the scholar, it is too commonly forgotten.

Owing to these combined causes, and to the recent spread of education, while the greatest differences are to be observed amongst those who have nominally enjoyed the same advantages, the elder boys appear the most deficient in school education ; while boys are found in good schools to whom the simpler rules of arithmetic

are familiar at nine or ten, it is a rare thing to meet with a working lad of fifteen who is moderately versed in them. Many of that age who have professed an attendance on national or other schools for two, three, or four years earlier in life, are ignorant of the merest elements.

The religious instruction imparted in earlier years seems often to meet with a fate similar to that of the arithmetic, though not the same. What is lost in arithmetic is purely and absolutely forgotten ; but the doctrinal truths of religion, and such few historical facts as they necessarily imply, pass away differently. The ideas themselves, as of a much more complicated nature than those of arithmetic, remain in part, and are lost in part. Where, therefore, the ear has forgotten the exact form of words in which the truths were conveyed, all is error and distortion. The impressions are sufficiently obliterated to lose their meaning, yet remain so as to be capable of some kind of combination which is effected by guess-work. The ignorance of arithmetic forgotten is ignorance : the ignorance of religious truth forgotten is confusion and error. In both cases the salt of knowledge has lost its savour, and indeed its form ; in one, however, it has evaporated ; in the other it has effloresced into shapes often painfully grotesque.

As comparatively few seem to have received any regular instruction of a narrative or descriptive kind, such as history or geography, which would assist the memory by the imagination, or the attention by the curiosity and love of incident which are strong in children, I had slight opportunity of observing how far such subjects might be more easily learned and retained by boys employed in labour, though not otherwise connected specially with their mode of life.

If, however, the school education is crippled by the practical employment which encroaches on it, the practical employment itself very much loses its educational character by the want of a preliminary instruction of some kind, which might have explained its lessons,—or at least so stimulated the faculties as generally to awaken their interest in the subject which it brings before them. As the actual dealing with the physical world has not been preceded by any hints as to its general laws and properties, and is not attended by an intelligent curiosity to ascertain them, the most familiar and daily intercourse fails to convey knowledge concerning it of a coherent kind.

The agricultural labourer spends his life amongst the works of nature, possesses much manual skill, a quick sight, a faithful and exact memory (as all must know who have been in the habit of hearing him examined), an observation by no means naturally inert, yet his knowledge has hardly any form or shape ; and of the laws of the natural, and vegetable, and mineral world, which he daily sees and handles, he is ignorant. Superstition (the result here, at least, of ignorance) still lurks among the labouring classes

in these counties. The belief in charms for the healing of bodily hurts is not uncommon; faith in the same means of fertilizing the ground and trees is said to exist; that in witchcraft has hardly expired*—follies which may become perilous, and which an intelligent insight into the material world must mainly contribute to remove. The physical and sanitary condition, too, of this class, to which modern civilization is giving so much attention, is not lightly affected by the same circumstances. Many efforts are now being made by agricultural and other societies throughout these counties to give to the agricultural housewife habits of cleanliness in the management of her cottage interior and gardens, by prizes and other artificial encouragements. These may effect something, as they may establish habits which will not wear out with the occasion; but the most direct and enduring spring of practical habits is the knowledge and conviction of good or evil to arise from them; and in this respect an intelligent acquaintance with the common physical laws would do much to remove the evils of their physical condition. Gross waste in economy of food and clothing, or impurity of dwellings and persons, could hardly exist together with an ordinary knowledge of the nature and properties of the air and vegetable matter to the functions of the skin and lungs. The rich can perhaps indeed dispense with these acquisitions better than the poor, because their more delicate organs, habituated to refined life, test the poisons of effluvia and filth with a precision almost chemical, and their wealth enables them to command the intelligence of others to free them from the annoyance. But the organs of the poor are not startled by such nuisances; they need to be convinced by knowledge of the mischief which will result, and by knowledge in a great measure to provide the means of avoiding it. The low position of the agricultural labourer in the social scale confronts him so close in this respect, as well as others, with the material world, that he must owe to his own personal resources the chief management and use of it.

APPRENTICES.

In one or two districts, as I had sometimes found a difficulty in obtaining a list of the apprentices bound within the Union, I applied personally to the overseers of the several parishes, and to the magistrates' clerks for information on the subject.

Hollingbourne Union, near Maidstone.

I took the evidence of the clerk to the magistrates who had signed the indentures of apprentices, bound in a very large district,

* I was informed credibly of a very substantial farmer in the north-east of Kent, who, within a few years, used to arrange scythes in a particular order, around his stables, to secure his horses from witchcraft.

in the neighbourhood of Maidstone, which was to the following effect.

That the number of parish apprentices bound in the thirty parishes comprised in the eastern division of the Lathe of Aylesford, within the last ten years, has been very small, amounting to little more than one in the course of the year, and that a very slender proportion of these have been the children of agricultural labourers. That the most strict inquiries have always been made previous to the binding. That a premium varying from 10*l.* to 25*l.* has usually been given. That the apprentices have commonly been cripples. That no case within the deponent's recollection has occurred in which an apprentice had applied either to complain of ill usage, or to be discharged from his indentures. That apprenticeship in husbandry has become quite obsolete.

In addition to obtaining this information, I visited an apprentice, a cripple, the son of an agricultural labourer, who had been bound by a neighbouring parish to a tailor in the town of Maidstone. His term had nearly expired, and there was a temporary difference between him and his master, owing to which he had been lately refused permission to dine at the same table with his master's family. The youth, however, stated that he had been well treated, sufficiently taught, properly fed, and had no general complaints to make.

Tonbridge Union.

In this Union, it appears that only three apprentices have been bound within the last five years; one now out of his time, and earning his livelihood, after an apprenticeship to a shoemaker, without a premium, in which he is said to have been well treated. Another, still serving his apprenticeship at a shoemaker's, with a parish premium of 10*l.*, whose treatment is also said to be good; and a third, also bound to a shoemaker, with a similar premium, and who has left his master, not from ill treatment, but owing to a disease of the hip-joint, which has made him chargeable to the parish.

Dorking and Guildford.

In this Union, I made personal inquiries of the overseers, in one or two agricultural parishes, in the neighbourhood of Dorking. The assistant-overseer of the parish of Capel deposed that no son of an agricultural labourer had for some years past been apprenticed by the parish officers. The overseer of the parish of Ockley also deposed that the practice of binding apprentices was very rare, and that no such case had occurred within his recollection.

By a communication from the overseer of the parish of Newdegate, it appears that one boy only has been apprenticed within five years, from that parish, to a tailor, with a premium of 20*l.*

I also examined the clerk to the justices for the Hundred of Wootton, who stated that the practice of binding apprentices by the parish had of late years much decreased; but that there were charitable funds at the disposal of the parish officers of Dorking which had rarely been applied to the apprenticeship of agriculturists. That he could not call to mind any case of parish apprentices complaining of their masters; but that five or six instances had occurred within his recollection in which the masters had preferred charges against their apprentices, two of whom had been accused of drunkenness, and one charged with drunkenness and general desertion of his work; that apprentices were very well treated by their masters.

I add a list of apprentices bound in 26 parishes in the Union of Guildford, in the county of Surrey, which furnishes proof of the degree in which the practice prevails at present. The parish officers of Send and Ripley have the command of charitable funds for the purpose of putting out apprentices, a circumstance which of course acts to perpetuate the practice. It may be observed that the premiums are large, and that very nearly one-half of the apprentices so bound are under masters in their native parish.

In the 15 parishes comprised in the Union of Cuckfield, only one apprentice appears to have been bound by the parish officers during the last five years. In this instance the apprentice was an orphan, and was indentured, with a premium of 8*l.*, to his uncle, a carpenter, living at Brighton, by the parish of Hurst Pierpoint.

In 12 parishes comprised in the Union of Rye, three agriculturist children appear to have been put out by the parochial officers; the account of them is, upon the whole, not very favourable; two were apprenticed to shoemakers at the age 16, without premium. The master of one has become insolvent, and the youth lately worked elsewhere, with his master's consent, and for his master's benefit, who still supports him, but the young man has applied to have his indentures cancelled.

The other apprentice has within the last two years absconded, and the deponent could not say what had become of him.

The third, who had been bound during the present year to the sea-service, without premium, but with an outfit of clothes, had since absconded with his wearing apparel, estimated at 7*l.* by the captain of the vessel.

I have, &c.,

HENRY HALFORD VAUGHAN.

Devereux Chambers, 15th March, 1843.

APPRENTICES bound in Thirty Parishes of the GUILDFORD UNION, within the last Eight Years.

HUNDRED OF BLACKHEATH.

Date of Indenture.	Name of Apprentice.	Name of Person to whom Bound or Assigned.	His or her Trade.	His or her Residence.	Term of the Apprenticeship or Assignment.	Premium or Assignment-Fee.	Name of Parish.
1836, 27th February .	William Mason . .	Richard Carter . .	Blacksmith . .	{ West Hors- ley . . } Shalford . .	Till 21	£. 20	Albury.
„ 13th August . .	George Carpenter . .	Richard Clarke . .	Blacksmith . .	Shalford . .	Till 21	15	Albury.
1841, 11th December .	Charles Padwine . .	Henry Potter . . .	Cordwainer . .	Albury . .	Till 21	10	Alford. Bramley. Cranley. Dunsfold. Ewhurst. Hascomb. Saint Martha. Shalford.
1834, 15th February .	John Harris . . .	John Potter . . .	Cordwainer . .	{ St. Mary's, Guildford }	Till 21	20	Shere. Wonersh.

HUNDRED OF WOKING.

1836, 9th April . . .	William Truslen. .	Stephen Keene . .	Cordwainer . .	Compton .	Until 21	12	Ash and Normandy. East Clandon. West Clandon. East Horsley. West Horsley. Merrow. Ockham. Pirbright.
1836, 13th February .	Daniel Stenning. .	Samuel Hook . .	Cordwainer . .	{ St. Nicho- las, Guild- ford . . }	Till 21	30	} Send and Ripley.
22nd October . . .	Emma Wools . .	Mary Buckland .	Mantua-Maker .	Send . .	2 years	20	
1837, 20th May . . .	William Faulkner .	Richard Booker .	Cordwainer . .	Cobham . .	Till 21	30	
1838, 10th February .	William Norman .	William Wilkins .	Cordwainer . .	{ Sunbury, Middlesex . }	Till 21	40	
16th June . . .	Charles Sanderson .	William White . .	Cooper . . .	Cobham . .	Till 21	30	
1838, 1st December .	Thomas Elstone . .	Henry Pendry . .	Blacksmith . .	Chertsey . .	Till 21	25	
1840, 11th January .	Edward Pantlin . .	Thomas Pautlin .	Carpenter . .	Ripley . .	3 years from 1st Jan. 1840.	10	
25th January . . .	William Stevens. .	John Hills . . .	Cordwainer . .	Kingston .	Till 21	40 30 25 20 25 35	
30th May. . .	Henry White . . .	William Briggs . .	Tailor . . .	Richmond .	Till 21		
27th June . . .	James Wakeford .	Thomas Greenfield .	Grocer . . .	Ripley . .	Till 20		
1841, 30th October .	James Heady . . .	Thomas Taylor . .	Blacksmith . .	Ripley . .	Till 21		
1842, 11th June . . .	George Steer. . .	William Wade . .	Cordwainer. .	Ripley . .	Till 21		
3rd September . . .	William Faggotter .	Richard Lee. . .	Blacksmith . .	Cobham . .	Till 21		
14th October . . .	Francis Bird. . .	John Pledger . .	Blacksmith . .	Ripley . .	Till 21		
						Stoke.	

APPRENTICES bound in Thirty Parishes, &c.—*continued.*

Date of Indenture.	Name of Apprentice.	Name of Person to whom Bound or Assigned.	His or her Trade.	His or her Residence.	Term of the Apprenticeship or Assignment.	Premium or Assignment-Fee.	Name of Parish.
1835, 3rd January . .	James Hedger . .	James Adams . .	Blacksmith . .	Wanborough	Until 21	14	Wanborough. Windleshean. Wesley. Woking. Worplesdon.
TOWN OF GUILDFORD.							
1839, 16th December .	George Slade . .	James Norris . .	{ Bricklayer and Plasterer . . }	St. Mary, Is- lington, in the County of Mid- dlesex . .	Till 21	8	Holy Trinity. Saint Mary. Saint Nicholas.

DEPOSITIONS ANALYZED

As to Sorts of Work, Hours of Work, Hours of Meals, Wages of Women, and Children employed in Agriculture.

Terms used in the *Table of Labour* in the Hop-Gardens,
Opening the Hills.

A hole is made, two feet square and two feet deep, that the earth may be sufficiently loosened to that depth; but if it has been previously trenched, it will be completely so, and in this instance not necessary. Into each of these holes three nursery-plants are put; the mould, having been finely pulverized by the spade, is thrown gently in about the roots, which are to be carefully spread out, and the plants raised up above the natural level of the ground, so that a hill may be hereafter formed about them; the hole is then filled up to its proper height with the mould that came out of it. In the second year, whenever the season is at all kindly, either in the month of February or beginning of March the hills are opened in order to get at the lower part of the last year's shoots, which it is intended now to prune; being provided, therefore, with a good pruning-knife, a rag-stone, and a whet-stone (the former being the sort with which scythes are sharpened in order to give them an edge, and the latter the blue stone which smooths the edge), cut off the old shoots, clean and smooth, within one or two inches of the main stem, and all the suckers quite close to it; the soil is then replaced sufficiently to cover the wounds, in order to prevent the air from affecting them just before the plant begins to spindle.

Malcolm's Agriculture of Surrey.

Poling the Hops.

About the month of April, and before the plant begins to shoot, a pole, varying in size according to the age and vigour of the plant, is inserted forcibly into the ground to a depth sufficient to give it a secure hold upon the soil, and so provide the growing bine with an axis and support for its future growth during the year. The number of poles corresponding with that of the plants on each hill is not always the same. To fix them calls for considerable muscular exertion, and is invariably performed by the man, who obtains assistance, however, from his wife, his son, and sometimes his daughter.

Tying the Hops

Is a process carried on from the moment that the bine has shot from the ground, in order to assist the natural instinct of the plant to embrace the artificial prop which the pole offers, and climb towards the summit in spite of wind and bad weather. This task is committed invariably to women through Surrey, Sussex, and Kent. The woman is paid for her labour by the acre; and her family, if of a competent age, lend their aid, and materially increase the extent of ground which she can safely undertake to attend to.

Shimming, Breaking or Nidging, or Nidgeting the Hops,

Is effected by an implement called the shim, break, nidge, or nidget, which, during the summer months, is occasionally drawn by horse through the hop-gardens and between the hills, to loosen the earth and remove the weeds. Boys of various ages are made use of to lead and direct the horse or horses, which must, in the narrow spaces through which they are driven, be held in strict command.

Horsing the Hops.

When the hops reach the top of the poles, it is a common occupation with the women to fasten the bines which may have been blown off, again to their places; this is called "horsing" the hops, and is so named from a kind of ladder which they mount for the purpose.

Chog-Clearing.

Taking from the hop-gardens the chips and broken ends of poles and other remnants which may cover the ground.

In the neighbourhood of *Tunbridge Wells*, in *Kent*, WOMEN, are employed in the hop-grounds at—

Opening the Hills.

Women do this sometimes, but seldom; it is heavy ground to work on.
Mr. W.

This is usually done by men as day-work; sometimes they contract to do it by the acre; in this case the wife assists. It is hard work for a woman; the moving the ground is heavy. *Mr. L.*

Hours of Work, at day-work from eight to six.

Hours of Meals, one for dinner.

Wages. In husband's task, commonly 4*d.* per hundred; if hired, 10*d.* per day.

Poling.

She carries and delivers the poles to her husband: sometimes hired.
Hours. Above.

Wages. Task of husband; commonly from 16*d.* to 18*d.* per hundred.

Tying.

A woman will take generally two acres or two acres and a-half. Her trouble depends on the weather: if it is boisterous weather she has to tie them over and over again, as the wind blows them from the pole, or in a wrong direction, away from the sun. She can tie about two acres and a-half, for the first time, in a week; she must visit them to re-bind them every two or three days till they grow out of her reach; this takes place, on an average, in five or six weeks. *L.*

Hours, uncertain.

Wages, about 9*s.* per acre.

Hop-Picking

Furnishes occupation for women and children of all ages. The fruit is culled and dropped into bins which stand in the gardens.

Hours of Work vary according to circumstances, the size of the oast, and the despatch with which the hop can be dried; for it is alike detrimental to the condition of the fruit that it remain on the bine after it is ripe, or in the bin after it is plucked. A woman can pick rather more in a day than a man.

Chog-Clearing.

Hours, see above.

Wages, 8*d.* to 10*d.*

Stripping and Stacking the Poles.

Women assist their husbands at this immediately after the hops are picked. The poles are stripped and stacked on the ground. This commonly lasts a fortnight. L.

Hours, as above.

Wages, task.

Rag-Chopping.

Work by which a manure is prepared for the hop-grounds it is carried on at home.

Wages, 7d. per hundred.

In the same district, Boys are frequently employed on labour in the Hop-gardens at—

Opening.

At this they help their fathers, or are occasionally hired.

Age. Begin at about 12 years old, and continue till 16 or 17. A stout boy of 12 can do this. W.

Hours of Work, day-work, from six to six.

Hours of Meals, for breakfast half an hour, for dinner an hour.

Wages, according to the size and age; at day-work, for the elder 1s., for the younger 6d.

Poling.

At this they help the father of the family, as the woman does by laying out the poles.

Age, begin at about 8 or 9.

Hours of Work, discretionary.

Hours of Meals, discretionary.

Wages, included in those of father. Sometimes they are hired by the farmer to assist the man at 4d. to 6d., according to age.

Shimming or Breaking.

The man holds the break, the boy drives the team.

Age, begins at 12. He must be 12 years old to have command over the horse and keep him in proper course. There are six feet between hill and hill. W.

Hours of Work, } as above. See day-work.

Hours of Meals, }

Wages, 6d. per day.

Picking.

For that they are paid as women.

GIRLS.

Girls do little or nothing but pick hops.

W.

In the Hop-Gardens around Maidstone, WOMEN are similarly employed at—

Opening;

Which is done by the piece more commonly here than by the day, at 4d. to 6d. per hundred. The women assist the men. The woman opens, the man cuts. Mr. C.

Hours of Work, discretionary. Day-work eight to five or six.

Meals, discretionary.

Wages, husband's task.

Poling;

At which women sometimes assist the husbands, who contract to pole at from 1s. to 1s. 3d. per hundred. C.

Branching.

Hours of Work, }
Meals, and } as above
Wages, }

Tying.

A woman would undertake four acres if she had no family. Her children assist her. In point of fact she takes about three acres, as the competition for labour is considerable. C.

Hours of Work, }
Hours of Meals, } as above.

Wages, from 10s. to 12s. per acre.

Picking.

Hours of Work. The picking is usually continued for 12 hours in the day.

Hours of Meals.

Wages. In an average year 1s. is given for seven bushels, and in the same year a good picker could pick 14 bushels. C.

Boys are employed in—

Hop-Digging,

Or digging the hop-gardens in December. Men are hired to dig by the acre, and get their boys to assist them. They earn from 18s. to 1*l.* per acre. A man and boy will dig about an acre in the week. The man will dig three times as much as the boy.

Age, about 12 years old.

Hours of Work, discretionary. The ordinary day's work of a boy is six to six.

Hours of Meals. The ordinary meal hours are half an hour for breakfast, an hour for dinner.

Opening;

At which they assist their parents. The man cuts, the woman opens, the boy closes up again.

Age, about 12.

Hours of Work, }
Hours of Meals, } see above.

Wages, father's task.

Poling.

Assist the parents. A man, with his wife and one boy, will pole about four hundred in the day.

Age, 9 or 10.

Hours of Work, }
Hours of Meals, } see above.

Wages, as above.

Picking.

See women's work.

Stacking';

Which is contracted for commonly by the piece, and not, as the pulling and stripping, by the day. Three shillings is commonly given per acre. Boys do not assist if the stacking is contracted for at the time of the picking. A boy and man will do rather more than an acre in the day, C.

Rag-Cutting.

Boys under 14 are not allowed to do this. A lad must be of good size

and strength, and between 15 and 18, to cut two hundred-weight in a day.

Hours of Meals and Work, as above.

Wages, 7d. per hundred.

Pole Shaving.

Wages depend on the size of the pole. A woman may earn 1s. per day.

GIRLS assist their parents at Poling, Opening, Tying, Branching, Picking.

Age, about 12.

Hours, as women.

Within ten miles of the town of *Maidstone* are many thousand acres of Orchard-Ground, which furnish employment to WOMEN and CHILDREN.

WOMEN are employed in—

Clearing the Orchards ;

In picking up wood and stones from the orchards in January and February. Men are hired sometimes to clear and dig, in which case they get their family to clear it. Sometimes women and children are employed to clear it before it is ready for the men to dig.

Mr. C.

Hours of Work, eight to five.

Meals, one hour.

Wages, 1s.

Gathering

Summer fruit : gooseberries, currants : cherries in June, lasts two months.

Hours of Work, seven to six.

Meals, one hour.

Wages, 1s. 3d.

Autumn fruit : filberts and plums at the end of August.

Wages, 1s.

Apple-picking from the ground.

Wages, 1s.

Packing Apples.

Hours of Work, eight to five.

Wages, 1s.

Boys are employed on the Orchard-Grounds in—

Clearing.

Age, 12 to 14.

Hours of Work, six to six.

Hours of Meals, one and a-half.

Digging.

Boys dig with their fathers, who contract to dig by the acre. A man and boy of between 12 and 14 will dig an acre in the week ; a man by himself will do rather more than three-quarters of an acre in such time.

Age, 11 to 14.

Hours of Work, commonly six to six.

Meals.

Wages, father's task.

Hoeing.

The boy assists his father in hoeing the orchards during the month of June. A man gets 5s. for an acre; and a man and boy can hoe three acres and a-half. *Mr. Cogger.*

Age, 12.

Meals and Work, as above.

Gathering Summer fruit: gooseberries, currants, cherries. Autumn fruit: filberts and plums.

Age, 12.

Hours of Work, six to six.

Wages, 6d.

Picking Apples.

Hours of Work, six to six.

Wages, 6d.

GIRLS are also employed at—

Clearing, and Gathering gooseberries, currants, and filberts.

Age, 12; seldom hired.

On the arable and meadow lands in the Weald of *Kent*, about the neighbourhood of *Tunbridge Wells*, WOMEN find their chief agricultural employment in the following work—

Couching at Michaelmas and Spring, Pulling Weeds, Hoeing Weeds in the corn in Summer.

Many farmers do not have their corn weeded.

Getting and Dressing Turnips—Hay-making.

Hours of Work, eight to six.

Hours of Meals, one hour for dinner.

Wages, 10d. to 1s.

Shoving the Lent Corn.

Women are employed in raking the corn for the cart. This is never done to the wheat, but only to the barley and oats. It is called shoving. *L.*

Hours of Work, eight to six.

Meals, one hour.

Wages, 1s.

Reaping.

The man contracts to reap at so much an acre, at from 10s. to 12s., according to the crop, and gets his wife to help him. *W.*

The wife uses the sickle as the man does; but in case he uses the bagging-hook, which cuts the corn closer to the ground, she ties the corn into sheaves after him. *L.*

Hours of Work, from seven or eight till six, at discretion.

Hours of Meals, see above.

In the same district BOYS are commonly employed on the land, as follows, at—

Couching, at 8 years old.

Day-work is from six to six, or as long as it is light.

Wages, 4d. to 6d.

Meals, one hour and a-half.

Hoeing and Hand-weeding in the Corn.

Age, from 8 to 14.*Hours of Work*, six to six.*Wages*, 3*d.* to 6*d.**Meals*, as above.

Hay-making.

Age, 12 to 15.*Hours of Work*, as above.*Meals*, as above.*Wages*, 6*d.* to 8*d.*

Reaping.

Age. Boys begin to do this at 12 years of age. A boy at this time of life may reap about a quarter of an acre in two days, while a man would be reaping three-quarters of an acre in the same time.

Hours of Work, 4 A.M. to 8 P.M.

The man and boy go to work generally about 4 o'clock, and leave off at dark. The common rule is, "you should not leave off reaping till you can see a star." It is hard work for men and boys. Boys do not use the bagging-hook, for which work the man gets about 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* more by the acre than for reaping it. In this case the women bind, and boys bind or make the band. A boy ought to be 13 or 14 years old to bind. Boys are sometimes hired to reap by others.

W.

Hours of Meals, discretionary.*Wages*, task-work of father, or 10*d.* a-day, if hired.

Driving Team.

Harrowing,

When the land is sown broad-cast.

Age, 10.

They work from six to six, with the usual hours for meals. It is hard work, for the boys are young, and the land rough.

W.

Work, six to six.*Meals*, hour and a-half.*Wages*, 4*d.* to 6*d.*

Ploughing.

Age, 13 to 17.*Hours of Work*, six to six.

The team does not work so long, and when the team leaves off boys are set to odd jobs, as cleaning lodges.

Waters.

Stacking in the Yard, and Mowing in the Barn.

Age, 12.*Work*, six to six.*Meals*, one hour and a-half.*Wages*, 4*d.* to 6*d.*

Planting and getting Potatoes.

Dressing and getting Turnips.

Age, 10.*Meals and Work*, as above.*Wages*, 4*d.* to 6*d.*

GIRLS under 15 are very rarely employed except at—

Stone-picking—Potato-picking—Potato-planting—Bean-dropping

—Hay-making.

Age, 13.*Hours of Work*, eight to six.*Meals*, one hour.

Employment of WOMEN and CHILDREN on the Arable Land in the *Isle of Thanet*.

WOMEN are employed at—

Spudding and hoeing weeds in the corn.

Their dress, after the corn gets high, is inconvenient.

Mr. Rammell.

Hours of Work, seven to five.

Meals, one hour.

Wages, 10*d.*

Hay-making.

Hours of Work, seven to five.

Meals, one hour.

Wages, 10*d.*

Reaping.

Women are employed assisting the father of the family at reaping: he contracts to reap by the acre. *Mr. R.*

The man binds, not the woman: she is not strong enough. *Mr. R.*

Hours of Work, discretionary.

Meals, discretionary.

Wages, husband's task.

A woman may earn 1*s.* 6*d.* a-day.

Mr. R.

Turnip-pulling and topping.

Hours of Work,
Meals,
Wages, } as above.

The women are paid for the turnips by the acre; the woman's earnings depend upon the crop. She is paid from 10*s.* to 12*s.* an acre, and may earn about 10*d.* a-day.

Stone-picking.

Thistle-picking.

Hours of Work, seven to five.

Meals, one hour.

Wages, 10*d.*

Boys are employed at—

Couching.

Not commonly done.

Age, 8 to 12.

Hours of Work, six to six, or during daylight in short days.

Hours of Meals, one hour and a-half.

Hoeing and Spudding the Corn.

For this their labour is in greater request than at any other time. We often desire more labour than we get of this kind. *R.*

Age, 9 to 15.

Hours of Work, } as above.

Hours of Meals, }
Wages, 6*d.* to 10*d.*

Hay-making.

Age, 9 to 12.

Hours of Work, } as above.

Wages, 6*d.*

Reaping.

Boys of all ages, from 6 years old and upwards, will do something in this way, and earn something for their father,—3*d.* a-day, certainly. If the scythe is used, boys only make the bands. A man and boy will bring down nearly half an acre in the day. I think a man will do between four-sixths and five-sixths of the whole. The average price per acre is 13*s.* R.

Age, 6, upwards.

Seven or eight till dusk.

Stacking.

Age, 12 and 13.

Work and Meals, as above.

Wages, 1*s.*

Picking Potatoes in aid of father, who is paid by the sack.

Getting Turnips in aid of mother, who is paid by the acre.

Age, 8 to 12.

Hours, as above.

Wages, from 5*d.* to 7*d.*

Bird-tending.

Age, 8.

Hours, as above.

Wages, 4*d.*

Threshing.

Age, 8. At this age he is fit to help his father in the barn a little at threshing; for this he is not paid by the day; but as his father is paid by the quarter, he gets his son to assist him; and I think that a boy of this age may earn for his father as much as 5*d.* in the day. Mr. R.

Sometimes it appears he assists at the threshing machine, which goes on by night as well as by day. Orton.

Hours of Work, daylight.

Driving Team, Plough, and Harrow.

Age, 13.

Hours, daylight.

Wages, 8*d.*

At Sheepfolds;

Cutting, picking, and carrying Turnips.

Age, 9 to 12.

Hours, as above.

Wages, 6*d.*

GIRLS are employed occasionally at—

Weeding the Corn;

Not often.

Stone-picking, Turnip-topping;

Not often.

Reaping and Tending Birds;

Very seldom.

Girls do very little work either in the corn or grass lands. Mr. R.

Their wages are at the rate of from 4*d.* to 8*d.* a-day.

In *Central Surrey*, about the neighbourhood of *Dorking*, WOMEN are employed in acriculture at—

Couching with a rake.

It is too wet in the winter to couch : there is opportunity for it in the spring.

Hours of Work, eight to five.

Meals, one hour.

Wages, 1s.

Thistle-spudding, Pulling and Hoeing Weeds in the Corn.

Hours, as above.

Wages, 1s.

Hay-making.

Hours, as above.

Wages, 1s. and beer.

Reaping.

Women reap for their husbands ; the work is contracted for at from 11s. to 14s. an acre.

Hours, eight to five or six.

Heaping the Lent Corn.

Hours, eight to six, or later.

Wages, 15d. to 18d.

In the same district Boys are employed at—

Couching, by rake.

Age, 10 to 12.

Hours of Work, six to six.

Meal, one hour and a-half.

Wages, 7d.

Hoeing and Hand-weeding Corn, Thistle-spudding.

Age, 8 to 14.

Hours, as above.

Wages, 5d. to 8d.

Hay-making.

Age, 8.

Hours, as above.

Wages, 6d.

Reaping.

Age, 10 or 11. Assist father, who reaps at from 11s. to 14s. an acre ; use the bagging-hook as well as the man.

Heaping Lent Corn, Stacking Corn.

Age, 12 or 13.

Hours, as above

Wages, 8d.

Threshing ;

Very seldom.

In the same district, Boys are employed at—

Hand-weeding Corn, Hay-making, Stone-Picking, Potato-planting, Potato-picking, Bean-chopping.

Hours of Work, eight to five.

Meals, one hour.

On the Hop-gardens about *Farnham*, in *Surrey*, WOMEN are employed at—

Opening.

The men open, the women cut.

J. M. Payne, Esq.

Wages. The work is commonly contracted for at 7*s.* an acre; sometimes the woman is hired. *P.*

Poling.

Assist at this. The value of a woman's labour is rather more than a third of the man's. *P.*

Wages. The man usually works for about 10*s.* an acre. *P.*

Tying.

The woman and elder girls tie; a woman usually undertakes four acres. *P.*

Wages. For which she secures about 7*s.* an acre, and is allowed to take the superfluous bines which are cut off at the end of the period, and are usually worth about 3*s.* an acre. *P.*

Picking.

All hands assist at hop-picking.

Wages, the price varies from 1½*d.* to 6*d.* per bushel, according to the crop. *P.*

Rag-cutting.

Some women cut rags for manure, though this is more generally done by the men on rainy days. *P.*

Wages. 9*d.* is the average price per hundred. *P.*

Pole-shaving.

Some few women are employed in assisting their husbands in the woods. *P.*

WOMEN are also employed at—

Bean-setting, Potato-planting, Hay-making, Corn-weeding, Stone-picking.

Hours of Work, eight to four, or eight to five, with one hour for meals.
Wages, 8*d.*

Reaping.

During the corn-harvest, one-half of the hop-labourers migrate into the western parts of Sussex, to assist at the harvest in that country. The corn meanwhile is reaped in these parts by the men who remain, and the women whose husbands have left, who contract for the work by the acre. *P.*

Boys are employed at—

Opening.

Assist the men; usually their fathers.

Age, about 13.

Hours of Work, not fixed.

Meals. Usual day hours from 6 to 5, with half-an-hour for breakfast, one hour for dinner.

Poling.

Same.

Shimming, or Becking and Spudding, Hop-digging.

The shimming the hops by horse is not practised to a great extent, on account of the abundant population in this parish, except during the absence of the migratory labourers, and in this case chiefly by large farmers who hold corn-lands. The beck and spud, which are used manually, do the work of the shim. The work is very laborious compared with common agricultural work, and the same observation applies to all the work on hop-grounds which men perform.

Boys at every kind of labour on the hop-grounds will usually assist their fathers. *Mr. Payne.*

Age, about 13.

Hours, discretionary. See above.

Picking and Hiling Poles.

At this children assist the men and women. The work is generally undertaken by the men at 7s. per acre. The refuse bine is their perquisite in addition to the pay.

The age at which boys begin labour depends upon their strength and size. Some begin as early as 10 years old. They receive from 4d. to 8d. per day. *Mr. Thresher.*

It is not uncommon for small proprietors of hop-grounds to give a certain sum to a labourer to perform the whole annual work upon the ground. In this case the work of the women and children is increased. *Mr. P.*

GIRLS under 14 are not commonly employed on the Hop-grounds.

Mr. Payne.

SUSSEX.

In the neighbourhood of *Cuckfield*, in *Sussex*, WOMEN are employed in Agriculture at the following Works:—

Couching.

There is very little couching here, either at spring or Michaelmas. Women do it when necessary. *Mr. Wileman.*

Hours of Work, eight to six.

Wages, 10d.

Pulling Weeds, and Spudding Weeds in the Corn.

Hours of Work, } See above.

Meals,

Wages, 10d.

Hay-making.

Hours. See above.

Wages, 10d. to 1s.

Corn-raking.

Hours. See above

Wages, 1s. and some food.

Reaping and Binding.

They sometimes assist their husbands, and occasionally bind for them.

Hours, discretionary. See above.

Wages, husband's task.

Potato-picking ; Stone-picking.

Hours, as above.

Wages, 10d.

There are very few turnips in this country.

In the same neighbourhood Boys are employed at—

Couching.

Rarely practised.

Age, 8 to 12.

Wages, 3d. to 6d.

Hours of Work. Daylight during winter, and 12 hours at other times.

Meal Hours. Half an hour for breakfast, one hour for dinner.

Pulling and Spudding Weeds.

Boys are not commonly permitted to weed corn, but only clover and grass.

Mr. Wileman.

Age, 12.

Wages, 4d. to 6d.

Work and Meals. See above.

Hay-making.

In the hay-field boys are seldom hired : occasionally they are taken at 12 or 13.

Mr. Wileman.

Age, 12 or 13.

Wages, 8d.

Reaping.

Boys are taken to assist their father at about 10 or 11 years old. He is paid about 10s. an acre. The cutting begins at four : it is all reaped.

Age, 10 or 11.

Hours of Work, 4 A.M.—8 P.M.

Corn-Raking and Stacking.

Age, 10 or 11.

Hours and Meals, as above.

Wages, 6d., or a trifle more.

Driving Team.

Age, 10, at plough ; older at harrow.

Wages, 6d.

For harrowing he ought to be rather older, as he goes alone.

Mr. W.

A boy is eight hours in the field, and spends four more in waiting on the horses.

The hours for meals are not strictly settled. He takes them out of the twelve hours.

Mr. W.

Bird-scaring.

Very little of this.

Age, 7 or 8.

Wages, 3d. or 4d.

Threshing.

Occasionally assist the father. It is not uncommon for children as early as 8 or 9 years to assist their father at threshing. The father works at from 3s. 4d. to 4s. per quarter.

Hours, daylight.

Meals, discretionary.

Wages, task.

Hedging and Ditching.

At about 10 or 12 years a boy will often accompany his father at hedging and ditching.

Age, 10 or 12.

Hours, above.

Wages, father's task.

Cow-keeping, Turnip-getting, Stone-picking, Potato-picking, Potato-planting.

There are very few turnips here.

Age, 8.

Hours, six to six.

Meals, one hour and a-half.

Wages, 4d. and 6d.

GIRLS are employed occasionally in the same neighbourhood in Stone-picking, Potato-planting, Potato-picking, Bean-dropping, Hay-making.

Age, 9 to 14.

Wages, 4d. to 6d.

Sussex, near Rye.

In the Hop-gardens in the neighbourhood of *Rye* WOMEN are employed at—

Opening

Sometimes, but this is rare.

A woman's working hours are from eight to five.

Hours of Meals, one for dinner.

Poling.

Assist their husbands, who work for 2s. per hundred at four-pole work, six score to the hundred. *J. Smith, Esq.*

Clearing Chogs and Roots.

This takes place after the time of poling.

Wages, 6d. per acre.

Tying.

Wages, 8s. 6d. per acre for three-poled gardens, and from 10s. to 12s. for four-poled gardens.

A woman will take more or less, according to the size of her family. She is bound, according to the common understanding, to tie the bines at least three times to the pole on which they grow.

Branching.

Hours of Work, eight to five.

Hours of meals, one hour.

Wages, 10d. per day.

Horsing.

When the hops reach the top of the poles, it is a common occupation with the women to fasten the bines which may have been blown off again to their places. This is called "horsing" the hops, and is so named from a kind of ladder which they mount for the purpose.

J. Smith, Esq., of Rye.

Picking.

Hours of Work, uncertain.

Wages vary according to the crop; from $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ to $3d.$, or even $7d.$ per bushel. This last price is very rare. *Mr. S.*

Stripping and Stacking.

Assist husband, who works at from $6d.$ to $9d.$ per 100, six score measure. *Mr. S.*

Wages, husband's task.

Rag-chopping,

$8d.$ per cwt.

Pole-shaving,

According to the size of the poles.

In the Hop-gardens Boys are commonly employed as follows:—

Opening, Poling.

Assist the man at this.

Shimming, Stacking Poles, and Pole-shaving.

Sometimes as early as 9 years old.

At the shim, a young lad of this age goes with the fore-horse; an older lad with the hind one. *Sellman's Ev.*

Hours. At day-work from seven to five.

Meals, one hour.

Hop-digging.

They assist their fathers.

Age, 10 or 11.

I have a brother at hop-digging; he is 11 years old. *Hall.*

Hours. See above.

GIRLS are employed at

Clearing Chogs, Poling.

Assist father and mother.

Tying.

Assist.

Branching.

Paid $6d.$ per day.

Stacking.

Age, from 10 to 12.

Hours of Work, at day-work, eight to five.

Wages, $6d.$

Shaving Poles.

Paid by the 100, according to the size.

On the Corn-lands WOMEN are employed at—

Thistle-spudding in the Corn.

It is not customary for them to hoe either in corn or turnips.

Pulling and Trimming Turnips.

Hours of Work, eight to five.

Hours of Meals, one hour for dinner.

Wages, 8d. or 10d.

Shoving Barley and Oats ; Hay-making.

Hours of Work, eight to six and seven.

Hours of Meals, one hour.

Wages, 10d. to 1s.

Reaping and Binding.

Assist their husbands.

Stubble-raking.

Assist their husbands, who are paid from 2s. 3d. to 3s. per acre.

J. Smith, Esq.

Digging and Picking Potatoes.

A party of women undertake to dig and pick a cant of potatoes of a certain size. They divide the sum obtained amongst them. *J. Smith.*

Boys are employed on the Corn-Land at—

Couching.

Age, 8 to 10.

Hours of Work, seven to five, at day-work.

Meals, one hour for dinner.

Wages, 3d.

Pulling Weeds.

10 to 12.

Work and Meals, as above.

Wages, 4d. to 6d.

Bird-scaring.

Very little at sowing time.

Age, 8 to 12.

Wages, 4d. to 6d.

Hours, twelve to fourteen before harvest.

Hay-making.

Age, 10 to 12.

Hours of Work, seven to six, or longer.

4d. to 6d., and beer.

Reaping,

With father, who does the work at from 9s. to 14s. per acre.

Age, 10.

Hours of Work depend on the dew.

Hours of Meals, at discretion.

Stacking.

Age, 10 to 14.

Hours, as day-work.

Wages, 4d. to 6d.

Threshing.

With father.

Age, 10 or 12.*Hours*, as above, or during daylight.*Wages*, father's task.

Pulling and Trimming Turnips; Potato-picking.

Age, 8 to 10.*Wages*, 4d. to 6d.

They are sometimes hired by the man who digs potatoes, and are paid by the bushel.

GIRLS are employed on the Corn-Land at—

Tending Birds, Couching, Spudding and Weeding, Hand-weeding,
Hay-making.*Age*, 10 years.*Hours of Work*, eight to five, and at hay-making eight to six.

Reaping.

Assist their father.

Age, 9 or 10.*Hours of Work*, eight to six.

Attending at the Threshing-machine.

Not much used.

Age, 10.*General Wages*, from 8 to 10, 4d. per day; 10 to 12, 6d.; 12 to 15, 6d. to 8d.Boys are employed in the woods near *Tunbridge Wells*—

Faggot-cutting—Kiln Faggots.

Hours of Work, daylight.*Wages*, 2s. a hundred: a boy can cut about 50 in a day.

Pole-shaving.

Hours as above.Boys are employed near *Maidstone* in the woods—

Faggot-cutting, Pole-shaving.

Age, 12.*Hours* as above.*Wages*. Is paid from 6d. to 1s. per hundred; a boy of 12 may earn 6d. a-day. *Mr. C.*In the Weald of *Surrey*, below *Dorking*—

Wood-cutting.

Age, 9 or 10, *wages* 6d.; 12, *wages* 8d.; 15, *earn* 14d.*Hours of Work*, daylight.*Mr. Weller's Ev.*A handy boy of 11 may get 6d. a-day at wood-cutting. *Ede's Ev.*

Sussex, about *Rye*, towards *Northiam*, Boys are employed—
Brushing, and making small Faggots.

Wages, 2s. per hundred.
Hours of Work, daylight
Meals, one hour.

Shaving Poles.

Wages vary according to size.

Hoop-shaving.

Age 9, wages 4s. 6d.; 12, 5s. 6d.; 14, 8s.

Mr. W.

The common diet of this district is bread and cheese (which is much eaten), butter, potatoes, and in some places hard pudding.

Bacon is commonly eaten by those who are in better circumstances, and fish in some localities. The proportion of animal food varies with the state of the family, the amount of work and the earnings, and is commonly slight. The diet is increased in labour, and where the day's work is long, a "bait" or additional meal is taken.

The boy's general dress is cotton shirt, round frock or fustian jacket, trousers, high shoes and leather gaiters, worsted stockings: where shoes and gaiters are worn, it is not uncommon in some parts to go without stockings. Flannel is not commonly worn.

DEPOSITIONS

Taken on the Agricultural Employment of Women and Children.

Mr. James Lansdell is examined, and deposes upon oath as follows:—I am relieving officer and assistant overseer of the first district of the Tunbridge Union. I have lived within 12 miles of this place, Tunbridge Wells, for the last forty years. For 13 years I occupied a farm of 160 acres, and since the year 1835 I have held my present office. The Union comprises 10 parishes, three of which, and half of a fourth, are in my district. Two consist entirely of agricultural population, or nearly so. I am in the habit of seeing the labouring inhabitants, and know the occupations of the principal part, and their means of support. I have no farm now; part of the land in my district is arable, part is in grass, part is in hops. The whole number of acres is 15,398.

Women are commonly employed by the farmers in weeding the corn. This usually takes place in June, and lasts very seldom more than a week or ten days; many farmers, however, do not have their corn weeded at all; this work is not laborious. The women are expected to begin their labour about eight o'clock in the morning, and to continue it till six o'clock in the evening. The wages for a day's work vary from 8d. to 1s. per day.

It is a very common thing for women to assist in reaping. The husband contracts to reap by the acre, and the wife then reaps with him, and uses the sickle herself as he does; but in case he uses the bagging-hook, which cuts the corn closer to the ground, she ties the corn into sheaves after him. There is great art in using the bagging-hook. The woman works as long as he does. From five o'clock in the morning till eight in the evening is a fair average day's work. Some work from four till nine. The price of the labour per acre depends upon the crop; it varies from 8s. to 12s. A man and his wife must be fair hands to get through from an acre to an acre and a-half, with an average crop, in three days. The man, of course, usually does by far the most. It is hard work; but I do not recollect any particular cases of women

injuring themselves, otherwise than by accident. Women are employed also in assisting at the carrying the corn,—that is, in raking it for the cart; but this is not very common, and is never done to the wheat, which is in sheaves, but only to the barley and oats, the corn which is loose, it is called “shoving.” For this work they are paid by the day,—seldom less than 1s., seldom more. The men get about 2s. for the carting. It is a very rare thing for a woman to be three weeks in the harvest-field; a fortnight is the average. It is not common now for the farmers to give the men and women beer. I think that neither men nor women drink much beer; many, I think, drink no beer at all, but water and tea. The wheat-ground is left, after the sheaves are bound and carried away, for the gleaner; but after the “shoving” of the barley and oats, a large rake is passed over the field called a “dew-rake;” one seldom sees a gleaner in a field of barley or oats—Lent-corn, as it is called. The dew-rake is so called because it collects more when the ground is moist, and is employed most when the dew is on. Some farmers allow only their own work-people to glean; it is more common to allow any persons to glean. It is difficult to say how much a family may get in this way.

On the hop-grounds the women are occasionally employed in opening the hops, *i. e.* in levelling the hills which have been piled round the plants in the preceding summer. But this is usually done by men as day-work; sometimes they contract to do it by the acre, and then the wife assists them, as in the reaping the corn; but it is nice work, and therefore seldom done by the acre. When the woman is hired to do it by the day, she gets about the same as in harvest,—about 10d. or 1s. This work lasts for about a week in March. It is hard work for a woman; the moving the ground is heavy; the day's work is from six in the morning to six in the evening; an hour is allowed for dinner, and half an hour for breakfast, in this and all other day-work throughout the year. The women generally do not begin work till eight o'clock, except when they must keep pace with the men. When men contract, they are paid, I think, about 4d. per hundred.

About the month of April, when the hop-plants begin to shoot, the poles are fixed in the ground. It is very common for men to contract to do this by the acre; it is called “poling the hops.” The wife often assists at this, generally by carrying the poles to the hills, where the man fixes them, and by fastening them after he has done so by a “rammer,” with which she beats the ground into the hole. This work is generally contracted for. The price per acre is about 8s. or 12s.; it varies with the nature of the ground, and the number and size of the poles used. I think a good hand may earn about 3s. a-day at this work. It usually lasts a fortnight or three weeks.

In ordinary seasons, the binding of the hop to the pole commences in May and lasts until the hop has grown up the pole out of reach; this takes place usually about six weeks after.

It depends upon the season how long the woman's work continues. It requires more labour if the wind is high and the weather cold. Children are not employed in tying the hops. Women contract to work by the acre; 10s. is the average price, I think, now; it has been twelve. The price depends in some degree upon the number of the poles; in some grounds there are four poles in the hill, and in some only three. Few farmers will allow a woman to tie more than two acres.

The hop-picking usually begins about from the 7th to the 20th of September. Women are much employed in hop-picking. Boys and girls are also employed. In good years more bushels are picked for 1s. than in bad years. The price is sometimes 1s. for 10 bushels; sometimes the same is given for eight or six bushels.

Boys are often employed, if strong, in opening the hops. They get about 6d. a-day. They are often made use of to lead the horse in “shimming” the hops, as it is called, *i. e.* in weeding them with a brake between the hills, which are six feet apart. This weeding is done occasionally throughout the

summer; how often this may be depends upon the state of the weather and the state of the ground. It requires a good-sized boy to manage the horse; he can get 6*d.* a-day for it.

Both boys and women are employed in picking couch from the ground after ploughing. The women get 10*d.* or 1*s.*, the boys 4*d.* or 6*d.* a-day, according to their size. Boys also sometimes weed with the women in summer in the corn-fields.

In pasture-lands there is little either for boys or women to do; occasionally, but seldom, boys watch the sheep. On grass-land, intended for hay, boys and women commonly clear the land of stones and sticks, at the time the stock is shut out from it. This work lasts but a short time. In the hay-harvest both boys and women work from about eight to six; a good strong boy may get 6*d.* or 8*d.* a-day; a woman gets about 10*d.* or 1*s.* In a moderate-sized farm this lasts about three weeks.

In addition to occasional hirings, most farmers keep a boy about the house as servant of all-work. They will take boys for this purpose at 12 or 13 years old; they board them less frequently than they were accustomed to do, but more commonly they take them at wages by the day,—3*d.*, 4*d.*, or 6*d.*, according to their age and strength. If they board them at that age, they require usually something with them, 6*d.*, 9*d.*, or 1*s.* a-week; in either case they require their whole services for the year. Parents commonly send their children to the free schools at 1*d.* a-week, but take them away when they can get work for them. At some schools in this town this custom is prohibited; but in the small villages they are not so particular. Most boys go to Sunday schools; there are Sunday schools in most villages. I certainly have heard some farmers say that education injures the labourer.

There is very little labour indeed for girls to do in the fields; girls learn to sew, not to knit, at home. The bigger girls take care of the younger when the mother is out.

James Lansdell.

(Subsequently communicated.)

Girls do very little on the land indeed, except stone-picking, potato-picking, bean-dropping (which is rare in this part of the country) potato-planting.

I think that the women who work in the fields are generally the most industrious and best characters. Single women are very seldom employed, except in hop-picking. The New Poor Law has decidedly had the effect of sending out children earlier than formerly to work and to service.

John Waters is examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—I live at Halls Hole, about a mile from this spot; am 48 years old; all my life I have lived in this neighbourhood, and have been always employed in agriculture; in the early part of my life as a day-labourer on farms. For the last nine years I have been a farm-bailiff over 200 acres of ground, occupied by Mr. Benjamin Austen, who lives at another farm in Penbury parish. The farm produces grass and all kinds of corn and hops. I have brought up a family of seven children; my wife is living.

Boys of from 13 to 17 years of age are employed in driving the team at plough on the corn-lands. Sometimes they are boys hired for the purpose by the day; sometimes they are boys kept on the farm to go with the team, through the year. Those hired by the day, if young, get about 8*d.* a-day; if older, they get about 1*s.* a-day. The boys are generally at work by six in the morning, and go on to six at night. The team does not generally work so long, and when the team leaves off the boys are set to odd jobs, such as pulling turnips, or cleaning out “lodges,” which some call sheds; half an hour is given for breakfast time, and an hour for dinner. This work lasts about six weeks at Michaelmas, about October and November; and in the spring, for about two months, from a fortnight after Christmas to March. It is not a hard kind of work.

Boys are also employed in sowing season at an earlier age; they are nearly always hired for this by the day. They lead the horses at harrowing,

drilling, and stricking-in, when the seed is sown by stricking and drilling. Stricking is furrowing the land with a light plough after it has been ploughed in the common way and harrowed, in order that the seed, which is afterwards sown broad-cast, may fall into the furrows, and come up in rows. Boys begin to do this work sometimes at 10 years old. Some boys get 6*d.* a-day for this, some 4*d.* They work from six to six, with the usual hours for meals. It is hard work, for the boys are young, and the land is rough. The time for this is in October and November, and lasts about six weeks; more boys are employed at this than at the ploughing. About the same time, boys and women are employed in couching the land, *i. e.*, picking out the roots and weeds. Boys are hired for this at eight years old sometimes, and earn 5*d.* or 4*d.* a-day. The women get from 10*d.* to 1*s.* Boys are very commonly set to keep birds off the corn. When the seed is sown, for about three weeks until the corn rises out of the ground, one boy may keep 20 acres or more. They begin to do this at years old. Boys do not go upon the corn-land from this time until the summer, at the latter end of May or beginning of June, when the hoeing and pulling of weeds comes on; all farmers do not practise this, but it is generally done by women and boys. Boys do this from 8 years old to 14, and get, according to their ages, from 3*d.* to 6*d.* a-day. The women have 10*d.* a-day; this kind of labour lasts for a month. At corn-harvest the boys, as well as women, reap with the men. The man contracts to reap at so much an acre, at from 10*s.* to 12*s.*, according to the crop, and gets his wife and children to help him. The boys begin to do this at about 12 years of age; a boy at this time of life will reap about a quarter of an acre in two days, while a man would be reaping three-quarters of an acre in the same time, and a woman half an acre, if she worked as many hours as the man, but this is seldom the case. The man and boy go to work generally about five o'clock, and leave off at dark. The common rule is, you should not leave off reaping till you could see a star; but the woman goes a-field about seven or eight in the morning and works till about six. It is hard work for men and boys. Boys do not use the bagging-hook, for which the man gets about 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* more by the acre than for reaping it. In this case the women bind the corn, and the boys bind, or, if not old enough, they make the band; a boy ought to be 13 or 14 years old to bind. Boys whose fathers are not employed to reap are sometimes hired by others; they may get, at 12 years old, about 10*d.* a-day, but it is seldom that a boy does not work under his father. Boys do not help to carry the corn, but they help at stacking it in the yard, or mowing in the barn. Women do not assist at either. Boys at 12 years of age may get 6*d.* a-day carrying.

Boys are also employed at planting potatoes, at which they assist the men by putting the potato into the furrow along with the manure, and replacing the soil over them with a hoe afterwards. Boys of 10 or 11 years old are employed at this at about 6*d.* a-day. There is not much of this work, as not more than one acre out of 150 of arable land is given to potatoes. Boys of the same age are also employed in getting and topping turnips; this takes place at the beginning of the winter. The boys work as long as they can see; there is not much of this work, as in these parts not more than five acres out of 100 of arable land are given to the cultivation of the turnip. Women are sometimes engaged in the same work at about 10*d.* a-day.

On the hop-grounds, about the latter end of February or beginning of March, boys assist in opening the hops. A stout boy of 12 years old can do this; boys are also employed of 16 or 17 years old at the same work. The younger boys earn 6*d.*, the elder about 1*s.* Women do this sometimes, but seldom; it is heavy ground to work on. This commonly lasts about a fortnight, but it depends on the weather, and some farmers will only do it when the moon is new. They sometimes, but not often, contract to have their hops opened by the acre or hundred, at the rate of about 4*d.* a-hundred, and usually 1200 hops are planted on an acre of ground. The labourers in this case are assisted by their wives as well as children. When the boys

are hired, they work from six to six; an hour and a-half is given for meals. The opening lasts about a fortnight.

About April the hops are poled. Boys and women both work at this. The man contracts to do this usually by the hundred; his wife and boys help him by carrying the poles to the hills and delivering them to him. The labourer usually gets from 1s. 4d. to 1s. 6d. per hundred, and the time it requires to get through the work depends mainly on the assistance he can get. Boys and women are sometimes hired by the farmers to assist the man; the woman at 10d. or 1s., the boys at 6d. Boys sometimes begin this work at eight or nine years old. This work seldom lasts more than a fortnight, as the hops begin to grow, and different work is required; after the poling, boys and women are employed to pick up the chips and old pieces of poles from the ground; they are hired to do this by the day; it lasts only for a day or two.

At the beginning of May or latter end of April the hops are tied. Boys are never employed at this; men are never employed. It is an "endless" job for a man; a man cannot get on at it. Women usually contract with the farmer to tie for the season at 9s. per acre. A woman will take generally two acres or two acres and a-half. The trouble depends on the weather; if it is boisterous weather, she has to bind them over and over again, as the wind blows them from the pole, or blows them round in a wrong direction away from the sun. She can bind about two acres and a-half for the first time in about a week; she must visit them to re-bind them every three or four days till they grow out of her reach. This takes place on an average in five or six weeks.

Boys are hired to assist a man in driving the break between the hops to weed them. The man holds the break, the boy drives the team. He must be 12 years old to have command over the horse and keep him in the proper course. There is six feet between hill and hill. The break is sent among the hops every two or three weeks, from the time of poling to picking. At hop-breaking a boy may get about 6d. a-day.

Hop-picking begins generally about the second week in September. All hands are employed at this,—men, women, boys and girls, down to the youngest that can work; 1s. was given for the picking of 10 bushels this year. The better the crop, the less money is given for picking the same quantity. This year was an average year. A good picker could this year have picked 20 bushels in the day, or more; an active child of 12 years old could pick 12 or 13 bushels. A woman can pick rather more than a man. The work commonly begins about seven in the morning, and lasts till five or six at night. It lasts usually for three weeks. Immediately after the hops are gathered the poles are stripped and stacked. Labourers commonly contract to do this at 5s. 6d. an acre. Their wives and children often assist them. This commonly lasts a fortnight; girls do little or nothing in the fields but pick hops.

On grass-lands little is done by either women or boys, except at hay-time, when women are paid 10d. and boys about 6d. a-day. Girls of 13 or 14 years old can get, in the hay-time, 6d. or 7d. a-day; men get about 2s.

There is a good deal of wood-land in these parts; about three or four months in the winter it gives work to men and boys. The men cut hop-poles and faggots; the boys cut small faggots and shave the rind off. It is common work for agricultural men in the winter and for boys. A boy of 15 years old can make 50 kiln-faggots in a day; 2s. a hundred is the price; 4s. a hundred for the large faggots. The hop-poles are paid for according to the size.

The hop-grounds furnish much more work for the women and boys than the arable land or grass.

Thomas Yate, Esq., is examined, and deposes upon oath as follows:—My name is Thomas Yate. I am house-surgeon to the Dispensary and Infirmary of Tunbridge Wells. Before holding this situation I was assist-

ant to the medical officer to a district of the Tunbridge Union. In both those capacities I have attended the poor, both in town and country. There are no diseases, so far as my experience goes, to which women and children employed in agriculture are liable, in a higher degree, than those occupied in the trades and employments of a town, and the diseases to which both are subject do not attack the agricultural population more violently than those in the town. In the towns in this neighbourhood there are no manufactories. I never met with any case of disease either in a woman or in a child which I could attribute to an excess of work. There is much rheumatism both amongst the children and amongst adult women in this neighbourhood. I think there is not more in proportion to the number of the population amongst the agriculturists than amongst persons engaged in trade and artisans. The latter are, I think, more liable, from living and working in hot rooms, to catch cold. I seldom or never meet with accidents, sprains, or ruptures, amongst women or children amongst the agriculturists, which I can attribute to labour. The diseases of the poor are to be attributed to poor living and want of cleanliness, I think, chiefly. The population is generally healthy at present.

Thomas Yate.

Mr. *John Cogger* is examined, and deposes upon oath as follows:—My name is John Cogger. I am a farmer living and holding land in Banning. I have known the country in this neighbourhood for the last 30 years. I have held a farm for 12 years. My ground is 31 acres in extent, all orchard-ground. I have both green orchard-ground and cultivated orchard-ground. There is a very great extent of orchard-ground in these parts,—quite as much as 8000 acres within 10 miles of Maidstone.

Boys are employed, and women and girls, in picking up wood and stones from orchard-ground in January and February. Men are hired to do this by the acre, and to dig it, and then they get their family to clear it. Sometimes women and children are employed to clear it before it is ready for the men to dig. A woman is paid for this 1s. a-day; she generally begins at eight o'clock and leaves off at five. Children are employed, chiefly boys, and sometimes girls between 12 and 14 or later, to do this. The girls are seldom hired for it, but are sometimes employed by their fathers. Boys get about 6d. a-day. Boys work 12 hours if there is light; half an hour is allowed for breakfast, and an hour for dinner.

Boys are also employed about the same time of year by the fathers who contract to dig by the acre to dig with them. The men get 1l. per acre; a man and a boy of between 12 and 14, will dig an acre in a week. A man will do rather more than three-quarters of an acre in such time. This work a man can obtain for about two months; women are not employed at this.

Hoeing in the gardens begins about the beginning of June. Boys are employed to do this in the same way as they are to dig. A man gets 5s. an acre for hoeing at this season; a man and boy together can hoe three acres and a-half in a week. The man can do three times as much as a boy of 12 or 14: women never do this work. A boy will work at this 12 hours; but they can work longer if they please, as they work by the piece. This is not common, as the 12 hours' work is hard enough. A man may get about a fortnight of this work.

Fruit-gathering begins in the beginning of June. Boys, women, and girls gather the fruit. The boys and girls are not under 12; they gather gooseberries and currants at 6d. a-day. Women gather cherries as well, and older boys do the same. The women will get 1s. 3d. a-day, and the older boys 1s.; a woman and boy may be gathering summer fruit for more than two months. The boys work 12 hours per day; the women an hour less.

The gathering the autumn fruit begins at the latter end of August. Women get about 1s. per day for gathering filberts and plums. Children of both sexes gather filberts, and get 6d. a-day; boys gather plums also, and get about 6d. a-day. A boy or woman may get employment during a month in this way.

The apple-gathering begins at the latter end of September. Men do this chiefly. Women and boys assist in picking up. A woman is paid 1*s.*, a boy 6*d.* The woman works the same number of hours as at other fruit-gathering, and so does the boy.

Women and boys are both employed at intervals during the winter in packing up apples for market. The women work from eight to five, and the boys as long as it is light. They are usually paid by the day; the boys 6*d.*, the women 1*s.* per day.

Women sometimes cut rags to serve as manure for the hop-grounds in the winter. Sometimes boys above 14 do the same. Boys under 14 are not allowed to do this; 7*d.* a cwt. is given for rag-cutting. A woman can cut 2 cwt. in the day; a lad must be of good size and strength, and between 15 and 18 to do as much.

Hop-digging begins in December; men and boys are employed at this. The men are hired to dig by the acre, and get their boys to assist them. They get from 18*s.* to 1*l.* for this. A man and boy will dig about an acre in the week; the man will dig three times as much as the boy.

Women and boys are both employed in opening the hops, which is often done by the piece. They are commonly employed by men who contract to do the work at 4*d.* to 6*d.* per hundred. It is more common to do it by the piece in this part of the country than by the day. A man and his wife and child will do an acre per day. The man cuts, the woman opens, and the boy closes up again commonly.

The man contracts to pole the hops usually at from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* a hundred. Girls will sometimes assist at this, as well as the boys and women. After the poling, the workman is allowed to take the chips himself. A man with his wife and one boy will pole about 400 in the day.

A woman commonly engages to tie hops at from 10*s.* to 12*s.* an acre. She would undertake to do about four acres if she has no family. The children will assist her. In point of fact, she takes about three acres, as the competition for labour is considerable. Boys very seldom tie hops; they are not careful enough.

In picking hops, in an average year, 1*s.* is given for picking seven bushels and in the same year a good picker could pick 14 bushels. The picking is usually continued for 12 hours in the day.

Stripping and stacking should take place at the same time with the picking. The stripping is usually done by a man who contracts to pull and strip at 2*s.* 6*d.* a-day. The stacking is contracted for by the piece. Boys commonly assist their parents at this after the hopping; 3*s.* is commonly given per acre. A man and boy will do rather more than an acre in the day. If the stacking is contracted for at the time of picking, boys usually do not assist.

There is occupation for boys and women in the woods in winter. Women and boys and girls shave poles; boys cut faggots also. The price of shaving poles is from 6*d.* to 1*s.* per hundred. It depends upon the age; a boy of 12 may earn 6*d.* a-day; a woman can earn 1*s.* per day. *John Cogger.*

The Rev. *William Law Pope* is examined, and deposes on oath as follows;— I have for nearly 13 years been incumbent of the chapel of Tunbridge Wells. On my first coming to this town there was no other place of worship, according to the rites of the church of England, than my chapel; and there was no other public school for boys than a National school called the chapel school, supported by voluntary contributions, raised chiefly by a sermon preached annually in the chapel, and visited and controlled practically by the incumbent of the chapel. I have had the exclusive superintendence of this school for 13 years. The school is open to the sons of artisans, agricultural labourers, and small shopkeepers. There are at present about 112 boys there, and numerous applications for further admission. Five weeks of vacation are given at the hop-picking season, and one week at Christmas. In order to ensure continual attendance, I have

made and enforced a regulation, that no boy shall be absent, except on sickness, at any other time than vacation. I have both here and at a former living in Sussex found it necessary to make this rule; otherwise, at certain seasons of the year, boys are withdrawn for various agricultural and jobbing employments. I have learned from schoolmasters in the neighbourhood, as at Tunbridge, Penshurst, and Lamberhurst, Pensbury, where this rule is not enforced, that the practice alluded to materially interferes with the progress and discipline of the various schools. This applies more especially to the agriculturists, in a less degree to the others. The seasons for withdrawing the children, occur more regularly with the agriculturists. The temptations to do so are with the others fewer and recur less regularly. I have no doubt that the artisan and town parents are more generally sensible of the value of a good education than labourers in agriculture, and yield less to slight temptations of gain. In small agricultural parishes I have found that the regulation about regular attendance has operated to diminish the numbers of the school in the first instance; but as I have always been particular as to the qualifications of the teacher, and the usefulness of the system of instruction, the numbers have usually recovered themselves in course of time. I do not doubt that parents may be brought to acquiesce generally in this with a little trouble. I have known cases in which parents, from the conviction of the utility of a good education, have continued to send their children, although in a state of great physical destitution. I think that there is very little obstruction on the part of employers of agricultural labour to the education of the young, where the point is urged upon them and influence exerted. Boys usually leave the school which is under my superintendence between the age of 12 and 14. I never find that the education which agricultural children have received disinclines them from, or disqualifies them for, labour in the fields; but it frequently happens that I have applications from tradesmen and gentlemen for boys to assist in shops and domestic service, who are so diverted from following their occupation of agriculture. At the age of 13 the boys have generally a very good knowledge of arithmetic and geography; a fair knowledge of natural history; they write well, and are very well acquainted with the principles of their religion. There is one good infants' school in this place, and by this means children come to school more advanced, and may be removed from it advantageously at an earlier period than otherwise would be the case. But parents are, on the whole, more guided by the size and strength of their children as to the time of removal than by their proficiency. Agricultural children are usually removed at an earlier age than those of artisans.

W. L. Pope.

Mr. *Richard Summerfield* is examined, and deposes on oath as follows:— I am honorary secretary to the Maidstone Agricultural Association for the encouragement of servants and labourers. It was established in 1839. There are various rewards given by that association annually to encourage females and young persons engaged in agriculture in habits of morality and industry. There are rewards given to parents for bringing up children in good moral and industrious, cleanly and neat habits. There are also prizes given to youths engaged in agriculture, under 15 and 20 years of age, for good character and length of service. Females also of all ages are encouraged by the same means. We find that there are always good candidates for these prizes. The annual meeting excites great interest, and brings together many spectators from the lower ranks of life. The successful candidates seem to be much affected by their success. The number of competitors increases annually, especially amongst the females. There has been a great increase during the last year. Such societies are very generally established throughout the country. There are no prizes given for intellectual attainments other than those of agricultural skill in our society.

Garden allotments to agricultural labourers are common in this county, and are found to have a beneficial effect in all instances with which I am

acquainted. The allotment system, I think, produces a good effect on the family of the labourer as well as the labourer himself. I think it acquaints the children with the cultivation of the soil, gives them habits of industry, and teaches them to economize their time. They are generally cultivated at broken parts of time when the labourer's work is over, or cannot be continued. With this view half an acre is considered about the largest quantity that ought to be allotted.

Richard Summerfield.

John Otley, Esq., examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—I am a surgeon residing and practising in this town of Maidstone, and am one of the medical officers for the Maidstone Union. As such, I visit the poor of four adjoining country parishes as well as those of the town. Hops are cultivated in all of them. I never met with any diseases either in women or children in the country which I could attribute to excess of labour, nor with any diseases which I could attribute to the peculiar nature of their work. I do not meet with much disease amongst the women and children in the country. The constitutions of women and children in the country contend with disease successfully,—better than those of persons in the town. Both rheumatism and ague are common in town and country. I think it depends much on the season; and in the town, where it is more common than in the country, I attribute it partly to the situation. The women and children in the country are, upon the whole, healthy. The people in the country live better than in the town.

John Otley.

Samuel Godding Reader, Esq., is examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—I am secretary to the Maidstone Horticultural Society established about the year 1834. There are prizes annually given by that society to cottagers for the production of flowers, fruits, and vegetables. It is a rule of the society that all the specimens exhibited by the cottagers should have been produced by themselves or some members of their families. The benefits of the society are not limited to cottagers in any particular district of the county. Its influence extends about 10 miles round. There is a very considerable show of productions raised by cottagers every year. Some of their specimens of vegetables are superior to those raised by subscribers. The main object of the institution, so far as regards the cottager, was to encourage him and his family in industrious and domestic habits, and to procure them good food. Its operation at present is practically not very extensive from want of funds. It is in some degree interfered with by the establishment of neighbouring societies, and we have also difficulty in confining the competition solely to cottagers, in the strict sense of the term.

S. G. Reader.

William Beale, Esq., examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—I am a solicitor at Maidstone; my partner and myself are clerks to the justices for the Eastern Division of the Lathe of Aylesford. That division comprehends 30 parishes around Maidstone. The indentures of all apprentices bound by those parishes are necessarily submitted to them, and approved before they are signed by the contracting parties. Very few parish apprentices have been bound within the last 10 years. I could safely say not more than three apprentices have been so bound in every two years amongst all those parishes. Generally speaking such apprentices are cripples, and unable to provide for themselves but by sedentary employments. None have ever been bound to agricultural occupations. I never recollect any case of an application by the apprentice to be discharged from his apprenticeship owing to ill conduct on the part of the master, or to be otherwise relieved from ill usage. The inquiries are always very strict previous to an order to bind. A premium, varying from 10*l.* to 25*l.*, is usually given with such apprentices. I should say that the apprentices who have been bound, have not, in many instances, been the children of agricultural parents.

William Beale.

Mr. Thomas Rammell is examined, and deposes upon oath as follows:—I rent about 300 acres of land in the neighbourhood of Sturry, in this

county, and 400 acres in the Isle of Sheppey; and I have, within three years, managed 300 acres or nearly in the Isle of Thanet.

The first occupation of boys on a corn-farm is to keep rooks from the seed at Spring and Michaelmas; a boy usually begins to this at eight years of age, and is paid for this about 4*d.* a-day; about the same age he is also fit to help his father a little in the barn at threshing; for this he is not paid by the day; but as his father is paid by the quarter, he gets his son to assist him; and I think that a boy of this age may earn for his father as much as 5*d.* in the day; but when the father works, as in this case, by the piece, he is usually able to earn more than when he works by the day. Boys of the same age are employed also to pick couch after the plough at ploughing-time sometimes, but this is more commonly done in the summer on the fallows. The wages for this are about 5*d.* a-day. The usual time for work is as long as he can see in the winter, and when daylight is longer, from six to six; an hour and a half are allowed for meals; often the boys take breakfast before they come in the morning. Boys of the same age pick up potatoes for their father while he digs, and cut off turnip-tops, and pull the turnips themselves out of the ground with their mothers. The fathers are paid for digging the potatoes by the sack; the women for the turnips by the acre; in the latter case, the woman's earnings on each acre depend upon the crop; she is paid from 10*s.* to 12*s.* an acre, and may earn about 10*d.* a-day; with her boy about 15*d.* a-day. A boy can earn about a penny more in the day at piece-work than at day-work. Boys of a later age lead the horses at harrow and plough. About 13 a boy may earn about 8*d.* a-day at this labour. But between 8 and 13 a boy continues to do the lighter work of couching and potato-picking, only for higher pay than he received at eight. From 9 to 12 he can get 2*d.* a-day more than he can at eight years old for the same kind of work, and the same number of hours. Boys at this age, that is, from 9 to 12, are also employed in the sheep-folds, assisting at the cutting and picking and carrying turnips, at about 6*d.* a-day. Boys from 9 years old to 15 are often hired to weed the corn from the spring till harvest. For this their labour is in greater request than at any other time; we often desire more labour than we get of this kind; they usually gain from 3*s.* to 5*s.* a-week according to their age, varying from 9 to 15 years. Women are paid 10*d.* for this; but their dress, after the corn gets high, is inconvenient. Girls are employed at weeding and turnip-topping occasionally, but not often. The weeding lasts from May to corn-harvest; at which both children and women are employed assisting the father of the family at reaping. He contracts to reap by the acre. Boys of all ages, from six years old and upwards, will do something in this way, and earn something,—3*d.* a-day, certainly, for their father. If the scythe is used the boys only make the bands. The man binds, not the woman; she is not strong enough. The work of reaping seldom begins before seven or eight o'clock where the women and boys are employed. A boy of 13 will, I think, earn 1*s.* a-day, and more at harvest; a woman may get 1*s.* 6*d.* a-day. A man and boy will bring down nearly half an acre in the day. I think a man will do between four-sixths and five-sixths of the whole. The average price per acre is 13*s.* Boys of from 12 to 13 are also allowed to help on the stacks; they are generally paid 1*s.* per day. Women do not cart. Women and children of all sizes glean. Boys of 10 years old are engaged sometimes on the grass-lands to pick thistles in the summer; for this they are paid about 6*d.* a-day. Women get 10*d.* a-day. Girls are very seldom employed even at this.

Boys and women are both hired at hay-time to mow the hay; the boys at 6*d.* between 9 and 12; the women at 10*d.* On the clovers in the spring, boys, women, and girls are employed to pick up stones, so as to clear the ground before the crop grows. There are as many girls as boys set to this.

Girls do very little work on the land, either the grass-land or the corn-land; when the mothers are out they take care of the children; the girls

are generally sent to school. The schools in this village, except the Sunday and evening schools, are private establishments. There is a school for girls at 4*d.* a-week. There are other girl-schools. The mothers commonly send their children to school until they get to a certain age; it enables them, if their family is young, to get out and earn money themselves. It is a kind of nursery for their children. When the girls grow up to 11 or 12 the mothers will seldom keep their girls at school. My wife has been in the habit of paying for the schooling of three or four girls, but after 11 or 12 she seldom finds any who wish to take advantage of her offer; at that age the mother leaves them with the care of the house and younger children. The chance is, that when so left they form slovenly habits; but that depends upon the character of the mother. I think that I could find four or five that I could recommend as servants from my knowledge of the mother. There are good mothers, who teach their children with some pains the management of a cottage. There is a great deal of unchaste conduct in the village. The girls go about to fairs, and many are ruined there; especially Canterbury, which is a garrison town. Within the last eight or ten years many benefit clubs have been established, and most of the cottagers here belong to them. The number of subscribers increases. There are clubs for burial, and friendly societies for offering pecuniary assistance in sickness and at death. Cottage rent is very high: cottages with two rooms are sometimes let for 1*s.* 6*d.*, without a garden; sometimes, but not commonly, for 2*s.*; 2*s.* 6*d.* and 3*s.* are paid for four-roomed cottages. It is common for persons in roomy cottages to let off a room to a stranger. The benefit of an airy abode is so lost, and other evils follow from the intimacy between a stranger and the grown-up daughters. The cottages, upon the whole, are neat. There are seldom any books in them except the Bible. There is no national school for giving instruction in the week; there is an endowed school for giving Sunday and evening instructions. Some few people here believe in charms: there is a woman named Sally Waters who charms wounds. Boys do not go to school after eight years of age, when they can generally get some work. *Thomas Rammell.*

(Added afterwards by letter.)

A woman's working day is from seven to five, allowing one hour for dinner.

James Orton is examined, and deposes as follows:—My name is James Orton. My father is dead; my mother lives at Wincheap. I work in the fields when I can get work. The day before yesterday I was digging; I dig from daylight till dark. I have an hour for dinner in the middle of the day. I breakfast before I start, and earn 8*d.* in the day. In the summer, when the wheat is up, I weed the corn; I get 6*d.* a-day for that. I sometimes lead the horse at plough, and get 8*d.* I get 6*d.* only for couching; it is not so hard as digging, or leading the horse at plough. I could not get any "bird-scaring" this year; 6*d.* is the price of that a-day. I got 8*d.* at poling, for laying the poles. I picked hops; I do not know how much I got for that. I have had no digging in the hop-grounds since my father died. I cut wheat and beans this year with my mother; I do not know how much my mother got: they cut wheat and that by the acre. At beans we reap as soon as we like. It don't do to cut wheat early if there has been any damp, till eight or nine; we never begin before eight any time. If we could get two or three "cants," we would cut beans at two in the morning, and on till dark. I have done no threshing. I have set potatoes for 8*d.* a-day; I have dug potatoes for 8*d.* a-day. I keep sheep sometimes for 6*d.* I don't remember what I got for clearing the ground for hops. Last summer I got 3*s.* 6*d.* a-week for keeping cows in the stables, milking, and feeding them. I have got 6*d.* a-day for topping and pulling up turnips. My mother has relief from the parish; I do not know how much. I have always three meals in the day: I have bread and meat for dinner, and bread and cheese

for breakfast, and bread and cheese for supper. When I am not at work I do not often get bread and meat for dinner. It is ever so long since I went to school. I left off going to school before my father died, when I was about eight years old. I cannot read. I do not know the names of the months. I have good health; I have never any pains. When I do not work, I go out to play. I had rather work than play; you get most victuals when you work.

Thomas Orton is examined, and deposes as follows:—My father's name is George Orton. I was 12 last Sunday. I work all the year round when it is dry. I lead the horse at plough sometimes, and always at harrow, and at shim in the hop-grounds. For all that I get 8*d.* a yoke: a yoke is from six to two, when the horses are taken out. I have my breakfast before I go; I have my dinner at two o'clock. After dinner, I go and clean the horses; this lasts an hour. I then feed them, and go away about seven. I thresh, too, at the machine, and get 9*d.* a-day. I get more at this, as it goes on all night that it may not spoil because the corn is in the fields; for the day and night I get 1*s.* 6*d.* We then watch for three nights, and turn it for three days during the same time, that it may get dry and hard. I get 8*d.* a-day for turning, and nothing for the night, for I am then only helping my father. I am now keeping cows off the corn, at 6*d.* a-day. I get 8*d.* for weeding in the summer; I weed potatoes, but seldom corn. There is hardly any weeds in Mr. R.'s corn. I hull the hills in the hop-ground, and pole and dig all with my father; I do not know how much he gets for it. At all this we work from six to six; half an hour is allowed for breakfast, and an hour for dinner. At day-work we take the half-hour before we begin. I never tie the hops; women tie them. I pick the hops from the ground, not from the bine, as others do, and for this I am paid 1*s.* in the day. The others who pick are paid by the quantity; they are paid more for picking small ones than large ones. I work with the others from seven to six. I am paid 1*s.* 6*d.* for digging and for picking potatoes. I have three meals a-day; I have bread and cheese and bread and butter for breakfast, and sometimes, but not often, bread and meat or meat and potatoes for dinner. We are 11 in all; there are five brothers and four sisters. We all sleep in one room, except father and mother. There are three beds in one room, and there are four rooms. We pay 3*s.* a-week rent. We are badly off for clothes; there are not many so bad off as we. I work keeping cows on a Sunday; the others do not go often to church. I once went to school for a week. I know that twice ten is 20, because I have heard other boys say so. I cannot read. My mother goes out to work; one of my sisters goes out to work.

Mr. Thomas Southee is examined, and deposes upon oath as follows:—I am clerk to the County Hospital, and secretary to a friendly society, entitled the United Kentish Britons, managed in the town of Canterbury, and supported by subscribers in the neighbourhood. The object of the society is to assist the family of the subscriber in case of his sickness or his death. The wife and children profit chiefly by the provisions of this society. Every subscriber must be a male, between the age of 18 and 30 on entrance. 1*l.* 6*s.* must be paid annually to ensure pecuniary assistance in sickness, and 15*l.* at death for the benefit of his wife and children. This society is steadily increasing, and would advance much more rapidly were it not for the establishment of similar societies in the country parishes. Our society is supported by agricultural labourers and the inhabitants of towns equally. The parochial societies are supported mainly by agriculturists. There are few agricultural labourers who do not belong to a society of some kind instituted for similar purposes. The "United Kentish Britons' Friendly Society" consists of 996 subscribers. The benefit of such societies is appreciated by labourers, and a spirit of providence is encouraged and cultivated. This society was established in 1807; 39 new members have enrolled their names during the present year.

Thomas Southee.

Mr. *Christopher Baxter* is examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—My name is Christopher Baxter; I have been bailiff in the family of Charles Barclay, Esq., near Dorking, for 14 years, over between 400 and 500 acres of meadow and arable land, in addition to wood.

A boy is not fit to lead horse at harrow or plough, or drill, under 12 years old. His wages are about 7*d.* a-day. He is a-field and in the stable from about six in the morning to five in the afternoon. An hour is allowed for dinner, but the breakfast is usually taken before he goes to his work. Women are never employed at this, nor do boys ever pick roots from the land at winter time, because it is too wet for such work. When the ploughing takes place in the spring, there is then opportunity for couching, at which rakes are commonly used; and the age required for this, too, is from 10 to 12, at about 7*d.* a-day. Couch-raking is also woman's work. The boy at this occupation works from six to six, except the half-hour at breakfast and hour at dinner. The woman comes at eight o'clock, and works till five, with the allowance of one hour to dinner: 1*s.* is woman's pay. In April and May hoeing takes place, when the corn begins to grow, and hand-weeding about May and June on the Lent corn; it would spoil the crop to hoe. Boys and women are both employed at hoeing and hand-weeding. Boys of from 10 to 12, or a little younger, are hired for this; from eight to ten they receive 2*s.* 6*d.* per week; from 10 to 14 they earn from 3*s.* to 4*s.* in the week; for as the days are longer, they are longer on the land than in the winter; and this applies to ploughing, hoeing, and hand-weeding in the spring, as well as to hand-weeding in the summer. A woman works from eight to five at these kinds of labour, with an hour allowed for dinner, for 1*s.* a-day. I do not think that there is much difference between the amount of work which a boy and a woman will do, as the boy's time is longer. Nothing more is done on the corn-land till harvest. Boys help their fathers sometimes at this—very few so early as 10 years old—and women do the same for their husbands; for the work is contracted for, at from 11*s.* to 14*s.* an acre. Both women and boys do the bagging-hook work as much as they do the reaping work. Boys work as long as the men—*i. e.* as long as they can see. The women are kept at their households till eight, and resort there again at five or six. Boys also help at the carting of Lent corn, by heaping, raking, and lifting, and stacking, and at the wheat by raking and stacking. A boy of between 12 and 14 usually earns a little more at harvest-work than at other times. In harvest women are employed at heaping barley and oats, but have nothing to do with the wheat. Their harvest wages are from 1*s.* 3*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a-day. They come at eight, but work a little longer at night than on other occasions. Boys get very little more at harvest than at other times. Carting does not begin before nine in the morning, but goes on till late—in fact, as long as we can see. At bird-tending, boys of from six to eight begin to work; they come as early as they can see, and get about 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* a-week, and are a-field on Sundays as well as on working days.

In addition to the man who goes with the team, boys of from 12 to 14 are employed to assist in filling the carts, and emptying them of manure, and driving the horses, at about the same rate of wages as at other times.

On the turnip-lands some farmers, but not many, will have the turnip taken up from the ground to feed the sheep through the winter. The turnip is in this case pulled and dressed, and the cutting-machine turned by boys. Boys of eight years old are occasionally hired for this, at 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* a-week. In this country there are few potatoes—not more than one or two acres in the Hundred. There are many beans cultivated, and girls and boys of four or five years old assist in dropping the bean after the man who dibbles before them. This, too, is work usually contracted for by the piece, and the workman brings his children, or hires others at about 4*d.* a-day.

On grass-lands, a boy is commonly required to lead the fore-horse when

the large roller is sent on the ground in the spring. His age is from 10 to 15—his wages about 7*d.* a-day. At hay-harvest boys of all ages are serviceable, to throw the grass about and rake. A boy of eight years old may earn 3*s.* in the week. Women are also employed very much for the same kind of work; their pay is about 1*s.* a-day, and a quart of beer. Threshing in this country is commonly done by the hand, seldom by the horse-machine. The labourer in the barn engages for the work by the quarter, but it is not common for him to get assistance from his children.

It is much less common than it used to be for boys to live in farm-houses, as servants for farm-labour. There is on this account less control than formerly, and less settled industry and discipline. The common farm-labourer's pay, since the last harvest, has been 10*s.* per week. The rent of an ordinary cottage runs from 6*l.* to 7*l.* in the year. Allotments are not common. The price of coal is 2*s.* for the hundred-weight; that of faggot-wood about 1*l.* 10*s.* per hundred-weight, if of the best quality. *C. Baxter.*

Henry Ede is examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—My name is Henry Ede. I have been used for 35 years to cut wood in the winter months. There is much wood in these parts; many men get their living in the woods. They cut faggots for fuel, colliers' wood—that is, wood to make charcoal—and wood for hoops. The work begins about a month before Christmas, or sometimes earlier, and lasts mostly till the end of March. For the faggots—they are paid for kiln-faggots, 2*s.* a-hundred; for house-faggots, 2*s.* 6*d.*; for colliers' wood 2*s.* a-load: and for hoops, 6*s.* a-load. These, at least, have been the prices, but I hear that this year they are reduced. I am not working this year. Most persons cutting wood take a boy with them; generally they take a boy of their own, and sometimes they hire them. My boy I first took with me at nine years old to assist me. Those who hire would rather take older boys; but they sometimes hire them as early as nine or ten, and from this to 14. The price paid depends on the handiness of the boy. A handy boy of 11 may get 3*s.* a-week at this work. My eldest boy I took away from school, to assist me in the woods, at nine years old. I have three children now at home—two daughters, one nearly 14, and one about 10. Both the daughters go to a free school, and the boy, who is nearly eight, does the same. My wife works in the fields when she can get work, and sometimes asks leave of the governess of the school to take her daughters or her sons with her. The governess generally gives leave, but not for all at the same time, nor for a great length of time. My wife, when she goes out to work for farmers, gets about 9*d.* a-day. Mr. ——— has always given 1*s.* Mr. ——— generally gives higher wages than the farmers.

Mrs. Sarah Joyce is examined, and deposes upon oath as follows:—I am the wife of the vicar of the parish. I have for some time taken an active interest in the management of the National school, for the education of girls in this parish. Very great difficulty has been experienced in retaining the girls at school to an age which would allow of their education being properly completed. It was the custom for mothers to withdraw their children at 11 or 12; great pains have been taken to remedy this. A society has, within the last three years, been formed, called "The Girls' Friend Society," for the purpose of encouraging parents to keep their children at school up to the age of 14. A premium is offered by the society to girls for length of service, in places into which they shall have entered, after remaining at school until the age of 14. The amount of the premium varies in proportion to the length of service in one place. When girls leave the school at the age of 11 or 12, it is usually for the sake of giving their mothers occasional assistance at home, or of nursing the children of others who may be called out to work. I think that this kind of occupation has generally a very bad effect upon their character, and that the children even of the more careful mothers would live under a more safe and improving condition if kept at school.

It is one of the rules of the school that no child shall be permitted to absent herself without leave first given; and leave is never given to the girls to stay away from school for the sake of working in the fields. This rule was made from the fear that such employments would expose the girls to evil; and I believe that the more respectable families have an objection to taking girls into their service who have habitually worked in the fields.

I have reason to be of opinion that those women who go into the fields are much worse housewives than those who stay at home. The practice naturally leads to the neglect of their families, and to want of cleanliness.

Sarah Joyce.

John Hart, Esq., is examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—I am clerk to the justices for the Hundred of Wootton, which contains eight parishes, in the county of Surrey. I am also secretary to the Savings' Bank for Dorking and its vicinity. In this savings' bank there are 716 depositors, including three charities and 12 friendly societies. Of these, only 41 belong to the class of agricultural labourers.

As clerk to the justices of the hundred, I am usually present when the magistrates sign the indentures of parish apprentices, which are for that purpose submitted to them by the parish officers. The practice of binding apprentices by the parish has decreased of late years. There are, however, charitable funds at the disposal of the parish officers of this town for the purpose of binding apprentices. The apprentices who have been bound out of these or other funds by parish officers have rarely been the sons of agricultural labourers. I do not recollect any case of a parish apprentice complaining to the justices against his master, but I can call to mind some instances in which the masters have preferred complaints against their apprentices. Of this, however, there have not been more than half a dozen instances within my memory. Two of these were charges of drunkenness against the apprentice, and one on a charge of drunkenness and general desertion of work for several days at a time. I think that apprentices here are very well treated by their masters. The magistrates are not very often called upon to commit either boys or women, or to hear charges preferred against them. We have had instances of charges made for stealing turnips or cutting wood, but lately they have been less frequent than formerly. I attribute this partly to the presence of a policeman in the town.

John Hart.

Mr. Bowers is examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—I have for some years been assistant-overseer in the parish of Capel, and never remember any son of an agricultural labourer having been apprenticed by the parish officers.

Mr. Michael King is examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—I was overseer of the parish of Ockley, from Lady-day, 1840, to Lady-day, 1842. I have no recollection of any apprentices having been bound by the parish. It is very rare for apprentices to be bound in this parish. I never paid any premium as parish officer, nor ordered any indentures, nor applied to any justices to sign them.

Mr. Richard Weller is examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—I am a wood-hoop-dealer and farmer, living at Sprat's farm, Capels, in Surrey. I supply the East and West India Docks, the London Docks, and St. Katherine's Docks, with hoops for casks and tea-chests. I think that one-third of the face of the country, from Dorking, in Surrey, to Cuckfield, in Sussex, to the east, and from Guildford to Petworth to the west, is covered with wood-land. From the beginning of November until the 25th of March labour is employed in the wood-land in cutting wood-hoops and cord-wood to make charcoal. On the poor cold lands of this country little is done in the winter by the labourer in the cultivation of corn, and I think that as many as two-thirds of the agricultural labourers transfer their labour in the winter months to the wood-cutting. No occupation of any kind is given to women in the woods; but it appears from my books that for every two men engaged in this labour three boys are similarly employed. Some lads begin

their work about seven years old; eight is the common age; and the kind of work is continued through life. Those who begin at an early age either assist their parents, or are hired by older workmen. There are two kinds of work,—wood-cutting and hoop-shaving. At the wood-cutting boys are hired at the rate of 3*s.* a-week at nine years old; 4*s.* a-week at 12; at about 15 they begin to work for themselves, or at least, if they still work under the superintendence of an older labourer, they earn the whole worth of the work, and at this time of life they can earn about 7*s.* in the week. At all ages the workmen cut as long as they can see. Hoop-shaving requires more skill than wood-cutting, and meets with higher pay: the wood-cutter, upon an average, may make 11*s.* in the week; the hoop-shaver earns about 13*s.* or 14*s.* in the same time. When they work young, they commonly begin the employment with their father. It has been usual, when they set their hands to the occupation at a later age, to pay a premium to an old workman of from 15*s.* to 25*s.*, in order that they may be taught the art. A youth of 14 is so guided for two or three years, but during the whole time he earns the whole produce of his labour. A boy of nine years old at hoop-shaving may make 4*s.* 6*d.* in the week; at 12 years old, he may earn 5*s.* 6*d.*; at 14, 8*s.* Boys of 10 or 11 years old are during the winter months of considerable assistance to their families. Boys are seldom at school during the winter months; if they go at all, it is during the summer. There is a school for boys as well as girls in this parish (Capel): both schools are kept by the same schoolmistress, who is paid partly by a salary, partly by a penny, which is contributed by every scholar for the week. The girls are, I think, upon the whole, better informed than boys in matters taught at school, and I think that this is right: the boys are withdrawn earlier for labour. The families in this parish are, on the whole, well off; the cottages, generally speaking, are neatly kept. The greatest poverty and the worst moral habits are to be found amongst the young men who have no families. There are very many women about here who follow the trade of prostitutes. The beer-shops are much frequented by the young men. A cottage of four rooms is rented hereabouts at about 5*l.* per annum.

I reckon that 80 acres of corn-land in this country will furnish constant employment throughout the whole year to two men and two boys, and that the same number of wood-land acres will give constant work during the six winter months to six men and six boys, for such is the number required to work up 10 acres of wood-land, and the underwood is usually cut at eight years' growth.

Richard Weller.

The Rev. *James Joyce* is examined, and deposes upon oath as follows:—I am vicar of the parish of Dorking, and have resided here for five years. I am a subscriber to, and inspector of, the National school in this town, which is open to all the children in the parish. When I first came here, the master of the school was paid partly by an allowance, partly by a small sum taken weekly from each child. It was found that the school was not frequented so much or so regularly as was thought desirable; and on this account chiefly, and for the sake of extending the benefits of the school, a change was made about a year back. Under the present system, all children are recommended by subscribers, but pay nothing for their education; those parents, who have fair means, are invited to become subscribers. Under the old system, as I have been informed by the master of the school, in case the children were prevented from attending on one or two days in the week by work or other causes, in order to save the expense of the weekly payment they frequently forbore to send them during the rest of the week. Since the alteration of which I speak the attendance has been much larger. It is a rule of the school that children be allowed to go to work when they have the opportunity: some go for days, some even for weeks. There is, I think, much drinking in the parish. Owing to the continual control which is exercised over the children at all times of the day in the workhouse-school, I think that they are generally better children than those who are educated

at the free schools, and return either to their homes or to the streets when the school work is over.

James Joyce.

George Curtis, Esq., is examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—I am medical officer to the Upper District of the Dorking Union: as such I am in the habit of attending both women and children of the poor in town and country. Rheumatism is the prevalent disease of this district; consumption is not uncommon. There are also many instances, on certain localities, of contagious fevers, which I attribute to ill-drained lands chiefly, but partly also to the crowded state of the cottages of the poor; for owing to the high rents which they are obliged to pay, they are in the habit of letting off part of their cottages, and so losing all the benefit of good tenements. Upon the whole there is more disease in the town amongst women and children than in the country: the countrywomen and children are, I should say, a healthy race.

George Curtis.

William Waters is examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—I live at Brockham, in the county of Surrey; from want of work I left my house locked up after last harvest, and went with my wife and children to the village of Hightam, between Sevenoaks and Maidstone, to help to gather hops in that country. We were away from home for one month, and during our stay in Kent we lodged at the hop-houses on Mr. William Taylor's property. The hop-houses are built to receive those who come to pick hops from a distance, and cannot afford to hire lodgings. The houses in which we were placed had no chimneys nor windows; we were provided with straw and hurdles, by which we fenced ourselves off from two other families in the same building. Some houses are much larger than that we lived in, and hold more families. There were at the hopping a great many from all parts. There was a very great deal of disorder going on in the evening, and on Sundays. There was a great deal of drinking, a great deal of bad language, and brawling and fighting, and no care for Sunday. There were many worse companies than those which we were in. If we "stood our hours," we could get 6s. or 6s. 6d. a-day by the work of the whole family,—myself, my wife, and three children. To work from seven till five is called standing our hours. 3s. is the least we ever got in the day. I am now on the parish, and have been so for 10 weeks, I believe. There are not many who go hopping from these parts. There was one family from the Holm Wood, three miles from our house. I have been hopping before. My wife's father has been in the habit of hopping for several years. It is 32 miles from our house to the ground where we hopped this year, and 36 miles to the ground where we hopped in Sussex.

John Manwaring Paine, Esq., is examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—I possess and superintend the cultivation of a district of hops, larger than that of any other proprietor in Surrey, and also of an arable farm and grass-land, to the extent of 700 acres in all.

In February a small portion of women are employed in bean-setting in the new hop-grounds, and arable farm also, at the wages of about 8d. a-day. From eight to four is the time of a woman's working day.

From the middle of March to the middle of April women are employed in assisting the men at the opening and cutting hop-grounds, at the rate of 7s. an acre; the woman does about a third of the work. Boys of 13 sometimes assist. The women cut—the men open. The men sometimes hire women to assist, for 1s. a-day.

From the middle of April to the middle of May, women and children, from 11 to 15 years of age, assist at poling, which is task-work, generally contracted for at about 10s. an acre. The value of the woman's labour is rather more than a third of the man's.

From the middle of May to the beginning of July, women and the elder girls tie the hops. A woman usually undertakes four acres, for which she receives about 7s. an acre, and is allowed to take the superfluous bines, which are cut off at the end of the period, and are usually worth about three shil-

lings an acre. During the same period women and children are much employed at potato-planting [and hay-making. Children from 12 to 15 receive 6*d.*, the women 8*d.* a-day. The wages for hay-making are about the same. The hours of the child and the woman are generally the same. If the child works longer, he receives more pay. About this period nearly all the women in the parish are employed.

During the corn-harvest one-half of the hop-labourers migrate into the western parts of Sussex, to assist at the harvest in that country. The corn meanwhile is reaped in these parts by the men who remain, and the women whose husbands have left, and who contract for the work by the acre. The stout boys accompany the men; those under 14 stay at home and assist the mother.

The corn-weeding is performed chiefly by women—less by boys.

All hands assist at hop-picking. The price varies from 1½*d.* to 6*d.* a bushel, according to the crop. This lasts for three weeks from the 1st of September, after the completion of the hopping. Some children are employed in bagging;—others assist the men and women in stripping and hiling the poles, which is generally undertaken by the men at 7*s.* per acre; the refuse bine is their perquisite, in addition to the pay.

Sometimes women cut rags for manure,—this is more generally done by the men on rainy days;—9*d.* is about the average price per cwt.

Some few women and boys are employed during winter in assisting their husbands and fathers at wood-cutting. Boys are commonly engaged at this from 13 or 14 upwards; and at every kind of labour on the hop-grounds, the boys, if above the age of 13, will usually assist their fathers. On account of the abundant population in this parish, the shimming of the hops by horse is not practised to a great extent, except during the absence of the migratory labourers, and in this case chiefly by large farmers, who hold corn-lands. The beck and spud, which are used manually, do the work of the shim. The work is very laborious, compared with common agricultural work; and the same observation applies to all the work on hop-grounds which men perform. It is not uncommon to give a certain sum of money to a labourer to perform the whole annual work upon the ground. In this case the amount of labour performed by the women and children is increased.

The parish of Farnham contains about 7000 people; and during hop-picking between 4000 and 5000 strangers are introduced into this parish. They come chiefly from the towns and villages within 20 miles of Farnham—some few are from a greater distance, and others are labourers, who have no settled home. Amongst these last are some gipseys. Various means are provided for their reception. Some are admitted into barracks constructed for the purpose; others into spare rooms in cottages, which are specially reserved from the tenants. It is not uncommon for the same labourers who come from the neighbourhood to visit the same hop-grounds for labour during many successive years. The children and women come usually without the father of the family, and they are provided with sheets, crockery, and other necessary utensils in the parish.

Owing to the peculiar nature of the hop cultivation, a great part of the parishioners are thrown out of employment during the winter, and those among them who in the busier seasons did not find work for their families invariably seek parochial relief, in some shape or other, from the beginning of November to the beginning of February. Considerable mischief necessarily arises to the morals and good order of the parish from the large influx of strangers. In many instances labourers in this parish have half an acre or an acre of land; the cultivation of this, and the fatting of the pigs which are kept upon it, are sufficient to detain the wife at home, and prevent her seeking labour elsewhere. There are many benefit clubs in this parish; not more, however, than one in ten is managed upon a system that

can be ultimately successful; many have already failed. Very nearly all the children in the parish attend school. The boys usually remain till about 12, the girls a year or two longer. In the busy seasons they are sometimes taken off.

J. M. Paine.

The Rev. *Richard Sankie* is examined, and deposes upon oath as follows:—I have been for 10 years curate of the parish of Farnham, and have been in the habit of conversing with the poorer classes in the neighbourhood continually. I think that between the ages 15 and 22 the character of the population is the least moral, manageable, and orderly. I think that this parish stands under considerable disadvantages, from the peculiar nature of the labour which is employed at the hopping. At that time there is a vast influx of strangers of all kinds, who are partly admitted into the cottages of the inhabitants, and are partly received in buildings for the purpose. I believe that nearly every cottager takes his tenement on the condition of admitting hop-pickers for his landlord's plantations. I have seen the cottages crowded with strangers and their families at this season, who so much disturb the order of the households that provisions are bought for the day instead of a longer period, lest, in the confusion of the establishment, they should be lost or made away with. Such, at least, is the statement of shopkeepers, who justify the opening of their shops on Sunday upon that ground. The crowded intercourse, both in the cottages and on the hop-grounds, must be productive of mischief, especially to the young. There is very little uproar anywhere, and not until the close of the hop-picking. The labour of the day, and, as is commonly alleged, a soporific influence from the hop itself, disposes them to quiet. At the close of the labour on the grounds, when the workmen are being paid off, the scene changes, and there is much drinking, fighting, and bad language. During the whole hop-picking, the church is but slightly attended, either by strangers or natives. I am well acquainted with the National school. There is one in the town, and, in addition to this, there are two other National schools in the parish, and two upon the British and foreign system. We have also two infant schools. It is very difficult to retain the boys of the agricultural labourers at school after 11 or 12; and before their arrival at that age they take frequent leaves of absence, in order that they may labour. It has struck me, however, that the regularity of the attendance depends much upon the inclination of the children themselves, and their interest in what is taught, and in the manner of teaching. Where they come irregularly, and are withdrawn early, they soon forget what they have known. Until within the last six months, I should have made the same observation as to the difficulty of retaining the girls at school that I have now offered with regard to the boys; but at present the upper class in the girls' school consists chiefly of pupils 13 years old. This has not been the case for six years. The present schoolmistress has but recently held that situation; she is effective and intelligent. In order to habituate the girls to regular industrial employments, an attempt has been made in some instances to invite them, for the day on which there is no schooling, into the establishments of gentlemen, where they may begin to learn some regular household occupation. I think that in the few instances in which this scheme has been tried it has been productive of good.* Within the last year an institution has been set on foot for the awarding of prizes to vegetable productions reared by cottagers, and to general interior neatness of the cottages themselves. This promises well to encourage habits of cleanliness, order, and industry, especially in the wives.

During the last year 680 families have subscribed to the clothing funds, and about 340 to the coal fund. The average subscription to each fund is about 3*d.* a-week.

R. Sankie.

* I learned afterwards from Mr. Sankie that the families in the neighbourhood had objected to the practice, and discontinued it.

W. Newnham, Esq. (Communicated by writing):—I have had extensive opportunities of becoming acquainted with the disorders prevalent among the poorer classes of the town and neighbourhood of Farnham during the last 30 years. There is no work performed by women or children in the hop-plantations calculated to produce disease, or to which their disorders can be fairly traceable, with the following exception:—If the hop-picking season proves a wet one, they are exposed frequently to become wet, and to stand for many hours upon the ground saturated with moisture; and when this happens to be the case, disorder of the digestive functions ensues, commonly showing itself in the form of diarrhœa, and not usually of an obstinate or severe character. With regard to the imported population, at this season they, of course, are exposed to the same causes of disorder, aggravated by their being lodged in very crowded and ill-ventilated apartments, and by their great want of cleanliness, and generally improvident and dissolute habits. Even here, malady is not of a severe character, and a death among the imported population is scarcely ever heard of. It is not the employment of hop-picking which is injurious, but the common causes of disorder to which I have referred.

I have never been able to trace any epidemic or endemic malady, arising after the hop-picking season, which could be fairly attributed to it as a consequence. The greater number of the poor of the parish of Farnham live in detached cottages, on small portions of land enclosed from the waste. Much might be said on the causes of their disorders, but I confine myself to the subject of disorder produced by the nature of their occupations.

W. Newnham.

The Rev. *Thomas Astley Maberley* is examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—I am vicar of the parish of Cuckfield, and as such I superintend the National school of the town and parish. It is the custom now to give leave of absence from the school to any scholar who may require it, in order to take advantage of any offer or opportunity to obtain work. On my first entering on the living, I thought that the scanty attendance, apparently consequent on leaves of absence, were so prejudicial to the advancement of the scholars, that I introduced a rule to the effect that illness should be the only allowed plea of absence. I found the enforcement of the rule impracticable, and abandoned it immediately. At the present time many are in the habit of absenting themselves for the sake of employment. I find some difficulty in properly maintaining the school, owing to the slack encouragement given by the farmers resident in the parish, who generally refuse their support to it, and sometimes express their disavour of education in general. It has been urged that education does not contribute to make the young good servants. I consider that the lower orders in this neighbourhood are not in an instructed state, nor intelligent. I remark also a particular deficiency in the feelings of the women as to chastity; in many instances they seem hardly to comprehend or value it as a virtue. I have not been struck by any prevailing habits of excessive drinking. The cottages are not neatly kept, and are not furnished with any books but the Bible sometimes, and strictly religious works. There is a society now in existence for the encouragement of horticulture, at which prizes are given for the best show of vegetables, and flowers, and fruits, produced by cottagers; the show is generally considered good. During the last year prizes have been given by me to cottagers, and to male and female servants for continuance in the same service for the longest period. Till within the last year, a prize had been awarded by the Horticultural Society for the neatness of cottage gardens. This has been recently discontinued, from the doubts entertained of its permanent efficacy in producing neatness.

In addition to the National school, there is an establishment where the same system of education is adopted, but it is not supported by any public assistance. The master conducts it for his own benefit, and at his own risk.

T. Astley Maberley.

Lovel Byass, Esq., examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—I have practised as surgeon and apothecary between 30 and 40 years amongst the poor and other classes of society in the parish of Cuckfield. I have not been able to trace any disorders amongst the female part of the lower class to their occupation in agriculture. Boys are more frequently called upon to labour in the fields between the age of nine and 12 years, and although their general health is good, yet I have frequently witnessed, in consequence of their being thus early employed, from the conjoint causes of wearing heavy nailed boots necessary for their occupation, and walking over rough and deep ground, great weakness about the ankle-joints, as is evinced by the great turning out of the feet. I have rarely met with any instances where the constitution has been depressed or disordered by excess of labour. The men are often the subjects of chronic rheumatism late in life, which I attribute to their constant exposure to cold, as they are generally of temperate habits.

Lovel Byass.

Mr. *Stephen Wileman* is examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—I occupy 120 acres of land in the parish of Cuckfield, and am landlord of the King's Head Inn. I have been in the parish 12 years.

The greater number of boys employed in agriculture are taken by the farmers by the week, and some are paid by the year and taken into the farm-house: they are also hired by the day. From 10 years old a boy may be employed to drive horse at plough and go with the team, generally accompanied by a man. 6*d.* a-day is the common pay. For harrowing he ought to be rather older, as he goes alone. A boy is usually eight hours in the field, and generally spends four more hours in waiting on the horses. The hours for meals are not strictly settled, but they take the time out of the 12 hours. It is not the common plan here for boys to thresh, although the fathers thresh by the piece, until they are 14 or 15 years old. Boys are very little employed at bird-scaring; seven or eight years old is sufficient age for this. There is very little couching here either in spring or Michaelmas; children and women do it when necessary. A child would be paid 4*d.*, and a woman 10*d.*

At about 10 or 12 years old, a boy will often accompany his father at hedging and ditching, which is generally done by the rod, and wood-cutting, which is undertaken by the hundred of faggots cut. The man may earn 1*s.* 8*d.* or 2*s.*

Boys are not commonly permitted to weed corn, but only clover and grass-fields. Women usually weed the corn by pulling and spudding, at 10*d.* a-day. In the hay-field boys are seldom hired; occasionally they are taken at 12 or 13, and have 8*d.* a-day. Women earn 10*d.* or 1*s.* at the same work.

In corn-harvest, boys are taken to assist their father at reaping at about 10 or 12 years old. The father is paid about 10*s.* an acre. The work begins at four, and ends at eight; the cutting begins as early as four. It is all reaped, except the corn, which is cut with a scythe, as barley and oats. Boys rake the corn together, or drive the team, or are employed on the stack, at the same age. A hired boy would have a trifle more than the 6*d.* a-day which the farm-boy has.

Women are never hired to reap, but sometimes assist their husbands. They also rake the corn, and occasionally bind the wheat. The women earn about 1*s.* and a little food. A woman's working day begins later than the man's; a boy's day is 12 hours, like that of the man.

Women and boys are both employed in picking up potatoes; boys more frequently than women. A boy of eight years old can do this; he would have about 4*d.*

There are very few turnips in this country, and therefore they furnish very little work. Women and boys both pick up stones from the grass-land. The woman is paid as usual; the boy has 4*d.* or 6*d.*, according to his age. This lasts a very short time.

Girls under 15 are sometimes employed in stone-picking, potato-planting, and occasionally in bean-dropping and hay-making. They begin as early as

nine years old and from that time to 14 they are paid from 4*d.* to 6*d.* a-day. The New Poor Law has not had the effect of sending children out to work more than formerly. Married women are more frequently employed than single. There are but few allotments in this neighbourhood: they are not much approved by the poor, as they have in many instances given their allotments up.

(Subsequently communicated.)

Girls are occasionally employed at stone-picking, potato-planting, potato-picking, bean-dropping, and hay-making, from the age of 9 to 14.

Mr. *Stephen Wood* is examined, and deposes upon oath as follows:—I hold about 480 acres of land in the parishes of Cuckfield and Linfield. I commonly take three or four boys into my service for continual work, and have been in the habit of engaging them as early as 10 years old. They do not live in my house, but in their father's cottage. Formerly boys were taken by farmers into their houses to a greater extent than they are now. It was not uncommon for the parish to make an agreement with the farmer, under which he engaged to receive and board a boy for the benefit which he might derive from his services, and for a slight weekly payment, which he received in proportion to the age of the boy and his capability of work: the agreement lasted for a single year. The practice has been dropped for some time, as it was frequently found that the farmers preferred taking small boys with the trifling sum of money, to engaging older boys without any benefit but their services. Since the discontinuance of this custom, farmers have found it less expensive to hire boys for 6*d.* per day, than to keep them in their houses and feed them. The farmer certainly has more control over the boy whom he employs when he keeps him in his house; but which of the two customs is, upon the whole, better for the boy I will not undertake to say; it depends upon circumstances. I do not think that, if a boy be not overworked, he can begin labour too early.

It is very difficult to find good female servants for farm-houses; and this is a difficulty which I believe to have increased during latter years. My own opinion is, though I do not wish to say anything which may seem to discountenance education, that in the National schools they become habituated to needlework, which is labour of a much finer kind than they must perform in farm-houses, and which gives them a distaste for it. I do not say that this would make them worse servants for a gentleman's family. When girls go out at the early age of 12 or 13 into service, it is usually as nurse-maids that they go, and they often receive some trifle weekly in addition to their board.

It is not common for farmers to sell wheat or flour to their labourers, but some years ago, when the price of corn was high, instead of raising their wages, I offered to furnish them with flour at a lower sum than they could obtain it in the market. When the price was about 1*s.* 5*d.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* per gallon in the market, I undertook to provide it at a sum not exceeding 1*s.* 3*d.* Since the price has fallen the agreement has not been continued. I think the practice a good one, and favourable to the labourer. The boys who work with me are all the sons of some of my labourers. I pay the fathers, not the children. The eldest boy in my service is 14 years of age, and receives 3*s.* a-week.

It is not uncommon for children as early as 8 or 9 years to assist their fathers at threshing. This work is paid for by the quarter. Wheat is threshed at from 3*s.* 4*d.* to 4*s.* the quarter.

Stephen Wood.

John Harris, Esq., examined, and deposes upon oath as follows:—I have been for many years in the parish of Northiam, and have practised as a surgeon and apothecary among the poor, and other classes; I am now medical officer to one district of the Rye Union, which contains a fair proportion of the hop-gardens. In the district of the Rye Union, which is not generally healthy, disease is much increased during the hop-picking season by the influx of strangers, who come partly from Ireland and partly from other

places in this country, and nearly double the population in some parishes. They frequently arrive in a bad state of constitution, and fall ill, sometimes of contagious and other disorders. Scarcely a season passes without some case of small-pox appearing, though by timely precautions, in removing the patient, it has been prevented from spreading to home-dwellers; to whom, however, hooping-cough has been frequently communicated, and sometimes measles. To the home-dwellers, too, wet hopping-seasons are frequently productive of disorders arising from exposure to cold; for it is the practice with all to take to the field during the time of hop-picking; and females and young persons, who have been in the house for a long time together, are much exposed to bad weather in rainy seasons, as rain does not suspend the process of picking.

In fine autumns the hop-picking is not at all an unhealthy occupation, and is even recommended to the weak sometimes by medical advisers. I have rarely met with instances in which young boys have been injured by premature exertions in the hop-gardens; yet it occasionally happens, that by working and digging with their fathers at an early age they soon lose the activity and pliancy of youth.

At the close of the hop-picking the strangers often indulge in intemperate habits. I recollect few deaths among them; agues and intermittent fevers prevail here, owing to marsh miasma. Pulmonary disorders are rare.

Edward Norris is examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—I have been a gardener in gentlemen's gardens for some years; before that I worked in the fields. I have lived in the parish 24 or 25 years. Women work very little in the fields here, except in summer time; they usually earn 9*d.* or 10*d.* for weeding, and 1*s.* for hay and corn harvest, with beer. Some boys begin to work with their fathers, or to act as cow-boys, at 8 years old, for 3*d.* and 4*d.* a-day; they are fit to be plough-boys at 10 or 11, and go with the team, for which they have 6*d.* a-day until they are 13 or 14, when they get 8*d.*; in this case, however, they are sometimes taken into the house by the farmer, and supported without pay, but it is more common for them to live with their parents. A boy is removed from school for work, and returns when his work ceases; they are not often hired by labouring men, except to drop peas and beans after them when they are dibbling, and I think that they get the same rate of wages from the farmer and from the labourer; five boys to one man get 6*d.*,—four boys to one man, 8*d.* A boy requires more food, and wears out more clothing, when he works than when he does not. It is more expensive to have a family of girls than boys; the girls remain at home longer, and assist their mother, if she has a family, or go out to service in the farmers' houses. My eldest girl is 12, has left school, and is still at home.

Wood is the common fuel among the poor; the best faggots cost 32*s.* per hundred; my fuel has cost me nearly 3*l.* this year. Cottage rent averages from 4*l.* to 5*l.* per annum; families in the larger cottages take in lodgers, but they are scarce now, since the railroad has been finished. Some farmers, but very few, sell wheat to their labourers; Mr. Wood, a large farmer, in this village sells flour; it is considered an advantage to the labourer in his case, as he used to sell it at a fixed price through the year, whatever the market price might be, and I know it used to be to the advantage of his men. What his arrangements are now I cannot say, though I know that he still sells them flour. Very few persons here subscribe to benefit societies. It sometimes happens that a boy finds work when his father cannot.

Edward Norris.

Thomas Norris is examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—I was schoolmaster of the National school in this parish for seven years, which I left two years ago in order to keep a school of my own; I now take both labourers' children at 4*d.* a-week, and farmers' sons at 8*d.* per week. I have found, both in the National school, and at my own, that the habit of

labouring in the fields has materially interfered with the education of the pupils; I think that the labourers' children are commonly withdrawn altogether at 10 or 11 years of age, and even the most respectable farmers frequently take away their children during the summer months, for the purpose of employing them on the farms.

Thomas Norris.

James Jennings is examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—I am nearly 20 years of age, and am the son of a small farmer in the town of Cuckfield; I was apprenticed to a hoop-shaver when I was 17 years of age, which is later in life than usual for youths who take to that trade; I paid a premium of 1*l.* to John Dansey, my uncle, who engaged to teach me and let me have my earnings; 2*l.* 2*s.* is the sum more commonly paid as premium; the work usually begins a month after Michaelmas, and goes on to the beginning of June. At the spring of the year (when the days are long) I could earn 8*s.* in the week in the first year of my employment; I can now earn 12*s.*; I staid with John Dansey two winters, and he paid me for my work at the same rate at which he was paid by his employer. Two years ago I was working on a piece of 16 or 18 acres, on which six men were employed cutting the underwood and making it into faggots, two men and three boys besides myself shaving hoops, and one boy who came occasionally to shave poles; the work engaged this number of workmen for five or six months; the eldest boy was 16, and the youngest four or five years younger; they were working with their father. The young make short hoops, and the old hands make long ones. In the long days I think a good hoop-shaver might earn 3*s.* a-day; my uncle and myself used to work about 12 hours; the other man worked more, so did his sons.

James Jennings.

Thomas Boddin is examined, and deposes as follows:—I am 16 years old; I live with my father, and work with Mr. Wood, a farmer; I began to work at 11 years old; I used to drive plough for 6*d.* a-day, and to cut the roots from turnips for the same; for three years I had 6*d.*; I used to thresh with my father sometimes; afterwards I had 9*d.* a-day, now I have 1*s.*, and have had it for a twelvemonth; I work 12 hours; sometimes I hedge and sometimes I thresh; my father works also with Mr. Wood. Before coming into Mr. Wood's service I went for three or four years into the National school; I learned reading, writing, and a little summing; I never wrote much.

Henry Bridgen, aged 12 years, is examined, and deposes upon oath as follows:—Two months ago I picked potatoes for 6*d.* a-day, and have driven plough for the same wages this year; I have also been employed in making bonds and in binding the corn at wheat-harvest; I am not paid for this, but I worked under Thomas Purser, who gave me, in place of wages, the gleaning over four acres which he had to reap, and over nearly all which I bound; he had for his work 9*s.* an acre and the gleaning; by the gleaning I got two bushels and a-half of threshed wheat; I worked for 10 days at binding, going at five or half-past five, and returning at seven in the evening. Reapers mostly get boys to assist them, if they have none of their own, at 6*d.* a-day; my father made the agreement; it took five days to glean the four acres. I go to school when I cannot work. When I went reaping I had four meals; commonly I have three; I had not then meat always once in a day.

Jeremiah Smith, Esq., of Rye, is examined, and deposes, under solemn declaration, as follows:—On the hop-lands women render assistance to their husbands at the poling, as also do boys begin at from 11 to 12 years of age. The contract of the man stands usually for 2*s.* per hundred at four-pole work—six score being reckoned to the hundred. The women are also occasionally hired for this work.

Boys lead the horse at the shim from 12 to 15 years old for from 4*d.* to 8*d.* per day.

Women and their girls tie the hops, and therefore a woman will undertake more or less according to the size of her family. She is bound,

according to the common understanding, to tie the bines at least three times to the pole on which it grows. When the hops reach the top of the poles, it is a common occupation with the women to fasten the bines which have been blown off again to their places. This is called "horsing" the hops, and is so named from a kind of ladder which they mount for the purpose; they are engaged to do this at 10*d.* a-day; they tie by the piece, earning 8*s.* 6*d.* an acre for the three-poled gardens, and from 10*s.* to 12*s.* for the four-poled gardens—six score work.

The hops are picked by persons of all ages, at a rate of wages varying, according to the crop, from 1½*d.* to 3*d.* per bushel, and even to 6*d.*, though this last price has been very rarely given.

Both boys and women help to stack the poles after stripping them. It is piece-work, performed by the man at from 6*d.* to 9*d.* per hundred (six score work), and is commonly not entered on in these parts until after the picking. There are commonly 1000 to an acre. The boy begins this at 12 years old.

Boys open the hops at about from 13 to 15 years of age, or, at least, give their assistance at the process for from 5*d.* to 8*d.* per day; and at 13 or 14 they begin to dig hops under their father's superintendence, who works at 2*s.* per hundred, or 20*s.* an acre, varying to 1*s.* 4*d.* per hundred, or 13*s.* 4*d.* per acre, of six score work, according to the season.

Women shave poles for the hop-grounds, in winter, for wages according to the size of the poles. They also chop rags for manure at 8*d.* per cwt., during the same season; many women are so employed.

On the pasture and corn lands, women spud thistles at 8*d.* or 10*d.* per day; but it is not customary for them to hoe either in corn or turnips. They assist at hay-making and harvest for 10*d.* or 1*s.* per day, when they are hired to "shove" the barley and oats. With their husbands they both reap wheat and bind it. At hay-making and harvest they work from eight to six or seven. At other day-work, from eight to five.

In the middle of winter women give their assistance to their husbands in raking the stubbles. This is task-work, paid by the acre, at from 2*s.* 3*d.* to 3*s.*

Women undertake to dig and pick potatoes. A party of women undertake to dig and pick a cant of potatoes of a certain size; they then divide the sum obtained against them.

Girls are much employed at tying and picking hops, as well as at hay-making and harvest, their wages varying from 4*d.* to 7*d.* a-day, according to their size. The price of labourer's wages is about 2*s.* a-day at task-work: more can be earned. Faggots cost about 28*s.* a hundred when delivered, and in the town coals cost 26*s.*, or less, a ton. 1*s.* 6*d.* a-week is the common rent for a cottage of not less than three or four rooms in the villages.

The labour of hop-digging is not prejudicial to the boys, and I dislike the practice, because unless superintended boys do it inefficiently. It is the lighter part of the ground usually which they turn up with the spade. The boy digs what are called the slips, that is, those spaces between the hills which the man leaves in digging the panel down, and which are cut by the plough in order to drain the surface water off. I have never known any illness caught during wet hopping seasons, but have known many persons quite reinstated to health by the hop-picking. If the hop continues on the bine in wet weather, it spoils much more rapidly than during dry weather. Pickers do not usually stand on the ground, but on boards in bad weather. The strangers who come to pick hops are either persons from the neighbouring villages or Irish, who arrive as they say direct from Ireland, in a very small proportion compared with the other labourers. Part of these are lodged in the cottages of inhabitants, part are received into out-buildings and tents; they generally behave well. I believe that the characters of the women who work in the fields and the hop plantations are good. There is a licence of language observable during the hop-picking; but a man always

superintends the hop-gardens at that season, who keeps strict order among the labourers. The cottagers on the farms keep their houses very neatly. The Agricultural Society of this district offers various rewards to young, as well as old, for length of service in the same place. I do not remark any great disinclination here on the part of the parents to send their children into service. Boys are less taken into farm-houses than they used to be, but I think that boys are better under their father's control.

Thomas Wakeham Richardson is examined, and deposes upon oath as follows:—I am a glass-stainer, residing in Brede, where I have lived for 23 years. My wife has been in the habit of hop-tying since our marriage, which is 13 years ago. She has tied hops for a farmer in this place; she was generally paid by Mr. ———, by a cheque for the wages she had earned, drawn upon the miller of the village, to whom at the time my wife owed no money. She used to obtain the money after some difficulty. It has been a common practice with the farmer to pay his labourers by a cheque on the miller, who is related to him, in order that the miller may take out of the sum drawn for, the amount of his bill against the labourer for flour. I have very frequently heard it complained of that the labourers experience great difficulty in obtaining the money, in cases where they owe nothing, and in obtaining the surplus over the sum which they owe, in cases where they are in the miller's debt. I know that the flour supplied last year by the miller was inferior to that sold by other millers, and that indeed it was very bad flour, sold at the price of good flour. I know that two farmers here pay generally in cheques, and seldom in money. I cannot state what is the common practice with farmers out of this parish as to the mode of payment.

Thomas Wakeham Richardson.

John Sellman is examined, and deposes upon oath as follows:—I am foreman on Mr. Smith's farm, at least that part of it which he hires, containing about 300 acres of land, part of which is hop-ground.

Boys, women, and girls, are all much employed on the farms.

Boys begin to work as early as eight or nine years old at opening the hops, at poling, and at shimming, where they lead the first horse, an older lad being often set to take care of the hind horse. At this age they are paid, when hired, from 4*d.* to 6*d.* per day, and work from seven to five, at day-work. The same wages are paid to boys of the same age, who work for the same number of hours at couching, carting, weeding. The breakfast is usually taken before the boy arrives, and an hour is allowed for dinner.

Boys of the same age also help their fathers at stacking poles, and at reaping the corn sometimes. They even dig holes occasionally as early as nine years old. It is common to pay boys of eight years old 4*d.* per day, and to raise the wages by about 1*d.* every year after that.

Girls are also very commonly employed at an early age. At ten years old they frequently assist their fathers at poling, at stacking and stripping, and at reaping on the corn-lands, where they use the sickle as the boy and woman.

They are hired by the day also, to make hay, to couch, to hand-weed the corn, to tend birds, and sometimes to assist at the threshing machine, at about 6*d.* per day. Their usual hours of work are from eight to five; in times of hay and harvest, from eight to six. They take their breakfast before they arrive, and are allowed an hour for dinner. They assist their mothers at the same age, in clearing the hop-grounds, which is called clearing "chogs," and at a later age in tying the hops. They shave poles at the same age, and are hired to branch hops. The poles they shave by the hundred, and can earn about 6*d.*, at this age, in the day. They are not generally trusted to spud the corn till fourteen or fifteen.

Girls are in this part of the country employed in field-labour very much,—nearly as much as the women or the boys, and there is little or no difference

between their pay and that of the boys. The common hours for day-labour are from seven to five in the long days.

John Sellman.

Henry Edwards Payne, Esq., examined, and deposes upon oath as follows:—I am secretary to the Rye Agricultural Association, and am also clerk to the Rye Union. The association offers rewards of different values annually to agricultural labourers for bringing up large families in independence. The object of the society in establishing these rewards was to encourage the labourer and his rising family in habits of industry, independence, and providence. The number of the candidates lately has not increased, but the difficulties of the labouring class have been greater lately than in the earlier years of the society's existence, which commenced in 1837; and it must be added, that the number of candidates for prizes given to labourers for bringing up their families, with a slight assistance from the parish, has meanwhile increased. There are also prizes given by the society to agricultural labourers 30 years of age, who shall have remained single up to that time, and shall have worked for the longest period on the same property, or in the same service. This prize was given in order to encourage early industry and good conduct, as well as to prevent imprudent marriages. There is no horticultural society in this place. It is my opinion that there is a smaller amount of petty crimes amongst the young in the country than in the town. Offences are observed to increase in the country during the increase of population at the hop-picking seasons. I hear of petty thefts to a greater extent than at other times; two cases, however, of a more aggravated nature occur to my recollection, in which the strangers who came for the hop-picking were the offending parties. It is my impression, and a general impression, that the moral condition of the younger poor engaged in the picking is worse during that season. But there is no open and offensive profligacy.

Only three sons of agricultural labourers have been apprenticed by the parish officers in this Union during the last three years. In two cases out of three no premium was paid with the youths, who were apprenticed to shoemakers at 16 years old. In both cases the boys had received some instruction in shoemaking previously. One of the youths has left his master, who has since the binding become insolvent, and lately worked elsewhere with his master's consent, who still supported him, and received his earnings. The apprentice, a short time back, desired that his indentures should be cancelled. This has not been done. The other youth has within the last two years absconded from his master. What search has been made for him, or where he is, I do not know. Of four who have been bound during the present year to the sea-service without premium, but with an outfit of clothes, one has since absconded with his wearing apparel, which the captain estimates at 7*l*. The three others are not the sons of agricultural labourers.

Henry Edwards Payne.

Edward Sladen Banks, Esq., examined, and deposes on oath as follows:—For the last four years I have been in the habit of attending the poor of one district of this Union. Owing to the nature of the climate in this neighbourhood, ague is the common disorder found amongst the population. The poorer classes, from their work and low diet, are more susceptible of the disease than others. Children are more liable to it than grown persons; it is not uncommon in infants. The disorder seems to arise more from situation than from any causes brought into operation by the nature of employment. I have never been able to trace this or any other malady to which women and children may be liable to their labour in the fields, except that sometimes persons from the town, who are little accustomed to exposure, go out during the hop-picking season, and if it proves wet and cold, are particularly liable to be attacked by disorders of some kind—rheumatism, ague, or influenza.

I have never known any case of a serious sprain being given to a boy from hop-digging.

I have very seldom indeed been called upon to attend any case among the stranger population that assembles here for the hop-picking.

It is generally thought to be the case, that at that time of the year immoralities are practised to a considerable extent. Such is my impression.

The cottages of the poor are ill built and badly ventilated. The agricultural population is more cleanly than that of the town ; it is moderately well clothed, and the tenements kept with tolerable neatness. *E. S. Banks.*

Thomas Hall is examined, and deposes upon oath as follows :—I am 12 years old, have been 4 years at work under Mr. Smith, was paid 5*d.* a-day at first, am now paid 7*d.* I work from 7 to 5, breakfast before I go ; work now at hop-digging ; yesterday I sprained my wrist ; I can move my wrist to-day. I have never hurt myself before at work in the hop-gardens, but in the summer I sprained my thumb at “swapping” (swapping is in other parts called bagging) ; I used to be much fatigued when I first went to work. Driving the horse at harrow is harder work than driving the horse at plough ; driving the horse at plough makes the legs ache ; driving at harrow makes the legs ache more. Hop-digging is a good deal harder than harrowing, it tires the back ; my brother has also sprained his wrist at hop-digging ; he is 11 years old. One can go on working after one has sprained the wrist if one ties it up, but then one keeps catching of it often ; I mean by that, that it gives sudden pains. At swapping, I used to work from light to dark, but hop-digging is harder than swapping ; many boys of my age dig hops. I have now three meals and a bait while I am digging. I have meat about once in the week,—I mean mutton by meat ; I have bacon once a-day. I have 5 brothers and 4 sisters ; I have a clean shirt once a-week : once in two or three years I have a new pair of leather gaiters, and once in three or four years a new jacket. I have had the ague for the last year, but have now got the better of it. I go to school on Sunday ; I went to school at an old woman’s for a-year before I went to work ; we paid 3*d.* a-week. I cannot write ; I can read a little. I have seen girls of my size reaping and couching, but not hay-making. I have seen them help to lay out poles, and to tie hops. I have a brother of 9 years old who gets 5*d.* a-day for work.

James Sargent of *Beckley*, is examined, and deposes on oath as follows :—Boys are employed at 8 years old to 10 in couching, they work for 10 hours, and receive about 3*d.* a-day. One hour is given for dinner. From 10 to 12 they pull weeds, at from 4*d.* to 6*d.* a-day ; they pick potatoes from 8 to 12 years of age, at from 4*d.* to 6*d.* a-day. They are often hired to do this last by a man who pays them per bushel. At 8 years old they scare birds ; this is not done so much at sowing as at harvest ; older boys do it at harvest-time. They reap and thresh at 10 years old with their father, who does the work at from 9*s.* to 14*s.* an acre. They stack and hay-make at 10 years old ; they hoe weeds in the corn at 14 or 15. Girls are employed at the age of 10 years in picking, tying, poling, stacking, weeding and branching. The hours of work are from 8 to 5 ; they are likewise employed at hay-making at the age of 13 or 14, at reaping at 10 or 11, rag-chopping from 12 years upwards, and at pulling and trimming turnips at 9 years of age. Boys are employed in brushing in the woods, and making small faggots, and in pole-shaving. The faggots are paid for at 2*s.* a hundred, and the poles according to size. I have been a farm-labourer for 31 years, and am the father of a large family, and have gained a prize for bringing it up with the least parochial relief. It is common for boys to begin to do regular work in the fields at 10 years, and for girls to do the same at 11 or 12, though they are not ever as much employed as boys. The lads are, I think, sometimes worked too early ; and I think there are instances where their growth is checked by it. I have observed in my family, that the boy who has been at hard work is dull and tired in an evening, and is difficult to wake in the morning, while the boy that goes to school is lively. But in common employment the working child is in better health, and eats more heartily than the child

who goes to school, and is less liable to ailments. Of girls, too, the one who is at common work is the more blooming, but they are apt to get wet and take cold, and I have known cases where they have illnesses in consequence: owing to the better clothing and better food which a child who works must have, what he earns is not clear gain. The father gains, perhaps, 2s. a-week out of 3s.; boys are taken into houses less now than they used to be, and I think that they are not so well off generally in point of food as when they lived with the farmer; but it would cost more money and trouble perhaps to keep them than to pay them 3s. a-week. It is not so general as it was for the farmers to sell their labourers wheat; some labourers like the practice; some would rather have it the other way.

Boys are employed at 8 years old in couching and bird-scaring, and picking potatoes; for couching, at that early age, they receive 3d. per day, for bird-scaring 4d., and for potato-picking 4d. At the last their services are more valuable; and at the second, they are continued through more hours than at couching.

Answers of the Rev. T. Harvey, Rector of Cowden, in Kent.

Labourers' wives throughout this district earn but little by labour in the fields, neither have they any in-door work by which they can obtain money. It is an evil to the labourers; generally speaking, too, there is little assiduity shown in the management of their households, in which they are far less careful and toilsome than the wives of the small farmers, who practise a system of rural and domestic industry reminding me of the classic pictures of rustic life, but of which I can see no traces in the cottage. Many of these belong to estates, and large sums have been expended by the proprietors to give a convenient house and garden, with no increase of rent. In towns, and sometimes country places, cottages have been built on speculation,—some good and comfortable, some mean and confined,—the rent of which, generally speaking, far exceeds the rent of cottages on estates. Where tenements are abundant, more than are needful for the comforts of the poor, they injure the district, as well as those who hire them, without the means of employing themselves; and high rents impair the moral condition of the poor: to pay rents, they must take lodgers, and in a confined cottage the bad effects of such an arrangement require no elucidation. Indeed the crowded state of the cottages is very difficult to remedy; use, and the preference given to such a state, with the power of letting a lodging, have produced habits which are strong and hard to correct. Incest, I believe, is not a crime of frequent occurrence; I cannot say but that I have heard of cases, and even know of a very few, but such instances have always been held in abhorrence by the labouring classes, lightly as they may view seduction, or even infidelity in a wife.

Girls are not employed in agriculture; they go out more now than formerly, when their parents were allowed for the number of their children, into service, both with farmers and gentry; but they still avoid it if they can subsist at home by the needle or in idleness. In earlier years they attend the schools, at which clothes and other benefits are supplied to them with regularity; but even in these cases very trifling causes, such as an imposition or keeping in, will cause the mothers to withdraw them rudely and suddenly, so that it is difficult to consider the value which they set upon education as high.

Boys are employed profitably in wood-cutting, and their fathers prefer this to sending them to school; little value, indeed, seems to be placed on education, and the farmers give no encouragement to carrying it out; it requires constant attention to keep the boys to a Sunday school; reading does not form part of a poor man's pleasures; after working all day he gets

his supper and goes to bed ; nevertheless, when books are lent which interest them, their children sometimes read such to their parents ; but reading is not among the solaces of a labourer's life. Through this district great efforts have been made to promote education ; many schools have been built by subscription, and endowed by landed proprietors and the clergy. The great obstacle is the difficulty in providing a yearly salary. Annual subscribers, where the small parishes are inhabited chiefly by tenantry, and boys enough to form a school of such numbers as to justify the high salary required by masters, can with difficulty be found.

I think that the children cannot be said to be badly clothed ; they are warmly clad generally ; the clothing-clubs have greatly added to their comforts ; at the same time these clubs have shown what a small regular saving will effect ; nevertheless it must be confessed that the labourers have been led to lean too much on such assistance, and do not so much feel the necessity of depending on themselves.

Another great and oppressive misfortune to the labourer's family is the difficulty of expending the earnings to advantage. Confined to the limits of his little circle, and perhaps only late on the Saturday evening receiving his wages, his dealings are solely with the village shop. In these shops articles for consumption are sold of but moderate quality at very high prices. There are numerous instances of large fortunes made in places where the farmers and labourers are the only customers,—such fortunes as could only be accumulated by excessive profits and want of competition. It is a hard case to have earned 12s. by the sweat of the brow, and to be able to procure not more than 9s. would command in a town where competition exists.

The cause of the high price of village shops, I apprehend, arises from want of competition. A labourer (it is considered) is allowed credit for a small amount, and then obliged to deal under fear of having his debt called for, and thus of being left destitute for the time. It may be true that the shopkeeper, by deaths and other causes, loses money, but with such large profits the effect is slight ; and, as he knows everybody, he has good tact, and generally avoids a bad creditor. Millers commonly pursue the same system. Blankets are double the price of a wholesale shop in London ; shoes, too, are excessively high ; the labourer in consequence finds himself ill off, and complains that he cannot live upon his wages, when in fact he cannot lay them out to advantage. Averages and quotations serve little purpose ; deal here, or pay your debt, is the practical argument. I believe one great cause of the bad condition of the poor is to be found in this.

Answers from the Rector of *Brede* to Questions addressed to him.

The men who send their children out earliest are generally the most improvident ; on account of this practice the majority of the boys do not go to school at all, while they who attend quickly forget all they have learned in consequence of the interruptions to which they are subjected by being obliged to go to work.

There is no prejudice among the farmers or others against the extension of education among the children of the poor ; on the contrary, they have lately assisted me in erecting a National school in the parish capable of containing 75 boys and 75 girls, to be educated at a charge of 1*d.* per week.

The effect upon the moral and social character of women, and on the economy of their houses and comfort of their families, from working in the fields, is such, in my opinion, as to destroy all those feelings which are associated with the expressive English name of home, by converting their dwellings into coverts or dens of nightly shelter, whereunto they resort only to rush forth again with their offspring in the morning in search of food.

They thus neglect that parental superintendence whereby economy may be taught, and cleanliness and comfort maintained.

The effect upon girls associating with members of families of the above description cannot but be pernicious; little difference of effect from the various kinds of work in which they are employed can be observed, except in hop-picking. I am of opinion that the "foreign" hop-pickers do much to demoralize the parish, they being generally persons of both sexes of the lowest characters, the very effect of whose manner of living, while employed here, is sufficient to produce the worst feelings and consequences. It is by no means uncommon to see from 8 to 10, or even more, persons of both sexes sleeping together under one shed, without any partition between them save that which the darkness of the night may provide. It is also a common practice for servant girls at this season to give their employers notice to quit their service, assigning no other reason but that they wish to go hop-picking.

I regret to state that too many young women are in a situation previous to their marriage which indicates anything but that sense of modesty which it would be desirable to find. I am thankful to say that there is no common prostitution in the parish. The poor find no difficulty in obtaining cottages on marriage, and they make it in general a primary consideration previous to their marriage, and seldom enter into that state before a residence is obtained. A considerable number of persons having emigrated during the last few years did away with the necessity for such erections; the number of cottages at present existing exceeds the wants of the poor. The cause of articles in this neighbourhood being dearer at the village shops arises from the infamous system of giving checks upon shopkeepers instead of paying the labourers in money, as adopted by farmers, I fear, too generally. The hardship which has been experienced in this parish has been excessive, through the prevalence of the above system, which, by making the petty shopkeeper the farmer's banker, at once exposes the labouring poor to whatever exactions their paymaster may think proper to impose upon them, for, under such a system, they have no alternative but to take his goods at his own price or starve.

The Answer of *Henry E. Duppa, Esq., of Frimingham House, near Maidstone*, to questions addressed to him.

Women are often employed in the fields, single as well as married, and such labour has decidedly no demoralizing effect, but on the contrary an industrious family is always a virtuous one. The hop-picking season has of course a bad moral tendency. In-doors the girls have no regular industrial occupation; the want of it is decidedly felt. They do little but mend their clothes at home. The most provident send their children most regularly to labour and school; but labour in the fields must prevent advancement in education; gaining a subsistence by the sweat of the brow and leisure cannot go together. There is just cause for the statement that the prices of village shops are exceedingly high. I can hardly give a better idea of my opinion on the subject, than by stating an alteration which I made about a year ago in the hour of paying the workmen; my former hour of payment was seven o'clock on Saturday evening, which I have changed to nine o'clock on Saturday morning. My people are enabled to purchase their goods at the market-town in consequence, at the distance of six miles. They have all quitted the village shops for the better and cheaper shops of Maidstone. My opinion is not ruled solely by this circumstance. I am certain that there is great foundation for the complaint.

Answers from Mr. *Tapsfield*, Overseer and Relieving Officer of the Parish of *Farleigh*, near *Maidstone*.

Hop-pickers come from all parts of England and Ireland, and amongst them may be found unfortunate members of various classes. A great number of the English come from St. Giles's, Saffron Hill, Whitechapel, and Kent-street, and they are the most vicious and refractory. The Irish, who are the most numerous, are extremely dirty, both in their persons and habits, and are very indelicate in their conduct and appearance; they frequently bring contagious diseases; they are, however, controllable, and on breaking up are much less troublesome than might be expected. The Irish are generally here a week or ten days before the hop-picking commences, during which time depredations are hourly committed by them, in destroying fences, robbing orchards and turnip-fields: the first of these offences is really a serious one. The young of neither sex have any opportunity of meeting in public. The girls do not plait or spin, but here and there one is brought up to dress-making; they are usually withdrawn from school to assist their mothers, or for service; but for the latter they are most reluctant to engage. It is quite evident that field-labour spoils them for house service, as they are rendered less cleanly; but I am of opinion that the least educated are the best servants. In the parishes contiguous to the town of Maidstone, the cottages are chiefly the property of country builders, who derive a dependent income from them, at a weekly rent, varying from 1s. 9d. to 3s. 6d. In the same agricultural parishes the cottages usually belong to the farms, and are consequently occupied by the labourer. When the cottage is not wholly required for the family a lodger is taken in, but the happiness of the family is too often broken in upon. The farmers are most unwilling to take boys into their houses, or girls, where they are in a better condition both as to necessaries of life and morals.

The Answer of *J. Hart*, Esq., of *Reigate*, assisted by Mr. *Pym*, of *Colley Manor Farm*, near *Reigate*.

In parishes strictly rural and agricultural, the cottages usually belong to the owners of the farms, and are let with the farm to the tenants, who usually let them to their own men. In and near towns, cottages are built on speculation, and this observation will apply particularly to a large common near this town. There is usually speaking a dearth of cottages, and persons on marriage find it difficult to obtain them. They do not stay in their parents' cottages, but generally prefer hiring a room in a stranger's cottage, till they can obtain one themselves. It is an invariable practice for cottagers to let off part of their tenements if they are large. It is very difficult to say at what age they do not sleep together in the same apartment. Many cottages have but one room, and the whole family sleep in one bed. I have often, while taking the examination of a sick man with a magistrate,—an occasion which has more often taken me into a cottage than any other,—observed upon this, and I consider its effects most demoralizing. The cottages of those women who work in the fields are more neat and comfortable than those of others, and the house-work is better attended to. The characters of these women are good; in fact they form the honest and industrious portion of the female poor. Girls very rarely do work in the fields. They commonly leave school about 12, and go into service at about 14 or 15. There is a lack, however, of good servants; but this is not to be attributed to out-door work, but to the mode of bringing up the children. They are not in general industrious, and the same remark applies to the parents. I have been much struck lately with the anxiety shown to take children from the Union-house rather than from the cottages of parents. Farmers are now

MR. DENISON

ON THE COUNTIES OF

SUFFOLK, NORFOLK, AND LINCOLN.

To the Poor Law Commissioners.

GENTLEMEN,—I have the honour to submit to you my Report on the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture in the counties of Suffolk, Norfolk, and Lincoln.

My instructions were to “examine into the sorts of labour at which they are respectively employed, the wages which they receive, the hours of work, and any other similar facts which may tend to throw light on their physical and moral condition.” My main attention was to be directed “to the employment of children.” I was instructed “particularly to inquire into the ages at which they began to work, and the effects which their occupation in labour may produce upon their bodily health, as well as upon their opportunities of obtaining school instruction, as well as moral and religious education.” I was also to inquire into “the condition of the children of agricultural labourers who may have been apprenticed by the parish officers” in those counties.

As my commission was limited to thirty days, I was obliged, in many cases, to ascertain rather the general opinion of those persons best qualified to form one, than to attempt to get at the truth by a personal investigation of the facts; and I feel much indebted to those persons for their readiness in giving information, and their kindness in the manner of doing it.

Sorts of Labour.

1. I submit to you a detailed account of the sorts of labour in which women and children are employed in different parts of Suffolk in each month of the year. I am in possession of exactly the same sort of information with respect to Norfolk and Lincolnshire; but I have not thought it necessary to lay it before you with such particularity, as it is almost the same throughout the three counties.

Effects on Health.

2. All my informants agree (with one exception) that out-door labour is “conducive to health,” both as regards women and children. An opinion to the contrary is given by the Rev. E. J.

Howman, Rector of Bexwell, in Norfolk, who I am told has paid great attention to the condition of the labouring classes. I therefore feel bound to lay before you his statement; though I must add that I have not found the same view entertained by the poor themselves in other parts of the country.

“As far as I have been able to form an opinion, I am satisfied that out-door labour is prejudicial to the health of females; and this opinion has recently received confirmation in the inquiries I have made on the subject amongst my medical friends. There are very few of the age of 50 who are not affected with rheumatism in its various shapes. A young man who has recently come from town to assist one of our surgeons, and who had seen nothing of country practice, was particularly struck with the prevalence of scrofulous complaints amongst the women, which he imputes to their being subject to atmospheric changes, producing irregularity, and consequent constitutional derangement at certain periods.”

One of my informants said that “crow-keeping” was certainly injurious to the health of children; but a medical gentleman living in the same place expressed a decided opinion to the contrary: and I have myself inquired of perhaps 30 crow-keepers in different parts of the country how they liked the work,—whether it hurt their health; and the answers have been, that they liked it, and could not remember when they were last ill.

How far laborious: Preferred to in-door work, or the reverse.

3. In very few instances indeed is their work at all laborious: and owing to the comparative freedom they enjoy (their evenings and Sundays being at their own disposal), the girls of 16 and upwards much prefer field-work to going into service. Indeed it is a general complaint among farmers that they find the greatest difficulty in getting dairy-maids. Some attribute this to over-education, which makes the girls anxious to become housemaids, nursery-maids, dress-makers, &c.; some to their dislike of the confinement of service, and their preference of out-door employment. I believe both accounts of the matter to be true; and that the *most* educated wish to get some more refined employment; the *ill* educated much prefer the activity and freedom of field-work. I am told, too, that out-door work is preferred on account of its effect on the animal spirits. It seems very questionable whether the just mean has been hit between an over-refined education and one that begins and ends in learning to read and repeat the catechism.

Wages.

4. Their wages vary slightly in different parts of the same county. In Suffolk and Norfolk the women get on an average 8*d.* a-day. In Lincolnshire I think 10*d.* is now the average. In the

latter county the labouring classes are certainly much better off, generally speaking, than in the two former. The wages of children vary with their employments, ages, and capacities.

Hours of Work.

5. Their hours of work are usually eight in winter, ten in summer.

Effect on Manners and Conduct.

6. As to the effect of field-work on the manners and conduct of women, I find different opinions. Some persons deprecate it altogether, as tending to uncivilize and demoralize them, from their being thrown so much into coarse male society. Some think it harmless to married women, though very injurious to girls of 16 years old and upwards. Some think it a good preliminary education for all those who will probably become wives of labouring men, and have to train up a labouring man's family. However, nearly all persons agree that at present it is a bad school of morals for girls of 16 and upwards. Though some think that this is more owing to the general want of education in the labouring classes than to the peculiar character of the work itself; and that it is an evil which is already diminishing, and will gradually disappear as education takes root and spreads. In Lincolnshire there is a very general endeavour to get these latter into service, and to keep them away from the field.

Diet.

7. The diet of the labouring classes varies in different parts of the same county; but throughout Suffolk and Norfolk it is unusual for a family to have meat more than once or twice a-week. In Lincolnshire they generally are much better off. I have given an account of the diet in different parts of these counties.

Ages at which they begin to Work. Opportunities of School Instruction, &c.

8. The children usually begin to be employed in the fields at the age of 10. But as their employment is not constant, they commonly return to school in the intervals of work.

The present state of the labour-market, combined with the effect of the New Poor Law, in throwing the labouring classes mainly on their own resources, almost compels the parents to take their children from school as soon as they can earn anything in the fields. And I think it is universally the case in these counties that schooling is so much sacrificed to earning in the course of the year, that both teachers and scholars have great difficulties to contend with, and much time is spent in constantly going over the same short and narrow ground. School instruction thus makes less progress than might be expected from the interest taken, the

sums spent, and the machinery employed in it. Most children, however, learn to read, and many to write : and there may be more truth than some are inclined to believe, in the complaint of the farmers, that " education is being carried too far." They mean (I believe) that the educationists are apt to value " book-learning" at more than it is worth to " the labouring classes : " that " the labouring classes " are educated too much on the same plan as the " leisure classes : " that as they will have to learn most things by " rule of thumb," *i. e.* observation, shrewdness, and practical sagacity, they should have their wits sharpened, and their general faculties stirred, rather than their memories stored with knowledge sometimes obsolete, sometimes useless for any of the purposes of practical life. And that as their staple virtues also are to be different from those of the leisure classes, the schooling and the training should in many respects be different.

The effect of this jostle of notions between the gentry and the clergy on the one hand, and the employers and the poor on the other, is to strike a sort of balance, more or less well-adjusted, according to circumstances, between the education and the earnings. The rich rarely have a very accurate knowledge of the details of a poor man's necessities, and therefore apply general rules where circumstances demand exceptions. The poor have so pressing a sense of their own immediate necessities, that they sometimes even increase those necessities by a want of foresight in choosing the means of escaping them. For instance, they will sometimes take a child from school to earn 2*d.*, when the wear and tear of the clothes will cost more than the earnings ; and the schooling will be lost into the bargain.

But perhaps of the two, the poor man's reasoning is the soundest. For, as the mass of mankind are much more fitted for action without knowledge, than for knowledge without action, employment is preferable to schooling, where a bare livelihood is to be gained by constant labour. " Whatever knowledge is superfluous, in irremediable poverty, is hurtful ; but the difficulty is to determine when poverty is irremediable, and at what point superfluity begins." (Dr. Johnson, vi. 56.) Yet it may be worth considering how far this difficulty may be overcome by the following suggestion from the Rev. E. J. Howman :—That " to make education really useful, a considerable quantity of industrial training should be superadded to what is popularly termed ' book-learning.' "

In connexion with this subject I should be glad to submit to you the following extract from a letter with which I was favoured by the Rev. Stephen Clissold, Rector of Wrentham, Suffolk.

" Notwithstanding all that has been written, and said, and done, to promote the education of the poor, the question still remains to be answered,—Has the education of the children of the poor throughout the agricultural districts advanced or not, since the passing of the New Poor Law ? I am inclined to think that, upon

the whole, it has not; more particularly in those districts in which large out-door allowances in aid of wages and in proportion to the number of children in a family were made to the able-bodied. By these allowances, parents were then enabled to pay for the schooling of their children a higher rate for inferior instruction in a dame's school, than they need do now for a really good education at schools of a superior kind; because their children were not then obliged, as now, to work for their subsistence. Their *time* was at their own disposal; and then they were sent more regularly to the schools. But since the New Poor Law this has been all reversed. The same means of subsistence can now only be procured by work: the necessity for providing for this portion of the subsistence of their children was a care that fell then on the parishes, but now on the parents. By this change the moral principles of the parents have been strengthened, and their affections for their children quickened: so far, much has been done towards advancing the education of the adult poor; but that is not the subject to which I am now inviting your attention: it is this—that if the facts I have stated are true, as respects the children of the poor, though there may be more schools, more teaching, and better instruction, at a less charge now than formerly, yet that parents are *naturally* more anxious to obtain employment than education for their children, and that the children are consequently less regular in their attendance at school whenever employment offers. Thus, though there *may* not be, and I believe there *is* not, any deficiency in the income of the poor now in agricultural districts, as compared with their income previously to the New Poor Law, but rather an increase, and the schools are increased, and teaching improved, and education offered at a less charge, yet the *time* of the children, which was before at the disposal of the parents, and occupied at the village-school, is more occupied by labour in the fields, in order to realize that income.

From which fact this conclusion follows:—that the poor are led to estimate the prospective gain from education far below the present gain of wages for labour.

Now whether this low estimate of the value of education results from the pressing necessities of their condition, or from their own mental degradation and demoralization, and consequent inability to appreciate the value of education; or whether from the change of habits and manners wrought of late years in our social condition by any change in our institutions, or the advances of science, or the progress of civilization, the comforts and conveniences of living have become necessities even to the poor; and whether the wages of labour have actually kept pace with these increasing wants,—are all questions of deep interest, that have hitherto attracted but little attention, and obtained only an imperfect investigation.

With regard to the opportunities for obtaining religious edu-

cation, Sunday schools seem to be very general, usually well attended, and to be of the greatest service in every point of view. The only occupations that keep children from attending them are bird-keeping, and keeping stock, &c. In many cases, the parents make arrangements to enable the children to attend school or church; but this varies much with the means and character of the parents, and perhaps the generality of them do not do so.

Pauper Apprenticeship.

9. I found scarcely any instances of pauper apprenticeship in any of these counties. Since the New Poor Law, the system has been almost universally abandoned. I have heard of no instances of ill treatment or neglect.

The Allotment System.

10. Some years back, the labouring classes in Suffolk and Norfolk were much better off than they are now, owing to the very general employment of women and children in hand-spinning. That employment has been put an end to by machinery, and no other domestic manufacture has been found to supply its place. The population is, therefore, strictly agricultural; and as the family earnings and employment are so much lessened by the loss of the spinning, I inquired very generally whether there was any sort of domestic agricultural occupation in which the women and children could be usefully engaged. The only thing I could find which at all supplied the place of the spinning, was the "Allotment System;" and as all the persons (with two exceptions) to whom I applied for information on this subject spoke as strongly as possible in favour of the system, I hope I shall not be exceeding my instructions if I embody their answers in my report; especially as I have met with some persons who seem to be little aware of its value.

As I found the allotment system (to use the words of Mr. Handley, late M. P. for Lincolnshire) "the most beneficial system that could possibly be devised for the poor," so, on the other hand, did I find a system as completely the reverse in its nature and effects,—viz., the gang-system. This latter is, fortunately, local (as yet); the former is becoming general.

The Gang-System.

11. In the parish of Castle Acre, near Litcham, in Norfolk, my attention was directed to the gang-system of employment which prevails in that and some of the neighbouring parishes, and is said to be the cause of much hardship and immorality.

I investigated the matter as carefully as my limited time would

permit, and I believe the following to be a true account of it. The system is this :—

Suppose a farmer, in or near Castle Acre, wishes to have a particular piece of work done, which will demand a number of hands; he applies to a gang-master at Castle Acre, who contracts to do the work and to furnish the labour. The bargain is made with the gang-master, and it is then his business to make his bargain with the labourers. He accordingly gets together as many hands as he thinks sufficient, and sends them in a gang to their place of work. If the work, as usually happens, is such that it can be done by women and children as well as men, the gang is in that case composed of persons of both sexes, and of all ages. They work together, but are superintended by an overseer, whose business it is to see that they are steady to their work, and to check any bad language or conduct. The overseer usually goes with the gang to the place of work, and returns home with them when they leave off for the day.

This is a general outline of the system; and on paper it may seem not open to much objection; but in practice it certainly works very ill for the employed, though very well for the employer and the gang-master.

In order to see how far the evils that prevail so widely at Castle Acre spring entirely from the gang-system, or are to be traced to other sources, I made many inquiries, in other parts, where I heard that the gang-system of labour is practised. In some I found the same bad results complained of, though perhaps not to the same extent; in others, I did not; but in these last the system was very different, and the really noxious elements of the system did not exist. Upon the whole, the result of my inquiries was, that the Castle Acre system is in itself essentially bad; but that many of the evils there connected with it are to be attributed *in the first instance* to the peculiar circumstances of that parish; and that as long as those circumstances remain unchanged, the gang-system, however it may be regulated, must be accompanied both with hardship and immorality.

Castle Acre is what is called an “open” parish: that is, in the hands of a considerable number of proprietors, while the neighbouring parishes are each owned by one or two (or very few) proprietors. These last, partly in order to prevent an increase of birth settlements, and to keep down the rates, partly from an unwillingness to invest money in cottage property, not only allow no new cottages to be built, but let the old ones fall into ruin. The resident population of these parishes is thereby gradually reduced, as the labourers are forced to quit them, and come to reside in Castle Acre.

Thus, while in the adjoining parishes there are not hands enough left to cultivate the soil, Castle Acre is overstocked with inhabitants that do not properly belong to it, and who are, generally

speaking, the worst characters in the parishes from whence they come. The competition caused by these new comers raises the house-rent throughout the parish; and as they are at the mercy of those who have land at Castle Acre, they are forced to pay exorbitant rents for very wretched dwellings. The following Table, for which I am indebted to Mr. Hudson, of Castle Acre, will show to what extent the above causes have worked to bring an undue population to the parish of Castle Acre.

Inhabitants of Castle Acre.

- 1 Clergyman.
- 4 Farmers.
- 80 Tradesmen and journeymen.
- 49 Labourers, with families, belonging to Castle Acre.
- 12 Poor widows, ditto.
- 103 Labourers, with families, belonging to other parishes.

The following Table will show to what extent the same causes have worked, to draw off the labourers from the neighbouring parishes, so as to leave an insufficient supply of hands for their cultivation.

FARMS in adjoining Parishes where the Gangs issuing from CASTLE ACRE are employed.

Name of Parish.	Acreage of Farm.	Name of Occupier.	Name of Owner.
South Acre . . .	1200	Mr. Clarke . . .	A. Fountain, Esq., Narford.
Ditto	1200	Mr. Palmer . . .	
Newton	700	Mr. Matthews . .	
Narford	1000	Mr. Coker	
West Acre	600	A. Hamond, Esq. .	A. Hamond, Esq., West Acre.
Ditto	1100	Mr. Futte	
Ditto	700	Mr. Cranshey . .	
Ditto	900	Mr. Sheringham .	
Walton	200	A. Hamond, Esq. .	
Ditto	1000	Mr. Wellingham .	
Ditto	300	Mr. Pridgeon . .	F. North, Esq., Rougham.
Gaytonthorpe . .	1200	Mr. Sooby	
Rougham	1000	Mr. Ringer	
Ditto	800	Mr. Matthews . .	Earl of Leicester.
Ditto	700	Mr. Whaites . . .	
Weasenham	500	Mr. Corbold . . .	F.W. Keppel, Esq. Lexham.
Lexham	1100	Mr. Gurwood . . .	
Ditto	400	F. Keppel, Esq. .	
Ditto	500	Mr. Hunter	Dr. Lock.
Ditto	500	Mr. Cook	
Sporle	900	Mr. Bowles	St. Katherine Dock Company.
Ditto	800	Mr. Matthews . . .	
Ditto	600	Mr. Wells	

From these two causes, viz.,—the excess of labourers in Castle Acre, and the defect of them in the neighbouring parishes, sprung the gang-system of employment. The neighbouring occupiers wanted hands, and applied to a person in Castle Acre to supply

them. This was easily done, owing to the great numbers living there, all together, anxious for employment. Thus the farmer got his work done well, quickly, and very cheaply (as I shall show presently); and so the system spread by degrees throughout Castle Acre itself, and over all the neighbourhood; and as it proved very beneficial to the employer, more labourers were continually either driven or drawn to Castle Acre, in order to get work in the gangs, till at length that parish has become (to use the expression of one of the overseers of the gangs) "the coop of all the scrapings in the county; if a man or a woman do anything wrong they come here, and they think by getting among them here they are safe." This last statement is to be explained by the following extract from a letter with which I was favoured by Mr. Hudson, of Castle Acre:—"I have known the parish of Castle Acre for 30 years, and have resided in it for the last 20 years; during the whole of which period it has always been considered the most immoral place for the size in the whole county of Norfolk; and I can but attribute it in a great measure to the want of some one invested with authority over so large a number of inhabitants, the population being upwards of 1500. There is an excellent magistrate (Mr. Hamond, of West Acre), residing about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles off; but when he is from home, which is very frequently the case, we have to go 12 miles to Sir William Folkes, 13 to Mr. Coldham, of Aumer, or 14 to Mr. Gurney, of Runeton, the only acting magistrates in the Hundred of Freebridge Lyme; and the petty session being held only once a month, and that at Hillington, 12 miles from hence, is very inconvenient. Minor offences are suffered to go unpunished from these causes; and the consequence is the gross habits, immorality, vice, and iniquity, of which you saw only a very small specimen. I do think that if we could have a *resident magistrate* in the parish, much might be done to correct the evil."

Having thus shown the origin and nature of the gang-system, I will briefly state what I believe is to be said for and against it.

It is advantageous—

1. *To the employer*: because he gets his work done quickly, effectually, and very cheaply.

2. *To the gang-master*:

Because it makes him a master instead of a labourer, which he would be if the gang-system did not exist.

Because it gives him great local power and an indefinite sort of patronage.

Because it enables him to make money, not only as gang-master, but as vendor of necessaries to the members of the gangs.

3. (As there is no unmixed evil in the world) *in some degree to the employed*.

Because, in the present state of Castle Acre, were it not for the

gang-system many persons would be out of work altogether, who are now enabled by great toil to earn some sort of livelihood.

It is disadvantageous—

To the employed—1. Because it is a mode of getting out of them the greatest possible amount of labour in a given time for the smallest amount of pay: for as the gang-master contracts to do a job *by the piece*, he makes his gang work as hard by compulsion as they would do freely were they working by the piece on their own account, while, in reality, they are no more than day-labourers, receiving *day-labourers' wages*. The former thus gets his work done as quickly as though it were done by the piece; the gang-master gets the extra profit which the labourer usually derives from piece-work; meanwhile the labourer undergoes all the toil of piece-work without any of its extra compensation.

2. As the gang-master engages to do a particular piece of work on a particular day (say, to pull turnips in a field five miles off), if it comes on to rain so that the gang cannot get upon the land, they have to walk there and back for nothing. On a farm they would have a chance of some barn or yard work, or some sort of in-door employ; and even if unemployed they would, in many cases (as I have frequently found), get half a day's pay. The gang-system cuts them off from these chances, and subjects them to the chance of going through great fatigue for no pay. (*See Samuel Peeling's evidence.*)

3. Children of six years old sometimes have to walk five, six, or seven miles to their work, and then, if it rains, to walk back again without earning anything.

4. [I give this in the words of one of the witnesses.] “Unless they do a certain amount of work in the day they get nothing: they go to do a piece, and are to do so much for the day's work. If they go in a morning, and stay a little time only for rain or other cause, they don't get paid. So they (the gang-masters) get each one of the gang to do short work, and then don't pay them: but still the work is done; that's the master's gain. The day is divided into quarters: if they stand the time, they're paid for it; if not, they get nothing.” [*i. e.*, a day is divided into four parts, 2*d.* a part: if they work for one part, they get 2*d.*; if less, they get nothing; and so on with each part.] (*See Mrs. Sculfer's evidence.*)

5. As children can do many little jobs on the land very well at a very early age, if they are kept close to their work; and as owing to the unnaturally dense population of Castle Acre there are very many children of all ages, and owing to the gang-system there are the means of keeping them close to their work, the children are constantly subjected to laborious work at very early ages (four, five, six), and thereby debarred from all opportunities of school instruction.

6. As the only object of the gang-master is to fulfil his contract, he regards the labourer solely as a living instrument, valuable only in proportion to its available power: hence all sorts of characters from all the neighbouring parishes are mixed up in the gang, male and female; and as the large proportion of females consists of grown-up girls, the consequences were thus described to me by one of the overseers of the gangs:—"I believe that owing to ganging 70 out of 100 girls are very imprudent girls—prostitutes. They get working along with the lads in the day-time, and make appointments at night; but still, if you was to come in among them when they are at work, you would not know but that they were all very prudent women and girls. * * * I should not like myself to take a wife out of the gang."

7. As the place of work is sometimes 10 miles or more from Castle Acre, the gang-master then sends them over in carts. "Then they *ought* to stop all night: but my husband would not allow it, for they sleep in barns or anywhere; that's what they said. There's pretty work for boys and girls! We would not agree for ours to stop by no means; not if they lost their work." (See Mrs. Sculfer's evidence.)

8. It throws the whole labouring population into the power of the gang-master, who, if he be a low, hard man, illustrates the proverb that no tyranny is so grinding as that of "a poor man who oppresseth the poor." He has neither the will nor the power much to mend their condition: he may, on the other hand, exact any amount of toil from them, on any conditions he pleases. (See Mary Churchman's evidence, and Mrs. Sculfer's, about Fuller's shop.)

It thus seems that, to *the employed*, the gang-system has a large balance of evil: and as I took great pains to ascertain the general opinion of all classes at Castle Acre respecting it—from the clergyman of the parish, the Rev. J. H. Bloom, who has very justly described its evils in his 'History of Castle Acre;' from Mr. Hudson, whose letter and evidence I subjoin; from the labourers themselves at their own homes; from one of the overseers of the gangs (*see* evidence annexed); from the talk of a gang of grown-up girls and children, with whom I walked some distance; and also from the neighbouring farmers and clergy (*see* Mr. Francis's evidence, and that of Mr. Hogge and others)—I can come to no other conclusion than that it is a very pernicious system, and very destructive of the real elements of happiness to those who are so employed.

But bad as the system is, I believe the evils existing in Castle Acre cannot be remedied merely by putting an end to "ganging:" they lie deeper. If, in the present state of the parish, "ganging" were suddenly put an end to, I fear that a vast number of persons would be thrown out of work, and the immorality and crime of the place would be increased by idleness and distress. I believe

those who first (unintentionally and unknowingly) caused the mischief can alone cure it: I mean the neighbouring landowners. If those 103 stranger families, who now swell the amount of crime and misery at Castle Acre, were living in their own parishes, subject to the control of their landlords, aided by their care and kindness, guided by their example, benefited by that chance contact with persons of birth, education, and station, which indirectly tends to civilize; influenced, too, by that sense of shame which keeps many a man straight when at home who "in a far country" would be "a prodigal," Castle Acre would not be reproached as "the coop of all the scrapings in the country:" its own native population would be uncontaminated by the refuse of other parishes; the gang-system would necessarily cease; and Castle Acre would no longer be, what it now is, the most miserable rural parish I ever saw anywhere.

I shall only add, in conclusion, an extract from a letter on this subject from Mr. *John Peirson*, of *Framlingham*:—"I am rejoiced to find my own county, Suffolk, free from such unhappy proceedings as those around Castle Acre. I had never heard of it, nor can I find any one in this neighbourhood that has; and I feel assured the Norfolk landowners and farmers, as a body, are not aware of it. They comprise a spirited body of agriculturists, and have only to be told to correct the evil."

[Since this report was written, I have received a letter from A. Hamond, Esq., of West Acre, respecting the gang-system: I have annexed it to the evidence. My view of the subject is not altered.]

9. There exists in many parts a practice of giving lower wages to single men than to men with families.

This I must ever consider unjust. It arises from the farmer giving employment to men with families, as single men can be maintained at a lower rate [than the others] if compelled to enter the Union-house.

J. H. Heigham, Esq., Hunston, Norfolk.

And even if they are not so compelled, the employer by this threat of the Union-house gets the average amount of work done at the lowest possible rate of wages.

I mention this as it indirectly affects the condition of the women, by driving the men to make improvident marriages; it also naturally causes discontent. This practice, though not uncommon, is by no means general.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient Servant,

STEPHEN CHARLES DENISON.

4, *Harcourt Buildings, Inner Temple,*

February 2, 1843.

SUFFOLK.

Evidence respecting the sorts of labour performed by WOMEN and CHILDREN in different parts of the County throughout the year.

Neighbourhood of *Bury St. Edmunds*.

(Witnesses)—Mr. Muskett (Duke of Norfolk's agent).

Col. Ray.

Mr. Rodwell, of Livermere.

Mr. Burrell, of Westley.

Mr. Turner (Lord Bristol's agent).

January Scarcely any.
February End of month hoeing wheat.
March Same.
April Same.
May Same.
June Hay-making.
July
August Harvesting and gleanings.

Generally speaking, women are but little employed in out-door work in this part of the country.

October
November Topping and tailing turnips.
December Same.

Livermere.

This year there had been, perhaps, three weeks' employ in gathering acorns.

Mildenhall.

(Witnesses)—Mr. Isaacson, Clerk to the Union.

Mr. E. Curling, agent to Sir H. Bunbury.

Mr. W. Paine

Mr. R. Gittins } Yeomen.

Mr. E. Cowell

January Generally no employment. Perhaps they go out washing, or take it in—nothing else.
February Ditto.
March Clearing land, dropping spring corn, digging allotment land.
April More out-door work, hoeing wheat, weeding, &c.; picking dirt off land, allotment work.
May Ditto, and burning surface of fen-land.
June Ditto, and hay-making (most employ).
July Ditto; burning land almost over; hay-harvest still going on in fens and low land.
August Wheat-harvest and gleanings.
September Ditto.
October Ditto in the fens at end of month, dibbling wheat, &c.; cleaning lands, topping and tailing turnips. (This last not much done in this district.)

November Wheat-harvest, and gleaning in the fens at end of month, dibbling wheat, &c. ; cleaning lands, topping and tailing turnips. (This last not much done in this district.)

December Scarcely anything. This and January the worst months in the year for employ.

Wickham Brook.

(Witnesses)—Mr. J. Everard }
Mr. J. Pryke } Farmers

January None.

February None.

March A little employ in picking stones off the land, and hoeing beans and wheat.

April Ditto.

May Ditto.

June Ditto; scarcely any hay-making here.

July Ditto.

August Gleaning in a forward harvest; no reaping—we have too many men for that.

September Gleaning.

October Dibbling wheat, heaping turnips for carting, topping and tailing them (but very little employ in this way).

November }
December } A chance day or so pulling turnips.

Lavenham.

(Witnesses)—Mr. Scott, relieving-officer | The Rev. W. Cadman.
Mr. T. Turner. | The Rev. R. Jackson.

January Scarcely any.

February Ditto.

March Dropping beans and peas (mostly done by children).

April }
May } In these months they get some employment in weeding,
June } hay-making, harvesting, and dibbling wheat; but
July } in this Union, as the supply of male labourers is in
August } most instances equal to the demand, women are
September } not much employed on the land—on the whole, not
October } more than four or five months in the year. Straw-

plaiting is now the only domestic manufacture in this neighbourhood. Formerly, all the women and children in the neighbouring villages, from 10 to 15 miles round, used to be employed in spinning yarn, and the wife and children, on an average, could earn nearly as much as the husband. 150 wool-combers used to be employed in Lavenham, each of whom furnished work for 30 spinners. There are now only 16 wool-combers in this and all the adjoining parishes. Their employment is quite superseded by machinery; the population is now become almost purely agricultural, and much less well off than formerly.

November Scarcely any.

December Ditto.

District between *Woodbridge* and *Saxmundham*.

(Witness)—J. Moseley, Esq., Glenham House.

The women are employed at different times of the year in weeding, hoeing, stone-picking, hay-making, gleaning, drawing beet and turnips.

About half of the whole number of females (married women?) are employed in out-door work.

Hundred of *Blything*.

Evidence.

Report of a Committee appointed by the Board of Guardians of the Blything Union to inquire into the employment of women and children in agriculture.

The Rev. Stephen Clissold, Chairman of the Committee.

Lord Stradbroke, Chairman of the Union.

Mr. H. White, Solicitor to the Union.

- January* Pulling turnips (weather permitting), gathering stones, forking grass out of turnip-land, feeding stock, occasionally assist in the barn, dressing corn.
- February* Much the same, according to the weather.
- March* Same, and planting peas and beans; latter end of month hoeing wheat, weather permitting.
- April* Hoeing wheat, and picking couch grass.
- May* Ditto.
- June* Ditto, and hay-making.
- July* Ditto, weeding instead of hoeing, singling turnips and beet by hand.
- August* Harvest-work and gleanings.
- September* Ditto; also pulling or cutting beans, taking grass out of pea and bean land, and preparing land for wheat.
- October* Dropping wheat and taking up grass, and in some parishes pulling beet and turnips.
- November* Same as October.
- December* Same as January.

In December, January, and February, they are least employed in agriculture; in November and March, they are less employed than in April, May, June, July, and August. As a large part of the Blything Union borders on the sea, the women are frequently much employed with their domestic concerns during September and October, at the commencement of the fishing season.

The domestic manufactures are—1, plaiting; 2, knitting; 3, tailoring; 4, braiding herring nets; 5, shoe-binding; 6, making labourers' gloves; 7, washing for families; 8, dress-making.

The earnings from these employments are—1, 6*d.* to 8*d.* a-day; 2, about 4*d.* a-day; 3, 6*d.* and board; 4, 6*d.* to 1*s.* a-day; 5, 6*d.* to 1*s.* a-day; 6, 6*d.* a-day; 7, 1*s.* a-day and board; 8, 6*d.* and board, when out; 6*d.* to 1*s.* at home.

Children.—The younger children of both sexes are employed in bird-keeping, stock-keeping, dropping corn, gathering stones, and picking grass. The older children are also employed in weeding corn. The boys also assist in general farm-work.

Stowmarket.

(Witnesses)—Mr. Buchanan, Clerk to the Union.

Mr. John Hart.

Mr. Kirby Moore, of Badley.

- January* Usually no employ.
- February* Bean-setting, &c.
- March* Ditto.
- April* Hoeing wheat, picking stones off land, tying the hops.
- May* Ditto.
- June* Ditto; hay-making at end of month.
- July* Weeding wheat (occasionally) and hay-harvest.

August Women always employed in raking barley after the waggons; when gleaning comes in they are all engaged in that, and will not leave it; hop-picking.

September Very little employ except in hop districts, unless barley is late; they sometimes go out to gather bean-stalks for firing.

October Dibbling and dropping wheat.

December Scarcely any.

In August and September the National school is broken up, to allow the children to go gleaning and hop-picking. This last occupies about three weeks, if the crop is good. About 1500*l.* was paid this year by the different growers for picking. The hops are a great benefit to the poor here. If the crop fails, they often find great difficulty in paying their rents at Michaelmas.

Walsham-le-Willows.

(Witnesses)—Mr. John Miller | Mr. Henry Plummer.
 Mr. John Fisher. | Mr. C. M. Burcham, Relieving-officer.

January No employ.

February Ditto.

March A little dropping oats and beans, and picking stones.

April Hoeing wheat and picking stones.

May Ditto.

June Weeding corn (a good deal done here—it's a stiff clay soil), hoeing beans.

July Hay-harvest, a little bean-hoeing.

August Very few women employed in harvest; they all glean.

September Well employed on allotments—not elsewhere.

October Ditto; a few children employed in dropping.

November } None.

December }

Neighbourhood of Eye.

(Witnesses)—Mr. R. Woodgate. | Mr. B. Younger.
 Mr. T. Trench. | Mr. J. J. Tuck.
 Mr. H. Adams. |

January } None.

February }

March Dropping spring corn.

April Hoeing wheat, picking stones.

May Same.

June Weeding corn, hoeing beans.

July Hay-harvest, a little bean-hoeing.

August Dearest time for all employment; some trifling employ in raking barley.

September Gleaning; a good deal of employ in pulling beans in heavy soils for a week or two.

October Some little dibbling and dropping.

November } None.

December }

There is a little lace-weaving in Yaxley, and a few of the adjoining parishes, but very little.

Framlingham.

(Witnesses)—Mr. John Peirson. | Mr. J. Cottingham.
 Rev. J. Attwood. | Mr. G. Edwards.

January } None.

February }

March A little dropping and stone-picking.

April A little dropping and stone-picking.
May Hoeing wheat and stone-picking.
June Weeding corn gives a good deal of employment here.¹
July Hay-harvest, about a fortnight or three weeks' employ;
 a little bean-hoeing.
August Very little employ for women, except in raking up
 barley and "gavelling;" gleaning.
September Gleaning.
October Little employment; some dropping.
November } Some employ in storing mangel-wurzel and turnips.
December }

District between *Ipswich* and *Woodbridge*.

(Witness)—R. N. Shawe, Esq., Kesgrave Hall.

The women are employed at different times of the year in dropping corn, taking up carrots and turnips, hoeing wheat, hand-weeding, hay-making, and harvesting.

In reply to the question, "What proportion the earnings of women and children bear to the whole amount of labour on the respective farms?" the farmers in this neighbourhood say that they vary from one-seventh to one-twelfth of the whole labour employed. The variation arises from the difference of opinion as to the best mode of weeding, some farmers preferring to do it by hand, some by the plough.

The farmers object to employing young unmarried females, because it lessens the work for married women and their families.

Hunton, between *Bury* and *Eye*

(Witness)—J. H. Heigham, Esq.

During a part of March, April, and May, women and children are employed in picking stones, weeding, and dropping corn; in June, hay-making; August, gleaning. The employment in these months is not regular—in other months they are generally unemployed.

There is no domestic manufacture. Spinning has been superseded by machinery. Straw-plaiting has been introduced, but without success; no sale can be got for it.

Neighbourhood of *Bungay* and *Beccles*.

(Witness)—Mr. R. W. Clarke, Solicitor to the Union.

The women and children are employed more or less in weeding, hoeing, stone-picking, and hay-making.

The children are also employed in crow-keeping, watching stock, dropping and pulling turnips.

Neighbourhood of *Hadleigh*.

Mr. J. Last, Clerk to the Union.

Out-door labour for women is confined to a little weeding of corn in the spring; occasional labour in the hay-time; gleaning at harvest, and for children and young women, dropping wheat about Michaelmas.

The young girls are little employed, except in weeding, gleaning, and dropping; the boys are very generally employed.

A very little spinning is done here; it is paid for at a very low rate; perhaps from 1s. to 2s. a-week. There is also some plaiting in a few parishes; young females earn at times 2s. and 2s. 6d. a-week by it.

Thorington, between Halesworth and Saxmundham.

(Witness)—Mr. R. Appleton, agent to Colonel Bence:

January No employ.
February } Some employ in picking stones off young clover layers,
March } for repairing roads.
April } Partial employ in sowing wheat.
May }
June } Weeding corn and hay-making.
July }
August A profitable month. It's not uncommon for a family
to glean from a coomb to a quarter of wheat, according to the number
and activity of the family.
September Some employ in forking couch-grass and docks out of
the bean and pea stubbles previously to their being ploughed for
wheat.
October } Partial employ in dropping wheat.
November }
December None.

2. *Effect of Field-work on health.*3. *Diet.**Meal hours (when at work.)**Hunston* (Mr. Heigham's evidence.)

2. Conducive to health.

3. Chiefly bread, cheese, vegetables, tea, and milk.

4. From twelve to one or half-past; and half-hour at four.

Glenham (Mr. Moseley.)

2. Good.

3. Meat once a-week; bread, cheese, butter, and tea, daily.

4. One hour for dinner.

Kesgrave (Mr. Shawe.)

2. Favourable to health.

3. Bread, cheese, tea, pork, and beer; principally bread.

4. Twelve to one, dinner.

Framlingham.... (Mr. J. Peirson; Mr. Jefferson, medical officer.)

2. "Children generally get into better health when they get to an age when they can get out-door employment; I mean better than they otherwise would be likely to have at that age. I don't know any instance of diseases arising from their employments—none from bird-keeping."

Mr. Jefferson.

4. If one-journey work, no rest for dinner;—if two, one hour in the middle of the day.

Hadleigh (Mr. Last.)

2. Beneficial.

3. Bread and potatoes, sometimes cheese; rarely meat.

4. Breakfast about seven—dinner between twelve and one—tea or supper about six or seven, according to circumstances.

Lavenham..... (Mr. Scott.)

3. Their diet depends in a great measure upon the number of the family, and the amount of wages brought home to the common stock; whether they are frugal in their habits, and in the outlay of their money, &c. I can give you some information, however,

on the subject, having made myself acquainted on different occasions with the manner their wages are disposed of.

The following is an account from a woman whose family always appear clean and neat, and whose children are brought up to industrial habits.

Name.	Age.	Earnings.		Expenditure.	
		s.	d.		s. d.
Robert Crick	42	9	0	Bread	9 0
Wife	40	0	9	Potatoes	1 0
Boy	12	2	0	Rent	1 2
Ditto	11	1	0	Tea	0 2
Ditto	8	1	0	Sugar	0 3½
Girl	6	..		Soap	0 3
Boy	4	..		Blue	0 0½
				Thread, &c.	0 2
				Candles	0 3
				Salt	0 0½
				Coal and wood	0 9
				Butter	0 4½
				Cheese	0 3
Total earnings .		13	9	Total expenditure .	13 9

But there are numbers of families who, although in the possession of the amount of wages shown above, do not dispose of it with such frugality, but appear in the greatest state of destitution; many others, with the same number of children, do not get the wages this man's family have. The family I have given as an example is more to show you, that with industry and frugality their diet consists principally of bread and potatoes. There are, however, some who, when their families are grown up, by putting their earnings together, occasionally get a piece of meat at their supper-time, and their Sunday dinner.

Thorington (Mr. R. Appleton.)

2. As their employment is in the open air, and not very laborious, and so various, it must, I think, have a good effect on health.

3. Bread and cheese, or bread and butter and tea, form their principal diet, but they have occasionally animal food; and as they all have gardens, they have always vegetables at command; but they are not good managers in those matters.

4. Twelve to one, dinner.

Blything Union . . (Report of Committee.)

2. Generally conducive to health.

3. Breakfast—tea, milk, bread, butter, lard, cheese, dumplings of flour, and occasionally bacon or pork. Dinner—same as breakfast, with vegetables, and occasionally beer. Supper—same as breakfast..

4. Breakfast before eight, at home, before going to work. Dinner, at home, at twelve, one hour. Supper, at home after work.

Bungay, &c. (Mr. Clarke.)

2. Decidedly beneficial.

3. Bread and butter and tea; sometimes bread and milk; occasionally cheese, but very seldom meat or beer. The children have bread and butter, or molasses.

4. Two hours for a meal, from twelve to two. Crow-keepers, &c., either take their dinners with them, or have them brought to them in the field.

Mildenhall (Same witnesses as before.)

2. Generally healthy ; employment causes no diseases.

3. Chiefly flour pudding, potatoes, bread, butter, cheese, a small portion of bacon, more or less often, as a man has a large or small family. Tea.

4. Half-an-hour breakfast ; one hour dinner. If they have breakfasted before coming out, they usually take half-an-hour's rest in the course of the morning.

Wickham Brook . . (Same witnesses as before.)

3. Pudding, potatoes, bread ; very little meat.

Stowmarket (Mr. K. Moore.)

2. Beneficial to health.

3. Chiefly bread, not much meat.

4. Breakfast before they come ; one hour at noon for dinner ; rest again, and eat something at four.

The witnesses are the same as above.

5. *Whether out-door work is preferred to in-door, or the reverse.*

6. *Whether married women, widows, or girls are chiefly employed.*

7. *Effect of field-work on manners and conduct.*

Mildenhall 5. They like out-door work ("broad-work," as they call it) so much, that it is difficult to get an in-door servant. They will run the chance of getting 'broad-work sooner than come into service.

6. Married women are very seldom employed abroad,—usually grown-up girls.

Wickham Brook . . 6. Married women generally unemployed.

7. I don't think field-work has a good moral tendency as regards young girls ; in short, I cannot but attribute the unsteadiness of young women in a great measure to the congregating together at field-work.
Rev. C. Barton.

Lavenham 5. Women in general *here* don't like out-door work, if they can get any chance of doing in-door work. *Mr. Richardson.*

The greatest portion of labourers' wives seldom come from their homes to work, the majority preferring in-door employment.

Mr. Scott.

Eye 6. Few married women, some widows ; generally girls.

Kesgrave 5. Women prefer in-door work, such as washing, &c., when they can get it, because the earnings are generally greater than those of field-work.

6. 7. Field-work is not fit for young women, who ought to go into service. Farmers object to employing them, as it lessens the work for married women and their families. Field-work is no school of morals to young women.

Framlingham . . . 5. They, generally speaking, dislike out-door work, daily work in particular ; formerly, just within my recollection, daily-work was much more common, indeed very general ; but that is not at all the case now.
Mr. Cottingham.

Hunston 5. Out-door work is the only sort of work to be had, except by a very few employed in needle-work. It is *the want of employment*, and I may almost say *complete idleness*, during a great part of the year (particularly with women and girls), that increases the *bastardy list*, among other evils.
Mr. Heigham.

Glenham 5. Out-door employment is greatly preferred by women and girls to domestic service.

6. Its effects, moral and social, are prostitution and unfitness for wives and mothers, or domestic servants. Effect of in-door employments, the reverse. *Mr. Moseley.*

Blything Union. 5. In-door work is preferred to out, because of the wear and tear of clothes in the fields, and the opportunity which in-door employment gives to attend to the domestic duties.

Bungay, &c. 5. Out-door work agreeable. There is no preference, as there is no in-door employment.

Thornington 5. Work quite agreeable. They have no in-door work.

8. *Wages of Women and Children.*

Blything Union... Women, average wages 7*d.* a-day; occasionally during the hay and corn harvest from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a-day.

Children, from 3*d.* to 6*d.* a-day for *girls*; 3*d.* to 9*d.* for boys, according to age and ability for work.

Neighbourhood of Bungay and Beccles.

Women, weeding, hoeing, stone-picking, 7*d.* to 8*d.* a-day; hay-making 10*d.* to 1*s.*, and perhaps beer.

Children, 2*d.* to 5*d.* a-day.

Thornington..... Women, 7*d.* to 10*d.* a-day, varying according to the nature of the work and season of the year.

Children, from 4*d.* to 8*d.* a-day, according to their age and the nature of the work.

Kesgrave Women, 6*d.* to 9*d.* a-day; but when taking work with their families, something more.

Children, 4*d.* to 6*d.*; but in wheat-dropping, when the work is done by the acre, something more.

Hunston Women, about 8*d.* a-day; hay-making 8*d.*, and some beer.

Children, 1*s.* 6*d.*, 2*s.*, and 4*s.* a-week, according to age, &c., &c.

Glenham..... Women, 2*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* weekly.

Hadleigh Women, about 6*d.* a-day weeding; 9*d.* hay-making and dropping wheat.

Children 4*d.* to 6*d.* a-day; dropping is paid best.

Neighbourhood of Bury.

Women, 8*d.* a-day.

Children, 4*d.* to 6*d.*

Mildenhall..... Women, day-work, generally 8*d.*; in fens, 9*d.* and 10*d.* Hay-making, 8*d.*, and 1½ pints of beer. Piece-work 1*s.*, sometimes 1*s.* 3*d.* a-day. Women, when employed dibbling, earn from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 1*s.* 8*d.* a-day. It is the hardest work they do. There are but few who can do it; they must be brought up to it. Some do it very nearly as well as the men. It lasts from three weeks to a month.

Children tending birds, 2*s.* to 3*s.* a-week; dropping, 4*d.* to 8*d.* a-day.

Wickham Brook... Women get 6*d.* a-day on an average. Setting wheat is paid better. It varies from 5*s.* to 7*s.* an acre. One woman with two good droppers, on a fine day, can do half an acre, and at 5*s.* an acre, earns 2*s.* 6*d.*, (herself 1*s.* 6*d.*, the children 6*d.* each); but few women can earn above 1*s.* a-day. Much depends on the manner of setting, whether close or wide.

Lavenham..... Women, during seed-time, spring, and autumn, about 9d. a-day for dropping, 6d. weeding, 8d. hay-making.

Stowmarket..... Women, hop-picking, 7d. a-day (children paid in proportion); harvest and raking-time 1s. a-day, and a quart of beer (when they work all the day); hay-making 9d., and 1½ pints of beer; at other times 8d. a-day.

Children, from 2d. to 4d. a-day.

Eye..... Woman, 6d. to 8d. a-day.

Framlingham.... Woman, 6d. to 8d. a-day, field-work; 10d. to 1s. in hay-time and harvest.

Children, 2d., 3d., and 4d. a-day. Girls above 16, 6d. a-day. Lads the same, and upwards.

9. Hours of Work.

Neighbourhood of Bury.

Women, eight A.M. to four P.M.

Mildenhall..... In summer from eight, or a little before, to six; winter, eight to four.

Wickham Brook.. When a woman does piece-work, she comes at seven A.M., and leaves at six. They work generally as long as they can.

Lavenham..... Generally from six or seven till six, if the day admits of it. In the hay-time and harvest, some of their labour requires them to be from home a greater number of hours.

Stowmarket..... Hay-making, eight to six.

Eye..... The day's work is sometimes divided into two journeys. In that case they in summer come at seven A.M., and go at twelve; return at two and go at six.

Framlingham.... Children come at eight, bring their dinner, rest from twelve to one, leave work at five or six, according to season of year. They earn not less than 1s. 6d., nor more than 2s., by crow-keeping. Every person in the parish employs them in that way. I dare say at one time we had 50 or 60 children employed as crow-keepers. What is called "one-journey" work is very common in this neighbourhood, and is very much liked by the labourers at certain times, *i.e.* to do the day's work without a rest for dinner; and this generally ends at three P.M. "Two-journey" work is when you rest one hour in the middle of the day for dinner. I very often consent to the one-journey on the Saturday, as it enables the poor person to wash and clean himself ready for Sunday. I believe our labourers, when they work one-journey work, have always a crust of bread in their pockets for five minutes' luncheon.

Mr. J. Peirson.

Hunston..... Eight to six in summer; hay-making later.

Kesgrave..... Eight till five; (twelve to one, dinner).

Glenham..... Ten hours in summer, eight in winter.

Hadleigh..... Nearly all the day. None of it laborious work.

Bungay..... Same as male-labourers; but more when employed in crow-keeping and keeping stock.

Blything Union... Women average eight hours a-day; during hay and corn harvests from one to two hours more, according to the necessities of the case and urgency of the demand for labour; extra payment in all such cases being made in the above proportion.

Children; boys, six A.M. to six P.M., and less as the length of the day requires. Girls and young children, same as their mothers.

Thorington..... Women, eight to six; in the short days from eight till dark.

Children, (same as last witness).

CHILDREN.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Sorts of work.</i> 2. <i>Effect of work on health.</i> 3. <i>Hours of work.</i> 4. <i>Diet.</i> 5. <i>Meal hours.</i> 6. <i>Wages, (See Evidence, No. 8, Women.)</i> | } | <p>On these points the evidence respecting the women is applicable to children of both sexes. Their work (with the exception of bird-keeping and stock-keeping) is precisely the same in kind with that of the women, and only varies in degree according to the age and strength of the children employed.</p> |
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7. *Ages at which Children begin to Work.*

Mildenhall..... In some places (in summer) they begin as early as six years of age. They can only pick up the weeds off the land a few weeks in the summer months. They usually go out to work from the ages of 10 or 12.

Wickham Brook.. At the age of seven and upwards they go bird-keeping and picking weeds off the land, and such work as that.

Stowmarket..... Boys begin to work about 12. They usually have been to school before that age, and then they go again at intervals.

Badley (Mr. K. Moore).

Boys sometimes come at 2*d.* a-day—little things that can hardly walk, come with their fathers; it is better for them than idling about the streets or roads.

Framlingham ... Mr. Lane (Schoolmaster).

Children sometimes go to work at six years of age. No agricultural children stay at school after eleven. They usually go at seven. In bird-keeping the girls are more commonly employed than the boys.

Mrs. Tucker (Schoolmistress).

Average of girls go away at 12 years of age.

Mr. G. Edwards. Generally speaking, when children get to 10 or 11 years of age, they can [help to] support the family. *Small* children are the real burthen.

Blything Union.. Not generally employed before 9 or 10 years of age.

Kesgrave From 10 to 12 years of age.

Bungay About 11 years old. At seed-time they go out for dropping, with their parents, at eight years; by themselves at 11 or 12.

Hadleigh In weeding corn and dropping wheat, boys and girls work as early as 10 years of age, and in some instances earlier.

Thorington..... They begin to assist their mothers in stone-picking, &c., at an early age—say eight. At 10 the boys begin to do a little on the land, such as pulling turnips, crow-keeping, and other light work.

Hunston..... About 10 years, or as soon as they can earn a few pence by keeping birds.

8. *What learned before going to work ; if kept up afterwards or forgotten.*
 9. *Whether the schooling is sacrificed to the earning, or the earning to the schooling.*

Neighbourhood of Bury. Mr. Burrell, (Westley).

9. The parents were generally anxious to send their children to school, and would forego their earnings in order to keep them at school, *i. e.* at charity-schools, where the instruction costs nothing. This was generally the case where the parents earned enough to support their children away from their homes.

Mildenhall. 8. They usually have been to school before they go to work, when they begin at the age of 10. They go pretty generally to Sunday schools; learn most there; reading [and writing] principally, from 4 to 15 years of age. They are taught writing two evenings in the week in Dissenting schools. During the winter months they mostly go to school, both boys and girls. They learn of a winter and forget in the summer.

Wickham Brook. . . 9. The parents are not generally so anxious about it as could be wished. In many instances a slight correction at school has caused the removal of the child; and as soon as the children can earn anything they are generally taken away. In large families, this is not to be wondered at, as every addition to their small means is of consequence. Children come to my school (a Sunday one) at about six, and leave for work about 12 years of age.

Rev. C. Barton.

Lavenham. 9. There is great difficulty in getting attendance at school, because of the straw plait; they attend at intervals; there are schools here where education is given free; we let the children come in for half-days; the boys on the whole are more regular in their attendance than the girls, perhaps owing to the latter being more employed in plaiting. They can plait at a very early age, before it would be worth while sending them to school. We frequently find that boys are kept away from Sunday-schools, stock-keeping on the different farms,—an evil seemingly without a remedy.

Rev. W. Cadman.

Stowmarket Boys begin work about 12 years of age; have usually been to school before, and then go again at intervals.

Radley. 8. They are taught to read at night in well-brought-up families, or on a Sunday. On Saturday afternoon some go to a Dissenting school, and get a little instruction. They are generally taught to read somehow.

9. There is a tendency to sacrifice the schooling to the earnings. The labourers bring their children as soon as the little things can do anything at all.

Eye 8. At Eye there's a charity school, where children can get schooling for nothing; but this is not the case in the rest of the Union (Hartismere); therefore the parents don't send their children, except perhaps to Sunday schools. The amount of education thus varies very much, according to opportunity; where there are schools, they usually know something, otherwise not.

9. Generally speaking, the schooling is sacrificed to the earnings.

Framlingham The New Poor Law had a visible effect on education, in making children used as earners at an earlier age. We tried to lessen the evil by admitting them at an earlier age into the school. It is impossible to keep children regularly to school at any age. It is a great advantage where instruction can be given free; but it is not prized as much as it ought to be by the poor, except in hard times.

Rev. T. Attwood.

8. A child of 10, at all apt, can read tolerably well; will know his catechism, write middling, and some ciphering.

9. They are generally taken away from school, if they can earn anything by field-work. *Mr. Lane, Schoolmaster.*

9. There are 90 girls in my school; about one-third are absent in the winter—about two-thirds in the summer. The parents usually sacrifice schooling to earning. They go to field-work as soon as six years of age; the elder girls are absent sometimes from six to eight months in the year. Bird-keeping usually takes them from school, Sundays as well; they learn bad habits in the fields. Dropping is a thing that causes bad manners, from their working all together in numbers. They fall off much in manners when employed in field-work, and forget most of what they had learned, if they are away six months. In our schools, it's teaching the same things always over again. *Mrs. Tucker, Schoolmistress.*

Blything Union... 8. Spelling, and some proficiency in reading the New Testament. Some slight acquaintance also with the first principles of the Christian religion, and in general some slight acquaintance also with the Church catechism, and sometimes a little knowledge of writing.

9. The children of agricultural labourers are generally taken from school whenever employment offers.

Hadleigh..... 8. There is scarcely a parish in this neighbourhood that has not a school where poor boys and girls are taught to read, and the girls to knit and sew.

9. When any profitable employment can be found, the children are usually taken from school to attend to it. They can then attend the Sunday school.

Thornington..... 8. There are schools free to them in almost every parish; they are taught to read and write, if their parents will send them.

9. Generally taken from school, when there is any work for them to do, and sent there again when the work is completed.

Bungay..... 9. Always taken from school.

Kesgrave..... 8. Varies much with opportunity.

9. They are taken from school whenever they can get work. In Kesgrave school, consisting of 190 children from four surrounding parishes, about 60 are reported away at work daily.

Hunston..... 8. The general instruction given in a village school under the direction of the minister of the parish.

9. Taken from school where employment can be found; when nothing to do in the fields, they attend school again.

10. *Pauper Apprenticeship.*

Mildenhall..... Only one instance in this parish [for some years back]. A boy, James Andus, aged 18, who had lost his leg from disease, was bound apprentice to a shoemaker, for two years. Premium 10*l.* The master was to pay him 4*s.* a-week, and lodging.

Wickham Brook.. Hardly exists. It used to be done at times, but not since the New Poor Law.

Lavenham..... Not very frequent in my neighbourhood; I am not aware of any since the New Poor Law.

Stowmarket..... At an end; had been given up before the New Poor Law, in consequence of abuse; since that, almost if not wholly abolished.

Eye Hardly exists.

Framlingham.... Hardly exists.

Kesgrave..... Not common. Some few are apprenticed to the sea-service, with premiums of from 2*l.* to 5*l.* The masters give wages varying in amount. The apprentices are generally well treated.

Hunston None ; or so very few that I am unable to return any answer.

Hadleigh..... Very few now. Before the New Poor Law they were more general ; the premiums given vary from 5*l.* to 10*l.* Wages from masters 1st, 2nd, and 3rd years, about 1*s.*, 2*s.*, and 3*s.* weekly, respectively to out-door apprentices. No wages if master boards the apprentice.

Bungay, &c...... Not any.

Blything Union.. Not common, only in the case of orphan children, and subject to the regulation of the Poor Law Commissioners. Premiums are given, not exceeding 5*l.* Wages paid by masters vary according to proficiency of apprentice. No complaints of ill treatment have been brought to the knowledge of the Board of Guardians.

Thorington..... I do not know of one since the alteration of the Poor Law.

NORFOLK.

1. *Sorts of Labour* (WOMEN and CHILDREN).

The following are the occupations of *Women* employed in field-work, throughout Norfolk. The sorts of labour vary with the soil and situation—the amount of it with that of the population, with their habits, and other local circumstances.

Hoeing wheat layers (*i. e.* artificial grasses, &c.), hay-making, singling turnips, dibbling and dropping, picking stones off land, weeding, storing turnips, raking wheat, assisting at the threshing machines, pulling turnips, topping and tailing them, quicking, gathering potatoes, picking cockles on coast, singling beet, gleaning, spudding thistles, docks, &c.

Children are engaged in the same occupations, according to their ages and capacity. They are also occupied in bird-keeping, keeping stock, sheep, and pigs, and gathering sticks, muck, &c.

2. *Women's Wages* (at the following places):—

Shotesham (Witness) Mr. W. Bateman, steward to R. Fellowes, Esq.

Langley „ Mr. Burton.

Frettenham „ The Rev. J. Shirley.

Carbrooke „ J. C. Scott, Esq.

Stradset „ W. Bagge, Esq.

Mattishall „ Rev. T. Paddon.

Lingwood „ Rev. J. Burroughes.

The daily wages varied from 6*d.* to 8*d.*

Snarehill (Witness) H. C. Partridge, Esq.; 10*d.* to 1*s.*, and beer at harvest.

Stratton (Witness) R. Marsham, Esq.; third of a man's wages.

- Docking* (Witness) Mr. Pickrell; 8*d.* to 1*s.* 2*d.* a-day, according to employment.
- Cranworth* (Witness) The Rev. P. Gurdon.
- Burgh* J. Holleys, Esq.; 6*d.* to 7*d.* daily.
- Tuttington* (Witness) Mr. Legge, relieving-officer; 7*d.* *maximum* daily.
- Bexwell* (Rev. E. J. Howman) 6*d.* to 10*d.*
- Starston* (Rev. W. P. Spencer) 7*d.* to 8*d.*
- Gunton* (Mr. Smith, agent to Lord Suffield) 6*d.* to 7*d.* average.
- Fakenham* (Mr. Overton) 7*d.* winter, 8*d.* summer.
- Warham* (Mr. Moore) 6*d.*, daily average for girls of 16 years; 8*d.* girls above 20, and married women; piece work (usual in stone-picking), 10*d.* a-day.
- Swaffham* (H. Day, Esq.) 7*d.* to 8*d.* daily; in hay and harvest time, 1*s.* to 2*s.* and beer. Threshing, 8*d.* to 10*d.* a-day.
- Attleborough* (Mr. Salter) 6*d.* to 8*d.* usually, 10*d.* to 1*s.* hay-time.
- Heydon* (Mr. Richardson) January to May, 7*d.* to 8*d.* a-day; June, 8*d.* to 1*s.*; July, 10*d.* to 1*s.*; August to September, 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.*; October, 8*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.*; November, 7*d.* to 9*d.*; December, 6*d.* to 8*d.*

3. Hours of Work.

- Bexwell* }
Stratton } 8 hours a-day; more when threshing.
Frettenham }
- Stradset* 8 to 12, 1 to 6, summer.
- Swaffham* 8 to 12, 1 to 4, winter.
- Docking* 8 to 5, spring, summer, autumn; during daylight in winter.
- Tuttington* }
Cranworth } (Mr. Paddon) 8 to 10 hours.
Blakeney }
Dereham }
- Burgh* 6 to 11, 2 to 7, summer.
- Gunton* 8 hours or less in winter.
- Warham* 7½ to 12, 1½ to 6, summer; two hours less in winter.
- Starston* 8 to 12, 2 to 6, summer; 8 to 12, 1 to 5, winter.
- Lingwood* Eight hours is the regular time, but as it is mostly task-work, they work as the weather suits.

4. Meal Hours, same as Suffolk.

5. Diet.

- Cranworth* }
Frettenham } Chiefly bread, butter, cheese, tea—during hay-harvest, a little meat and beer.
- Carbrooke* Bread, with a little butter, and weak tea or water, fruit puddings or yeast dumplings, and potatoes. (Potatoes, bread, and weak tea, the principal food where there is a family of children—very seldom or never any meat.)
- Stradset* They generally buy butcher's meat, or bacon or cheese, with the best seconds flour; though some with large families can't afford to live so well.

- Dereham* Flour, potatoes, tea; meat rarely.
- Bexwell* Principally bread, butter, and potatoes, with tea. The best and most careful labourers have bacon, or other meat, twice or perhaps three times a-week; but I have no hesitation in saying, that no independent labourer can obtain the diet which is given in the Union workhouse.
Rev. E. J. Howman.
- Warham* Bread and potatoes; meat on alternate days and Sundays.
- Tuttington* Chiefly bread, some potatoes.
- Fakenham* Bread and Swedish turnips.
- Snarehill* They bring with them to the field bread and butter, or lard; some, cold tea. The great meal is supper. They do [not] generally get meat more than once or twice a-week.
- Burgh* Bread and potatoes, with a small quantity of cheese and butter.
- Swaffham* Good household bread, small quantity of butter or cheese, dumplings, potatoes, tea or coffee very weak; occasionally meat, but very seldom; sometimes red herrings.
- Necton* Bread, tea, butter, cheese, potatoes, and generally, where families are not large, meat on a Sunday.
- Docking* Meals generally taken at home; I should say their living is very good.
- Starston* The diet, when the women are at work, and therefore have no time to cook a dinner, is generally bread and cheese, or bread with a little butter. When they have time to prepare a dinner, it generally consists of flour dumplings and potatoes. Sometimes a little fat pork is chopped up, and put into the dumplings. Fresh butcher's meat I never saw in the cottage of any labourer who had two or three children.
- Stratton* Dumplings, potatoes, occasionally a little salt pork; this frequently depends on their own management. I consider a great deal of money is wasted in bad tea, brown sugar, and salt butter.
- Attleborough* Wheat, bread, and potatoes form the greater part of their nourishment. A portion of meat, cheese, butter, and so forth, fall to their share when good housewives. Bad ones are badly off in general.

6. *Effects of Field-work on Health.*

- Snarehill* Does not appear injurious to health, though it makes them look prematurely old, but not infirm.
- Swaffham* Very good. They do not go out much in severe weather, or when very wet.
- Heydon* Beneficial to health.
- Necton* Robust health.
- Starston* Does not appear to have any ill effect on the health of the women. Those who work out of doors are quite as healthy as those who do not.
- Elmham* Healthy and enlivening. *Rev. H. E. Knatchbull.*
- Frettenham*)
- Stradset*) The women engaged in field-work are generally very
- Docking*) robust, and enjoy excellent health.
- Dereham*)
- Cranworth* Doubtful. *Rev. P. Gurdon.*

- Bexwell* Prejudicial. (*Rev. E. J. Howman. See his letter on the subject, given in my report.*)
- Burgh* Those that work in the fields generally the strongest and healthiest.
- Warham* Almost universally attended with robust health.
Rev. T. Keppel.
- Stratton* Conducive to health.
- Carbrooke* Not injurious, being out-door work, and usually done in fair weather.
- Lingwood* Not injurious.
- Attleborough* Most decidedly good when employed in agriculture.

7. Effects of Field-work on Manners and Conduct.

- Heydon* Upon the whole not detrimental to their manners and conduct. Looking to the general effect of out-door work for women, in conjunction with the idea of their being labourers' wives, I think it beneficial, as they are able to teach their own children, and they are able also to assist their husbands very often in "taking work," and more especially in working and managing their allotments; for we find that women marrying agricultural labourers, whose employment has been in weaving and working in manufactories, make dawdling and dirty wives, and know nothing about their husbands' business, neither do they know how to set their children to work; so, for these reasons, I approve of such employment out of doors. *Mr. Richardson.*
- Lingwood* In general the mothers of the best-conducted families do not go out to work. If the husband and children earn sufficient, the woman is best at home.
- Frettenham* I find that when girls used to field-work go out to service, they rarely stay long in a place, and are frequently running home. Of course there are exceptions. The effects are not good on their manners or morals, as in many portions of field-work they labour promiscuously with men and lads. If field-labour could be confined to women and children, I don't think any bad results would ensue; but it places girls of from 15 or 16 and upwards in dangerous proximity, though in some farms care is taken that the girls should work as much as possible with their parents.
- Carbrooke* Parents here generally find domestic service for their daughters, or apprentice them to some trade, as soon as they can. Where females have out-door work, it appears to be generally done by the married women and children.
- Cranworth* Harmless to married women, if they do not work in gangs. The young women of the present day, from 15 years old and upwards, decidedly prefer field-work to service; and it is because they are at liberty to go where they like, and to form acquaintances, and to carry out their respective plans for their future settlement in life. Where the parents allow them to remain at home, and they are employed in the fields, an unfortunate result is too often the case. It would be well if it was always forbidden by the parents, and never allowed by employers.
- Bexwell* I think that out-door work is preferred by very many women, young ones especially, on account of the personal liberty they enjoy when the hours of work are ended. The effect it produces is unmixed evil. It makes them coarse and impudent, and by their constant contact with men, loose and immoral in their language and con-

duct. It produces also a bad moral effect on the men. Observation shows that women employed in field-work are not so careful and clean as others ; consequently, the home to which the man returns, after his day's work, is not so comfortable as it ought to be, and he is driven to the ale-house and beer-shop to avoid the discomforts, and to seek for that comfort which he ought to find at home.

Dereham The effect of women and girls congregating together is positively bad for their manners and morals.

Stratton Does not make them more coarse or immoral than others.

Docking I am sorry to say that out-door work is much preferred to in-door by girls above 15 years of age, and is attended often with the worst results as regards manners and morals.

Swaffham I am afraid the effect of field-work on young girls, mixed up as they sometimes are with young men or full-grown boys, to be sadly detrimental to good morals.

Warham Out-door work is preferred to in-door by those who are accustomed to it. I cannot speak too strongly of its baneful effects on the manners and morals of women, but more especially of girls from the age of 14 to 20. With them it is next to ruin. When a girl, even for a short time, has been in the habit of having such employment, she becomes totally unfitted for any domestic employment, and rarely, if ever, attempts to obtain any. I have always found that those women who have no out-door employment are the best behaved ; their houses are kept in neat order, their families are better brought up, they are more regular attendants at church, and though not richer are apparently of a superior class to those who labour in the fields.

Rev. T. Keppel.

Elmham Field-work certainly uncivilizes, though I do not find it demoralizes them.

Rev. H. E. Knatchbull.

Snarehill It is liked for the sake of society. It makes them brusque in their manners and lax in their morals (or tends to do so). I do not mean that we have not many very respectable women and girls who go to 'broad-work.

Necton Out-door work is preferred—natural to people born in rural districts. Girls used to derive great injury from it ; but where good, well-supervised National schools exist, the evil is much abated, and, possibly, in two generations, when the old leaven is passed away, it will be quite so.

Stradset Generally preferred, because there is less restraint ; but I cannot say that the effect, generally speaking, is in any way beneficial to their manners or morals.

Blakeney It makes them coarser in mind, and is injurious to morals. The better sort object to field-work.

Mr. Sparham.

Tuttington A bad thing for women ; there is a difficulty in getting them to go to service. They dislike the confinement of it. The better class generally object to out-door work as compared with in-door service ; to be sure they are much better off in service. They get from 3*l.* to 5*l.* a-year, and are lodged and boarded. It's very much the result of habit that girls object to service. The parents don't try to get them out, and they feel themselves unfit for service.

Warham It makes them coarser in mind, and disinclines them to domestic life.

Mr. Moore.

Fakenham (The same). It is the most difficult thing now to get an in-door servant in almost any family; and this, though an in-door place, is much better paid; but then they have their liberty.

Elmham The girls prefer it; but it unfits them for decent and proper society. They are not fit to take into the house. It leads to bastardy. It is as great an evil as can be to the female part of society.

Mr. Money Fisher.

Castle Acre They won't come to in-door service; it unfits them for it.

Starston If any big girls don't succeed in getting places, but continue to work in the fields, they generally become bold and impudent.

Attleborough . . . Very difficult to decide. My opinion is that country women are equally moral with town women; indeed it is generally admitted more so. There is also a prevailing opinion that since the duties of the women have become less laborious, and the education more liberally bestowed, the servant girls are not so industrious or contented in their situations as formerly.

Litcham (Mr. B. Francis). I am quite of opinion that it unfits them for domestic service. I abominate it. I always set my face against it: their morals are depraved very much by it, particularly in large gangs; where masses are congregated together there's more depravity.

CHILDREN.

1. *Sorts of Out-door Work.*
2. *Hours of Work.*
3. *Effects on Health.*
4. *Diet.*
5. *Meal Hours.*

On these points the evidence respecting the women applies equally to the children. As to the effect of out-door work on health, Mr. Moore of Warham said, "Any injury to health is an exception to the general rule. It sometimes is the case with delicate girls: I have known it hasten cases of consumption, but very rarely."

6. *Ages of going out to Work.*
7. *Wages.*

Shotesham 6. from 10 to 14 or 15.
7. 2s., 3s., 4s. a-week.

<i>Easton</i>	(Mr. J. Reid.)	} 6. 9 or 10.
<i>Surlingham</i>	(Mr. Gibbs Morell.)	
<i>Langley</i>	(Mr. Burton.)	
<i>Claxton</i>	(Mr. Batchelder.)	

Tuttington { 6. 9 to 12.
(Mr. Blake.) { 7. 1s. 6d. to 2s. a-week, and a Sunday's dinner.

Gunton 6. About 8.
7. 3d. to 6d. a-day.

<i>Antingham School</i> (Mr. and Mrs. Wortley.)	{	6. On an average, girls remain till 12, boys till 10, but then they are often away nearly half the time (from 5 years of age till 10).
		7. Four girls (three aged 11, one aged 10) told me that they had earned 7d. a-day for about 5 weeks, by dropping, that year.

Baconsthorpe School { 6. At 8 years old.

- Warham* 6. At 10.
7. 4*d.* to 8*d.* a-day.
- Great Ryburgh* .. 6. At 9.
- Elmham* } 6. If boys are kept at school till 15 or 16, they're useless
(Mr. M. Fisher.) } at farming.
- Holt* } 6. If boys are kept at school beyond 8, they're no use at
(Mr. Blades.) } all on the land.
- Carbrooke* 6. At 8.
7. From 7 or 8 to 15 years of age, 1*s.* to 3*s.*, or 3*s.* 6*d.*
- Cranworth* 6. The parents are glad to keep them at school till 10 or
11 years of age, if they can afford it; but generally, the boys go to work
at 9 or 10.
7. At 10 years, 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.*; 11, 2*s.* 6*d.*; 13, 3*s.*; 15, 5*s.*
- Stradset* 6. At 10.
7. 2*d.* to 8*d.* a-day.
- Bexwell* 6. About 8.
7. 4*d.* to 8*d.*
- Heydon* 6. Boys, at 7 or 8; girls, 8 or 9.
7. At 9 years of age, 1*s.*; 11, 1*s.* 6*d.*; 13, 3*s.*; 15, 5*s.*;
16, 6*s.* Girls have about one-third less.
- Frettenham* 6. 7 to 8.
7. 3*d.* to 6*d.* a-day.
- Attleborough* 6. 10 to 12, some few years since; but I think not quite
so young now, in consequence of the establishment of National schools,
where they often now attend till 12 or 14 years, except in wheat-dib-
bling countries; then they leave school during the seed time and very
young.
7. 3*d.* to 6*d.*; boys advance from 6*d.* as they approach
manhood.
- Snarehill* 6. At 9 or 10.
7. 4*d.* to 10*d.* or 1*s.*; bird-keeping, 4*d.* or 5*d.*; sheep-
tending, 6*d.*; a boy who can handle a plough, 10*d.* to 1*s.*
- Dereham* 6. At 8.
7. From 8 to 12 years of age, 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a-week; and
more as they grow older.
- Lingwood* 6. At 9.
7. Bird-keepers, 15*d.* or 18*d.* a-week; pig-keepers, 2*s.*;
boys large enough for horse-work, 2*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* a-week.
- Necton* 6. At 10.
7. 1*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.*, according to age.
- Docking* 6. Sometimes at 6.
7. 4*d.* to 6*d.* a-day.
- Burgh* 6. At 10.
7. 1*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* a-week.
- Starston* 6. At 6 or 7, stone-gathering; at 8, corn-drop, beans, &c.
7. 2*d.* a-day, and upwards.
- Swaffnam* 6. At 10, sometimes 9.
7. 4*d.* to 6*d.* a-day, according to age. This only when
at work, in fine weather; in dropping and harvest-time rather more.
Boys also get employed as constant hands in farm-yards to tend stock,
and earn, wet and dry, 3*s.* to 4*s.* a-week.

Fakenham 6. 7. The first question asked at the Board, when a man applies for relief, is, "What's the age of your children?" If they are of 9 or 10, they are held capable of earning something.

8. *What learned before going to School ; if kept up afterwards or forgotten.*

9. *Schooling sacrificed to earning, or vice versâ.*

Easton 9. Schooling sometimes keeps children from employ.

Mr. Reid, Yeoman.

Langley 9. I think the same in some cases ; for instance, in Lady Beauchamp's school ; I think the poor rather sacrifice the schooling to the earning ; but the rich want to see a good attendance at the schools, and therefore they don't think so much of the earning.

Mr. Burton, Yeoman.

Shotesham At this time of year the children are often let off from school to keep crows.

Rev. T. Fellowes.

Tuttington 8. They generally know little before they go out to work, and often forget that while at work.

9. Parents think very little of schooling in these parts. The best chance the children have is the workhouse. In these parts, I think the parents seldom take the child's Sunday work to enable them to go to Sunday-school or church.

Mr. Legge.

8. Education may be an evil for children unless they are brought up regularly to the work by which they are afterwards to get a livelihood. I find the children who come to me from Norwich useless as agricultural labourers. Not one in a hundred who have been brought up as weavers can get their bread as agriculturists ; their habits are unfit for it.

Mr. Blake.

Gunton 8. They may perhaps be able to read before they go out to service, but the foundation is so slightly laid that they usually forget it while in service. There's more opportunity for schooling about here than in many parts.

Mr. Smith.

9. Not common for parents to replace their children, when crow-keeping, by other children or by themselves, to enable them to go to school or church.

Mr. Smith.

Antingham School 8. A child at the age of 10 knows reading imperfectly, and loses it if he stays away long. He knows also a very trifling degree of arithmetic ; nothing to do him any good.

Mr. Wortley, Schoolmaster.

9. The value attached by parents to education, varies according to their dispositions ; some are thankful to keep their children at school, some not. On an average the girls remain till 12 ; when they get out to work, their manners are very much the worse on their return ; it produces habits of idleness and indifference to education : after six months' absence at field-work, both boys and girls lose a great deal of what they knew. It is our rule to give leave of absence at any time that parents ask it. Schooling is very materially injured by going to work.

Mr. and Mrs. Wortley.

Baconsthorpe School 8. 9. A child can't read properly before six. They go to work as young as eight, for a few weeks or months, and then come again. If away four months, they have forgotten a great deal—those whose memories are shallow, or who have not had home opportunities, or who are less disposed to study. The girls are taken away less than boys, especially in winter. The oldest now are 13 ; they go out to service earlier than they used. They used to stay sometimes till 15.

I think there's rather more difference in this respect since the New Poor Law; I think the employment interferes with the schooling very much. The cow-keepers are generally out all Sundays, though they are sometimes released by their parents. *Mr. Beales, Schoolmaster.*

Warham..... 8. Reading; and that is lost unless it is kept up at Sunday-schools. *Mr. Moore.*

Reading and writing; both imperfectly.

Rev. T. Keppel.

9. When opportunities offer for the employment of the children, most parents take them from school. *Rev. T. Keppel.*

Holt 9. Here there is every opportunity of instruction; but it is not so much taken advantage of as might be. *Rev. H. Jackson.*

Fakenham..... 9. The first question asked at the Board is,—What is the age of your children? If they are nine or ten they are held capable of earning something. *Mr. Overton, Clerk to Union.*

Elmham 8. Here they can and do go to school at six.

Rev. H. Knatchbull.

My yard-man told me that his children learned more at the Sunday-school than they used at the day-school. *Mr. M. Fisher.*

9. They are taken from school at the dibbling and weeding seasons; and at gleaning-time there are holidays. The parents keep them to school very well, and the children like to come. Usually one or two years they will keep them close to school, from Michaelmas to Lady-day, till they can read and write decently. I find field-working women and children quite as regular at Sunday school as the others.

Rev. H. Knatchbull.

Great Ryburgh } 9. In summer months (April to Michaelmas) one-
School. } third are absent at work. If they are away for six months they return with coarser manners; but as here the parents generally keep their children to study in the evening, they don't lose much in point of school knowledge. Education is very much prized here. I know no instances of children suffering in health from outdoor work. *Mr. S. Flaxman, Schoolmaster.*

Heydon..... 8. Some are put to day schools, and nearly all go to Sunday schools; but, if not otherwise employed (*i.e.* in some industrial pursuit), they learn nothing but idleness and immoral habits. And herein stands the benefit of a good wife, who has learned her husband's employment. She then makes them go on the road with little barrows, skeps, and shovels, and collect all the dung dropped on the roads, either to sell or to manure their allotments. *Mr. Richardson.*

9. They are frequently taken from school, especially to go with their mothers in dropping after the dibblers; and also to pick up stones and grass off the lands; then when work is slack they go back to school. Other parents keep their children at home entirely, when they have nothing to do but to gather dung upon the roads.

Mr. Richardson.

Frettenham..... 9. Children are usually taken from school to earn something; some few instances occur to the contrary.

Carbrooke..... 8. After they are wholly taken away from school to go to regular work, they generally (I fear) lose what they may have learned when at school. Perhaps, however, those now at school may be more likely to retain what they learn, as there are more Sunday schools for them to attend, which gives them a better chance of not losing all, at any rate whilst they are children, and at work during the rest of the week.

9. They leave school for a time, for the purpose of going to work, and return to it again, till they are taken away to be wholly at work.

Dereham..... 8. In many cases, to which, however, there are many exceptions, these children have previously had the advantage of going to a day or a Sunday school.

9. I should say the schooling is sacrificed to the earning.

Rev. T. Paddon.

Docking..... 8. Not much learned before going to school; and after once in the fields, I doubt whether they are ever made by their parents to go to school, or at all events very seldom, though there are Sunday and evening schools for the accommodation of the poorer classes.

Mr. Pickrell.

9. The schooling is very often sacrificed to the earning, if employment can be found by the parent.

Mr. Pickrell.

Bexwell..... 8. That depends much on the parishes in which they are residing. If it be one in which education is thought desirable, they generally are able to read and write a little; and the girls are taught to work previously to going out; and that which is lost during their absence is by care restored on their return; but I fear they generally leave the school entirely too early for much good to have been done.

Rev. S. J. Howman.

9. The schooling is almost universally sacrificed to earning. I know one or two instances only of the reverse. This is one of the few evils arising out of the operation of the New Poor Law.

Rev. S. J. Howman.

Snarehill..... 8. A little reading; and when they are looked after, the catechism, &c.; generally, I should say, is not kept up.

H. C. Partridge, Esq.

9. Schooling sacrificed to earning, I should say, always.

H. C. Partridge, Esq.

Stradset..... 8. The greater proportion are taught to read and [the girls] to work; and some to write.

W. Bagge, Esq.

9. In summer the greater part are taken from school to earn something by out-door employment.

W. Bagge, Esq.

Swaffham..... 8. Reading, writing, sewing, and knitting in infant and National schools; and in a great many cases these acquirements are kept up by attendance on work-days, when they can't get to work, and at Sunday-schools.

H. Day, Esq.

9. The schooling is *necessarily*, particularly where the family is large, sacrificed to the earnings; but advantage is taken, I think, of bad weather to attend the schools; and where the family is small (and of girls) the earnings are often sacrificed to the learning.

H. Day, Esq.

Necton..... 8. National or dame school instruction, which is too often afterwards a dead-letter.

Col. Mason.

9. Generally earnings have the priority.

Col. Mason.

Stratton..... 9. Generally taken from school as soon as they can earn anything.

R. Marsham, Esq.

Starston..... 8. The boys can generally read, and some of them write, before they get constant work: till then they attend school when not employed: the girls continue at school longer than the boys. No boys above 10 years old at the day-school.

Rev. W. P. Spencer.

9. They are invariably taken from school whenever a day's work can be had for them. *Rev. W. P. Spencer.*
- Lingwood*..... 8. Most of them can read. *Rev. J. Burroughes.*
 9. Some are taken from school for dropping wheat, and sometimes for bird-keeping. *Rev. J. Burroughes.*
- Burgh*..... 8. Taught at school reading and writing, and occasionally sewing and knitting. Those sent early to work, generally the best labourers in after-life, and the healthiest. *J. Holley, Esq.*
 9. Much taken from school when anything is to be earned by doing so. *J. Holley, Esq.*

10. *Pauper Apprenticeship.*

- Shotesham*..... Used to be the practice here both with boys and girls; but there have been none put out now for this 12 or 14 years.
- Easton* }
Langley } Don't exist now; they did, but have been abandoned.
Surlingham }
- Blakeney*..... Extinct.
- Tuttington*..... A few cases. Three or four in our Union in two years. They have done very well. The Union has taken care of that. They have been well treated.
- Gunton*..... None, or very few on Lord Suffield's estate for 18 years.
- Warham* Don't exist.
- Fakenham*..... At an end in this district.
- Heydon*..... Parish apprenticeships are now very uncommon. Thanks to the New Poor Law for that.
- Frettenham*..... No cases in this parish.
- Carbrooke*..... None since the New Poor Law.
- Cranworth*..... Since the New Poor Law, there has been only one application to the Board of Guardians for a parish apprenticeship. It was to bind out an orphan boy then in the house to a chimney-sweeper. It was refused, on the ground that there was not a sufficient guarantee for a prospect of kind treatment and future happiness of the child.
Rev. P. Gordon.
- Docking*..... Scarcely one boy, being an agricultural parish.
- Bexwell*..... Since this Union has been formed, only three parish apprentices have been bound out, arising, I believe, from the Commissioners never having issued any orders or rules on the subject, and apparently not encouraging it. The three so bound out are all partially disabled. Two boys to a tailor; and a girl, who lost her leg from a white-swellings, to the same trade, with a woman.
 Premiums—With the boys 30*l.*, and 10*l.*; one for six years, the other for two. Girl, 15*l.*
 Wages—None.
 They are perfectly well treated.
- Stradset*..... I hardly know of a single instance in my own neighbourhood, where such a thing has been done for years past.
- Swaffham*..... Since the New Poor Law has been in operation, there have been very few parish apprenticeships in this Union. Indeed I can hardly call one to mind.
- Stratton* None.

Necton None now.

Starston None in parishes formerly agricultural.

Lingwood None in this neighbourhood.

Burgh Uncommon.

Lynn I don't suppose we put out one in two years. There was one put out last February, under very strict conditions, that the master should take care of him, and not turn him adrift.

Attleborough Not common.

LINCOLNSHIRE.

Evidence.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. <i>Sorts of Labour</i> ... | } The evidence on these points was to the same effect as that given in Suffolk and Norfolk. |
| 2. <i>Hours of Work</i> ... | |
| 3. <i>Meal Hours</i> | |
| 4. <i>Effects on Health</i> .. | |

1. The only new sort of employment here was "clotting," *i.e.*, spreading the dung on the pasture lands.

4. Mr. Caswell, of *Folkingham*, said, "There is very little turniping here; it's too cold for women: I always tell them that it costs them more in the end with illness."

5. *Wages.*

6. *Employment of Girls of 15 and upwards.*

7. *Effect of Field-work on Manners and Conduct*

Holbeach (Witness) Mr. Bingham.

5. 1s. a-day. I've heard little or no complaint of the dropping of wages. Wages of men are 11s. a-week.

6. Widows go out principally with us. The girls generally get into service at 13 or 14. They like to go to inns: it's better pay, and less wear and tear of clothes, and less work.

Folkingham Mr. Caswell.

5. 9d. a-day clotting, 1s. weeding and hay-harvest.

6. Girls never go out, except in hay-harvest.

Sleaford { Mr Moore, Swaton. Strong clay loam—bean and wheat soil—small parish.
Mr. Tomlinson, Helpingham. Same, only a large and more populous parish.

5. 10d. for all common work; 1s. weeding; 2s. harvest. If a woman walked three miles to work, and could not work, we should pay her for half a day.

6. 7. We always hold off employing girls, because we think they are much better in service. We never think it improves their morals.

Welburn F. Brown, Esq. 2000 acres, various—limestone, arable land, grazing ditto, clay loam, heath land, fen land.

5. In all months, except in hay-time and harvest, 9d. (piece-work is taken whenever they can, and then they make more); hay-time 10d. and beer; harvest 1s. and beer; (they usually work by the piece with their husbands, and earn as much as 3s. a-day.)

6. We discourage girls who can get out to service from field-work, in order to drive them into service. We always have here three boys with a machine; I never employ a woman with the threshing machine, because boys are more active, and it is morally injurious getting young girls among half a dozen men.

N. Ranceby Mr. Roberts. 800 acres,—light limestone land, purely arable, 4-course system.

6. We employ all girls who are not out at service. They prefer out-door work, but we do what we can to get them into service. Parents like to keep girls at home, not thinking of what they cost them; besides they addle a little money for them.

Heckington Mr. Toynbee. Rich grazing land and fen.

6. We never employ women and children fully, except in weeding time. Girls of 15 or 16 are employed with their mothers; we endeavour as much as possible to drive them to service.

7. Out-door work is a very bad thing for them; it's a very bad thing keeping great girls at home with their parents; they generally come to no good.

Willoughby C. Allix, Esq. Light limestone, and pretty good grazing and moor land.

5. 10*d.* a-day,—1*s.* hay-time, 1*s.* 6*d.* harvest.

6. We never employ girls of 16 or 17. They almost all go out to service; we press it upon them very much.

Neighbourhood of Boston.

<i>Swineshead</i> .	(Witnesses) —	Calthorpe, Esq.
<i>Brothertoft</i> .	„	T. Gee, Esq.
<i>Sibsey</i>	„	Mr. L. B. Waite.
<i>Ditto</i>	„	— W. Paul.
<i>Freiston</i>	„	— Jackson.
<i>Boston</i>	„	— Porter.
<i>Sibsey</i>	„	— Thompson.
<i>Gosberton</i> . .	„	— Garlick.
<i>Frampton</i> . . .	„	W. Simonds.

6. 7. Field-work is a very bad thing for girls. 49 out of 50 are in the family-way in consequence. It's very rare here for girls to go out to field-work. At Gosberton, Mr. Garlick said, "5 out of 20 females employed are girls. I think the effect on them a great deal worse than if they were in service, but they won't go into service if they can get field-work."

5. 1*s.* regular wages. 10*d.* sometimes. Usually have the price of a man. (Wages to women have fallen less than those to men.)

Mr. Gee.

Spilsby { Mr. Hoff.
 { Mr. Wingate. } Witnesses.

5. 1*s.* a-day; not dropped when men's are, because of partial employ.

6. 7. Little employ for females in this part of Lincolnshire from October to Lady-day. Girls are generally in service; married women and widows are generally with their families. Employment for girls in field-work is injurious to their character.

Louth (Mr. Townend.)

5. 10*d.* to 1*s.*, when not "ta'en" work, *i. e.* piece-work; then, perhaps, from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* per day.

6. No girls employed except at Withcall.

Kelstern..... (Mr. Booth.)

6. Of 14 persons engaged about a machine, 5 would be women and boys: not girls much; they generally go out to service. Dairy-maids are very difficult to get, because of the National schools; they all want to be housemaids, or mantua-makers, or something of that sort. They object to such work as the dairy; they are too delicate for that. I think education makes the boys rather better; you can reason with them; they understand you easier: they generally get out at 10, so that they are not so much taught as the girls. I think education a good thing if properly regulated.

The women do very little out-door work during the winter: some few of them work at the threshing machine at from 10*d.* to 1*s.* a-day; some will dig up turnips at 8*d.* a-day; but generally speaking, they would rather not go to work during the winter.

Caister..... (Dr. Ellis, Schoolmaster.)

6. Generally married women; not girls.

Brigg..... (Mr. Mason.)

5. 10*d.* now, usually 1*s.* Some men at Fressingham are only getting 9*s.* a-week, but most 10*s.*

6. Women very little employed. No girls of 15 at this time of year, (December.)

Lincoln..... (Mr. Cunningham.)

5. They rarely get 1*s.* a-day for more than eight months in the year.

6. I don't know an instance of a girl above 13 employed in field-work. I believe there are many women here who would almost pine to death before they would go to out-door work. They're not inured to it. It's a thing quite out of their element to do.

Grantham..... (R. H. Johnston, Esq. clerk to Union.)

5. 9*d.* in winter, 1*s.* in summer.

6. No girls of 15 and upwards employed.

Stanford..... (Mr. H. Whittome.)

5. 8*d.* a-day, threshing and dragging turnips; 10*d.* hay-making.

6. No girls of 15 employed; and in corn harvest the women prefer gleaning to being employed by the farmers.

Horncastle..... (Mr. Chantrey.)

5. 1*s.* in summer, 10*d.* rest of year.

6. Out-door labour for young females is not so common in this Union as to produce any observable effect on their morals. Even young girls are very rarely employed in out-door labour of any kind, except in harvest-time.

Withcall..... (Mr. Dawson.)

5. This year 8*d.* a-day, dragging turnips (men's wages are 10*s.*; last year they were 13*s.* 6*d.*, and then women's were 9*d.* or 10*d.*); 10*d.* weeding, 1*s.* hay-making.

6. 7. Single and married women are employed; and generally apart from the men, with the exception of a confidential man or two to see that they attend to their work. I should say, that morally, out-door work is far preferable to the factory, where both male and female are so much thrown together.

Gainsborough ... (Mr. G. Crooke.)

5. 8*d.* winter, 1*s.* summer.

6. Girls of 15 and upwards usually go out to service.

Bourne (Mr. Nicholls.)

5. 1s. 6d. a-day, and beer, harvesting; 1s. threshing and hay-making; 8d. and 10d. weeding and hoeing.

6. I consider out-door labour to be beneficial to the health of the women, as they are not overworked; and I have no reason to think that it has an injurious effect upon either their manners or their morals, as they are, upon the whole, steady and well behaved; of course there will be exceptions. There are few girls of the age of 15 employed in agriculture; they generally get places as domestic servants before that age.

Spalding (Report of the evidence of about 25 principal farmers composing the Board of Guardians.)—*Mr. Storr, Relieving Officer.*

5. 10d. to 1s. a-day.

6. Married women go to field-work; but principally widows and single women, and girls of 14 and upwards. Girls seem to prefer field-work to household-work, because they have greater liberty, and are not constrained in the evening hours, and particularly on a Sunday. It works much mischief; for in consequence of the great liberty they enjoy in the field, they prefer it to household service; and from the loose society which they fall in with from time to time, their morals become depraved, and there is little doubt that a considerable portion of those girls, before they arrive at the age of maturity, through the habits imbibed in early life, become profligate and abandoned characters. *Mr. Storr.*

6. (Dr. Moore's statement.) Much conversation ensued at the Board on this point. The opinion of nearly all the Board of Guardians was, that the employment in the fields did not necessarily involve the demoralization of the females; that those who had been loosely brought up at home as children, before coming into the field, were the particular characters who mostly became confirmed profligates after being engaged in field-work; and that of the number of those so employed, whose morals were in anywise corrupted, the proportion was less than was generally imagined. Certainly the opinions of the guardians will not bear out Mr. Storr's expression on this point, viz., "a considerable proportion."

8. Diet.

Kelstern Labourers here seldom miss a day without having meat. The agricultural labourers, generally speaking, who confine themselves by the year, have about 28l. in money, a cottage and garden rent-free, the keep of a pig in the crews in the winter and run upon the farm in the summer, a rood of land to set potatoes on, four quarters of barley at 20s. per quarter, two quarters of wheat at 50s. If they milk a cow, they have 10l. less in money. The labourers are generally better fixed in Lincolnshire than in any county in England. *Mr. Booth.*

Grantham Bacon, vegetables, wheaten bread, sometimes barley.

Bourne I fear not good; but that depends, in some measure, upon the number of their family, and the employment which the husband is able to obtain. I may say generally that they eat but very little meat; in many cases, I fear, not more than once in the week: what little they can obtain being necessary for the support of the husband, to enable him to undergo the fatigues of laborious employment. *Mr. Nicholls.*

Gainsborough . . . Bacon, bread, and potatoes; but chiefly potatoes and bread.

Spalding Bread and butter, cheese, onions, tea, and bread ; seldom meat.

Boston Bread, potatoes. Most of them keep a pig, and eat it. Sometimes feed two ; they then eat one and sell the other : two are rare. We usually test a man by his pig : if he has a well-fed pig in his sty, it is a proof that he can't spend much money in the public-house.

Louth Bread, potatoes, bacon, dumplings.

Brigg After harvest the labourers are usually out of bacon ; they then have butcher's meat. A man and his wife and three children have done on 4 lbs. of mutton per week. I know this, because I'm a butcher. The women say they live on tea : they have tea three times a-day, sop, bread, and treacle.

CHILDREN.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. <i>Sorts of Work.</i> | } Same as women. Their work varies, of course, in amount ; in kind it is the same, with the addition of crow-keeping, stock-keeping, tending sheep, pigs, &c. |
| 2. <i>Hours of Work.</i> | |
| 3. <i>Diet.</i> | |
| 4. <i>Meal Hours.</i> | |
| 5. <i>Effects on Health.</i> | |
| 6. <i>Ages.</i> | |
| 7. <i>Wages.</i> | |
| 8. <i>What learnt before going to work, and whether kept up afterwards or forgotten.</i> | |
| 9. <i>Schooling sacrificed to earning, or vice versâ.</i> | |

Holbeach 6. Not very generally employed on the land here. Children are sometimes employed at five or six years of age, but not now so much as they used to be, because of the schools.

7. 9. Boys who go crow-keeping get 6*d.* a-day, at nine years of age. Crow-keeping keeps them away on Sundays, but the child gets to church in the evening, but not to the Sunday school.

8. All the boys about this town can read. There's a free school here, where they pay nothing but 6*d.* a-quarter for candles, &c. In potato and gleaning time the schooling is sacrificed to the earning. Schooling is prized by the parents more than it was.

Rev. — Morton ; Mr. Bingham.

Folkingham 6. Scarcely employed at all. Girls never go out, except in hay-time and harvest.

7. Boys at 10 get 5*d.* a-day ; and from that to 14, 10*d.* or 1*s.*

8. 9. We have a Sunday school here, and a public parish school for poor children. They pay nothing ; it's kept up by the parish.

Sleaford } 6. Ten to 12. No girls scarcely, except when the mother (Mr. Moore.) goes weeding, and then never under 12. I never saw (Mr. Tomlinson.) girls crow-keeping in my life here.

7. Boys of 12 earn from 6*d.* to 8*d.*, according to capacity and time of year.

(F. Brown, Esq.) 6. Bird-tending, 11, boys and girls. We have a great demand for boys throughout the whole winter. This district is more thinly populated and more highly cultivated.

7. Boys crow-keeping get from 6*d.* to 8*d.* ; sometimes 4*d.* when weeding with parents, but very rarely.

(Mr. Roberts.) 6. Boys from nine to 13. It is a thinly-peopled district; that is why we have boys so young. In weeding-time, we employ boys and girls of all sizes and ages up to 13, and a man goes with them to superintend. They are all out of our own parish. The overseers are our own labourers, confidential men, to see that they are not idle.

7. 6*d.* 8*d.* My boys of 14, 15, are excellent ploughers: their yearly wages are 2*l.* 10*s.*

(Boys who learn to read are better for it. I have seen a great difference within a few years in their conduct, both at work and afterwards: they employ their leisure time better. There may be too much education: writing and summing is too much.)

(C. Allix, Esq.) 7. 6*d.* to 8*d.* A plough-boy, 10*d.* to 1*s.*

Spilsby 6. Not under 10.

7. 4*d.* to 8*d.* Girls stop at home from 12 to 13 to mind the other children, and earn sometimes 5*s.* a-week by it in gleaning time.

8. They can generally read now, but up to this time they have not done so.

9. Schooling is usually sacrificed to earning; but if parents behave rightly, the children generally go to school up to 12. We make a point of getting girls out to service.

Louth 6. From 10 upwards.

7. 3*d.* to 1*s.* a-day, varying with capacity.

8. There are schools enough all over [the Union, and reading is generally known, but their knowledge varies very much with the disposition of the parents.

(Mr. Forster, master of the British, &c., school.) The number of children on the books is 320; average daily attendance, 240; one-fourth usually absent; the greater part of these owing to frivolous wants on the part of the parents, to nurse other children, go errands, &c. Some go to work in the brick-yard, some in the carpet-manufactory, &c., &c. The girls are less regular in their attendance than the boys; they are more away in household work.

The boys come at six; stay, on an average, till 11. Girls come at five, stay very variously indeed, and attend very irregularly.

A boy coming at six and going at 10, if he attends regularly, would be able to read, write, cipher, know a little geography, a little grammar, and possibly some drawing and music. 40 boys are taught music. [I heard three lads of different ages—eldest about 11, youngest about nine,—answer admirably in geography and arithmetic, and parse fairly.]

Caistor (Mr. Watkinson, schoolmaster.)

6. Forty boys and girls on the books: some, farmers' children; some, labourers'. In summer-months (August to October), 15 absent daily. They come at the age of four or five, stay till 12.

8. Boy at 10 knows reading, writing, arithmetic. They don't lose much by being away four months at work. Girls don't go out to work here.

(Dr. Ellis, schoolmaster.) Children value education more than the parents. [This I heard very generally.]

Brigg 6. No girls under 10. Boys bird-keeping from nine to 14.

7. 2*s.* a-week.

Lincoln 6. Girls from 11 to 13 (till they get out to service) go out with their mothers, and gather stones by the load; boys more often by the day. Now they are much occupied with the sheep, and more still when the snow is on the ground.

7. From 4*d.* to 6*d.* a-day. A boy from 10 to 12 is now getting about 4*s.*: it varies in different places.

Bourne Boys go to occasional work at about 11 years of age, to keep birds off the corn, drive the plough, and other light easy work, at wages varying from 6*d.* to 8*d.* a-day. They learn but little before going out to work, and I fear, generally speaking, but little afterwards. They are taken from school to assist in getting their own living, and when enabled to obtain constant employment they never return to school afterwards. Very few girls are employed; but when they are, which is for a few weeks in hay-time and harvest, they are overlooked by the women and men, and I have not observed any evil consequences result from it, either physically or morally.

Gainsborough ... 6. From seven upwards. Girls are not so much employed as boys, except in tending birds.

7. On an average from 4*d.* to 6*d.* a-day.

8. Those children who have had the privilege of obtaining a national education are tolerably well informed; but those who have not had that privilege are very ignorant.

9. Taken from school as soon as they are able to learn anything, in consequence of wages being so small.

Withcall An industrious parent, who wishes to bring her family well up, will bring her children out with her to weed in the spring when they are 12 or 13 years old; and if the children at that age only get 3*d.* or 4*d.* a-day she is satisfied; they are out of mischief, and the money is very useful on the Saturday night. Girls at that early age are not employed except in weeding; boys are engaged in keeping birds off the corn.

Spalding 6. At 10.

7. 5*d.* to 12*d.* a-day.

8. Generally go to school, where they are taught the common rudiments of education.

9. No doubt of schooling being sacrificed to earning, but only where the wants of the family are very pressing; the anxiety of the parents to obtain schooling for their children is predominant, and they rarely forego the opportunity of obtaining it; but where the anxiety of hunger and cold is greater than they can endure without throwing themselves on the parish, they will take their children out of charity schools (where permitted), as much as from 10 to 26 weeks in the year, exclusive of the usual vacations. The consequence is obvious, as far as education is concerned. I do not conceive that early labour has any injurious effect upon the mental faculties of children beyond that which, from a lack of cultivation and exercise, results to any other faculty.

Dr. Moore.

Stamford 6. About 10; boys employed in the fields, but very few girls.

7. 6*d.* to 8*d.* a-day.

9. Generally taken from school to earn something by work.

Grantham 6. About 9. Proportion of boys employed much greater than that of girls.

7. About 6*d.* a-day.

9. Taken away generally, though in some instances only in summer; they attend Sunday-schools.

Horncastle 6. Not before 10. Generally speaking not before 11 or 12. Girls very seldom employed in out-door labour.

7. Boys from 10 to 12, 6*d.* a-day; 12 to 14, 8*d.* to 10*d.* a-day.

8. In some villages the children, before going to work, are sent to day or Sunday schools, but their education is much neglected by their parents; and what they learn is generally soon forgotten.

9. The schooling is sacrificed to the earnings invariably.

Messingham..... The Rev. J. Bowstead.

9. The schooling is invariably sacrificed to the earning by the labourers in this parish. As soon as their children can earn anything, if at school they are taken away and sent out to work; though in most cases where the parents pay any regard to the education of their children they are put to school occasionally from time to time, when no work is to be had. For some purposes, such as dibbling beans and getting up potatoes, they go out even at 9 or 10 years of age; and they may expect regular employment about 12; in some cases a little later; though I imagine that up to the age of 14 they sometimes manage now and then to obtain a quarter's schooling.

The extent of their knowledge is not, I fear, at any time very great; what they learn they for the most part forget, and afterwards when grown up try to supply their deficiency by means of a night school.

I have before me a manuscript drawn up by a former curate of this parish for the present Archdeacon Bayley, vicar of Messingham, written in 1825, in which it is stated that "as soon as a child is capable of earning anything, he is that moment removed from school, never afterwards attends with regularity and certainty—perhaps a quarter during the winter season. In the spring they are employed in frightening birds from the new sown lands, in dropping beans, or planting potatoes. In the autumn they glean corn, and in October a child of 12 or 13 can earn 1s. a-day for gathering potatoes." This statement will apply equally to the present day in every respect; except perhaps that the wages of 1s. a-day may be somewhat reduced, but I think not last October, (1842).

10. *Pauper Apprenticeship.*

Holbeach..... C. Key, Esq. Does not exist, nor in my recollection for 14 or 15 years.

Folkingham..... None exists.

Sleaford, &c...... {Mr. Moore....} I never knew it to farmers; none of
 {Mr. Tomlinson} late at all.
 Mr. Roberts. None.
 C. Allix, Esq. Done away with.

Louth..... I never heard of any for a great length of time.

Brigg..... None to farmers' service; some to trades, but rare.

Spilsby..... Very rare.

Lincoln..... No; our Board never encourages that.

Spalding..... In our Union we have not, upon an average, put out above one parish apprentice in the year; the premium about 5*l.* No wages worth naming as such from the masters. The treatment good, being carefully watched by the Guardians of the particular parish. Our Union consists of 10 parishes with a population of 17,000.

Dr. Moore.

Grantham..... Scarcely known.

Stamford..... None since the new Poor Law.

Gainsborough ... Not common. The present law allowing no premium, it is difficult to find masters who will clothe and maintain an apprentice until he attains the age of 21.

Apprentices to the sea-service (but no others) have wages, out of which they have to find clothes and washing.

They are generally well treated.

Bourne Nearly discontinued in this part of the country.

Horncastle None in this Union since its foundation, to my knowledge.

SUFFOLK.

The Allotment System.—Opinions respecting its Utility.

Glenham (Mr. Moseley). Allotments, where adopted, induce honesty, civility, and industry. They exist in this and several adjoining parishes, but are, I regret to say, not general in this vicinity.

(Mr. Sandby) .. Effect most excellent. Women and children are employed on them.

(Mr. Shawe) ... The allotment system is much approved by the poor, and is favourable to their habits, both moral and social. Children are frequently employed on them.

Beccles (Mr. Clarke). The effects are good: the condition of families is improved by it. It gives employment to women and children.

The Committee of the *Blything* Union). Of all the means adopted of late years to improve the moral and social condition of the poor, this has been the most effective (in this parish). It is most clearly demonstrated every day in the orderly and industrial habits of holders of allotments, in the better cultivation of their cottage-gardens, arising from the spirit of emulation, which is felt even by the young of the family, and also by the women, who are much employed on the allotments, each endeavouring to excel his neighbour in the quantity and quality of the produce: and it is believed that, if 40 to 60 rods of land could be allotted to each cottager in agricultural parishes, it would go far to dispauperize them.

(Mr. E. Buchanan). With regard to the allotment system, one of the relieving officers of Sudbury tells me that he has a number of heavy land parishes on the border of Essex: among these is Bulmer, which he states to have been one of the most pauperized, until, a short time since, a quantity of land was divided into allotments among 73 families, who have 40 rods each, for which they pay 10s. per annum rent. The effects have been to completely alter the situation of the labouring population; and from having been the worst, he now states it to be his best parish.

Mildenhall Since the New Poor Law, the poor have depended much more on their allotments: they have turned improvident people into provident. One man, who had no allotment, considered himself 2s. a-week worse off than those who had. The women do most of the work.

Walsham-le-Willows. [Here the system has been tried on a very extensive scale (100 acres), and has had very remarkable success under very peculiar disadvantages. It is a stiff soil, with a clay bottom.] The tenants generally consider them a benefit. If we had as much land

again, they would come and ask for it; finds a very great deal of employment. The tenants would have been paupers if it was not for the allotments: they, to a certain extent, supply the place of domestic manufactures at certain seasons. The New Poor Law threw them back on their own resources, and this gives them some means of support; they render them almost independent of the fluctuations in the price of flour. The system has much reduced the rates.

Eye Very beneficial; great relief to labourers' families; supplies the place of domestic manufacture; is a means of encouraging the well conducted.

Stradbroke Effects excellent; poor extremely anxious to get them.

Framlingham (Mr. J. Peirson). Under certain regulations, I think it works well: at all events, I do it. It has excellent moral effects: draws out good qualities on both sides; creates a good feeling between employer and employed.

NORFOLK.

Shotesham, (Mr. Bateman.) "I advocate it very strongly, and so does Mr. Fellowes. There is a difference observable in the conduct and condition of those families who have allotments, and those who have not; they are better off, and conduct themselves better.

Norwich, (Mr. Forster.) Had let 78 allotments about three-quarters of a mile from the town to some of the poor town's people; thought it an unmixed good; but as they had only had it a year and a-half, there had not been sufficient time to test it well.

Langley, (Mr. Burton.) Approved of the system; the condition and conduct of the poor much improved by it.

Gunton, (Mr. Smith.) I am a strong advocate for it. It has made the tenants much more thrifty. It has worked very well here in all ways. It enables the cottager to live in comparative comfort. I think I can show, perhaps, the largest cottage rental (in numbers) of any in Norfolk, and the smallest amount of arrear.

Elmham, (Mr. Money Fisher.) It's the principal thing for the poor. I don't know what they would do without it. I am a strong advocate for it.

Mr. Knatchbull—There are, perhaps, 100 allotments here; the women and children invariably work on them. The good effects, in every respect, are beyond calculation. This system promotes happiness, contentment, industry, regularity of habits, and is duly appreciated by the poor themselves.

Litcham, (Mr. E. B. Francis.) Excellent—a great good—it prevails here generally; the poor like it very much. We have, I suppose, 50 or 60 tenants, and always many candidates.

Necton, (Colonel Mason.) The system prevails only partially here; where it does, the greatest good is derived from it.

Snarehill, (Mr. Partridge.) It influences their conduct in withdrawing them from the temptation of the public-house, by finding them occupation on wet days, after it has cleared and they have not gone to work. It adds to their comfort in the supply of wheat, potatoes, or turnips for those who keep a cow or a pig; women and children assist.

Heydon, (Mr. Richardson.) I highly approve of the allotment system, under certain regulations. *** By giving labourers land enough to grow potatoes sufficient for their own use, and a coomb of wheat, the benefits are so great, that they are more careful of their own conduct, better behaved, have a little stake in the county; and if owners or agents attend to them, and see that they manage them properly, this system gives them the real comforts of life.

Dereham, (Mr. Paddon.) Women and children are engaged here in this beneficial occupation, and the soil is almost always well cultivated.

Stradset, (Mr. Bagge.) The system is very good; both women and children are employed.

Cranworth, (Mr. Gordon.) There are now in this and the two adjoining parishes about 60 allotment tenants; and I know of no plan that could have so materially increased the welfare and respectability of the parishioners.

Mr. Howman. I believe it to be a most valuable means of bettering the condition of the poor; every instance of its adoption which has come within my observation, with one single exception, has been in every way productive of good. The holders of allotments, I have observed, are always better conditioned, arising, no doubt, from their having employment and amusement for their leisure hours, which, leading their minds to better things, keeps them from the ale-house. The possession of a little property of their own makes them more careful of that of others. Indeed, I don't recollect an instance of a holder of an allotment having been brought to trial for any crime; and I know strong cases of reformation arising from the possession of them, coupled with the encouragement given by different societies for the promotion of industry.

LINCOLNSHIRE.

Holbeach, (Mr. Morton.) It's called here "rood" land; it's a great blessing to the poor.

Sleaford, (Mr. Moore, — Tomlinson.) Nearly universal in this county, and productive of a very great deal of good.

H. Handley, Esq. The most beneficial system that can possibly be devised: it leads to a savings' bank, and then there's no saying what good mayn't follow from it.

Mr. Soynbee. It does the tenants a great deal of good.

C. Allix, Esq. The system is general, and a very great advantage to the labourer.

Boston, (all the witnesses given before.) Very useful system—no doubt of it; it's a very excellent thing for the labourer; we hope it will become general all over.

Spilsby, (Mr. Hoff.) Almost in every village—benefit to the industrious labourers almost beyond description. You find a fat pig in the house of every labouring man.

Grantham, (Mr. Johnston.) Effects decidedly beneficial.

Spalding, (Dr. Moore.) The good effects are unquestionable, both on the condition and habits of the poor.

Gainsborough, (Mr. Crook.) The allotments are anxiously sought after; and no doubt tend to improve the condition of the labourer very materially.

Evidence as to the best mode of putting the Allotment System into practice.

Allotment System in different parts of *Suffolk*.

Mildenhall.—The labourers of the parish very generally have allotments of land, from a quarter of an acre to 60 rods, at the same rent as the tenants pay for their land,—from 2*l.* to 15*s.* per acre, according to quality of soil. The soil varies very much—some is good, some light. The allotments are dug, and cultivated alternately with wheat and potatoes. The rents are regularly paid: the land is in excellent condition. Two-acre allotments had been tried and found too large; they were always badly cultivated; the holders of them endeavoured to keep a cow; the cow trespassed, and they got into trouble in consequence. Besides, these large allotments threw them out of their regular employment, from taking up too much of their time.

Walsham-le-Willows.—The land allotted is parish land. We began some 10 or 12 years ago, with some 10 or 12 acres at first. It worked well, so we increased the allotments to 50 acres more; since that, to 20 acres more. The land was formerly a common. The size was an acre at utmost. The acre allotments are as well cultivated as the smaller ones, because we apportion the allotment to the size and nature of the family; a quarter of an acre the smallest. It is a stiff soil, clay bottom; not actually heavy, but it is forced to be drained; not so stiff as some; not bad working land; 70 acres of it, about 24 years ago, was enclosed common. Since the last-mentioned 20 acres, we have allotted 20 acres more. (In all about 100 acres.) The tenants of the allotments would have been paupers then, and now too, if it was not for the allotments.

The rents vary. The last 20 acres are let at about 40*s.* an acre; they look pretty well cultivated on the whole. They were taken by a Miss Wilkinson, deceased, at a high rent, and then let by her to the poor at a sacrifice, from benevolent motives.

The rents of the other 70 are, on an average, 25*s.* The first 10 or 12, about 30*s.* They are more valuable from their situation; they lie close to the town; they are subject to tithes and rates; the others are subject to rates, but not to tithes; and are, on average, two miles off the town. The rents are generally well paid; there are more than 100 tenants, and only two behind now.

There are so few families who have not allotments, that it is almost impossible to test their moral and domestic condition by comparison with those who have not allotments; but relatively with their own past condition, they are looking better off than they used to be.

Extract of a Letter from Mr. John Miller, 27th December, 1842.—It is an imperative condition that they should cultivate them entirely by hand and spade husbandry. There appear to me to be one or two very strong reasons for adopting and enforcing that condition, particularly in this parish, as it creates a great deal of additional employment, which is of considerable importance here, as we have a numerous population, principally dependent upon agriculture for employment and support, and a greater number of labourers than, under the ordinary and usual system of farming, can find employment; and but for the additional labour so created, we should have generally a considerable number of unemployed labourers, which has not been the case now to any extent for some few years past, and which I think may be attributed in a great degree to the operation of the system adopted. I beg further to observe, that the superior degree of tillage obtained by spade husbandry, and the facility it affords for keeping the land free from weeds,

admits of its being kept under a constant course of cropping, whereby an additional produce is obtained, and the cultivators are remunerated for their time and labour. The distance of the allotment is a disadvantage, but I think not so much so as was anticipated, and much less than strangers generally imagine. The land has been so held for some years, and the cultivators have consequently had considerable experience, and notwithstanding the distance, they consider the land of great advantage to them, and upon all occasions, when it has been proposed to deprive any of them of their allotments from any cause, they always evince a great reluctance to part with them. They get their manure carted by donkeys, or very frequently their employers lend them a tumbril and horses for *that purpose*, and when they have work want doing, or they have *no other employment*, they take an entire day, instead of going occasionally for an hour or two, as might be the case if nearer to them, which I consider is not much disadvantage to them; for after having performed a full day's work for a master, I think their cessation from further labour is necessary to renovate the energies of both mind and body for the ensuing day's toil. I think there are other considerations that make it very doubtful, if it is desirable that it should be considered as a part of the system, that the allotments are to be cultivated by working over-hours. I therefore, upon the whole, am of opinion that the distance is not a serious obstacle to the working of the system, and I feel justified in coming to that conclusion, from the fact of the desire invariably shown by the cultivators to retain their allotments, notwithstanding the disadvantage.

Conditions upon which the Poor of *Walsham-le-Willows* are to cultivate certain Allotments upon the *Town Farm* of the said *Parish of Walsham-le-Willows*.

1st. The object in allotting land to be cultivated by the poor is to better their condition, by giving them an opportunity for the exercise of beneficial and industrious exertion, and thereby enable them to raise themselves from the situation of paupers.

2nd. That the poor are not to be the tenants of the land at will, or otherwise, in any respect, nor have or possess any possession or right of possession whatever, but to be the cultivators merely, the trustees pledging themselves, as far as they can, that if these conditions are in all respects performed, no one shall be deprived of his privilege without being paid by valuation for all matters and things usually allowed by an incoming to an outgoing person: but it is expressly understood that this pledge shall not operate in any manner as an agreement, or confer any right upon the cultivators at law or in equity, or be so construed, on any pretence whatever.

3rd. That the respective cultivators shall pay every year, to be computed from the 11th day of October in each year, to the treasurer of the trustees of the Town Farm, or some person on his or their behalf, for permission to cultivate and take the produce of their respective allotments, such sum or sums of money as are now or shall be hereafter fixed by the trustees to be paid for such permission, together with all rates, assessments, and parish charges in respect of their several allotments; and such payments shall, together with any sum or sums of money which may have been advanced to the cultivators respectively, by way of loan, if demanded, be made quarterly, or at such times and in such proportions as the trustees shall direct and appoint.

4th. That the allotments shall be cultivated solely by hand and spade husbandry, and not by cattle.

5th. That the yearly course of cropping the several allotments shall be, one moiety peas, beans, tares, potatoes, or other vegetables, and the other moiety grain. And one moiety shall be yearly well and husbandly manured; and before any crop shall be sown or planted, the land shall be well and properly dug, hoed, and otherwise cultivated, and freed from weeds.

6th. That all the straw and haulm arising from the respective allotments shall be made into manure, and carried thereon, and not sold off or burnt.

7th. That each cultivator shall repair the roads, fences, banks, ditches, and drains, in such manner and proportions, and at such time or times, as the trustees shall direct and appoint.

8th. That no person shall be allowed to transfer his allotment to any other person without the consent in writing of at least three of the trustees.

9th. That no stock or cattle shall be turned on or fed on any of the allotments without being staked, or otherwise well secured.

10th. Every trespass or encroachment upon another allotment shall be strictly avoided, and the boundary-lines faithfully kept; and in case any cultivator, his family or cattle, shall do any injury to the land, cattle, or crop of another cultivator, recompense shall be forthwith made and paid for such injury.

11th. That no soil or manure, carriages, harrows, or implements, shall be left upon the roads or paths, nor any building erected without the consent in writing of a majority of the trustees.

12th. That every cultivator, on entering or leaving any of the fields, shall secure the outside gates, so as to prevent any cattle trespassing; and no cultivator shall do or cause any damage to be done to the gates, fences, roads, and paths, the same not being measured or included in any of the allotments.

13th. That these conditions may be altered, and others substituted, from time to time, as shall appear necessary to a majority of the trustees, at any meeting to be called for that purpose.

14th. That if any cultivator shall neglect or refuse to comply with these or the subsisting conditions for the time being, or any of them, the trustees, or any person on their behalf, may immediately after enter upon his allotment, and the crops and produce then growing or being thereon shall, upon such neglect or refusal, become forfeited, and become the actual property of the said trustees, to all intents and purposes, and they or their agents shall be at perfect liberty to take and secure the same, and dispose thereof, as they may think proper, without being subject or liable to any action, indictment, or other proceedings either at law or equity, and without rendering or being liable to render any account of the same, or the proceeds thereof.

15th. And every cultivator who shall commit or permit any breach in any of the conditions, shall, after notice in writing from the treasurer and clerk for the time being, together with three other trustees, cease to enter or come in or upon his allotment, and if after such notice he shall come thereon, he shall be deemed a wilful and malicious trespasser, to all intents and purposes, and be subject and liable to be proceeded against in the same manner, in every respect, as if he had never been permitted to take or cultivate the same.

I	do agree to cultivate the allotment marked
Number	upon the plan, upon the foregoing conditions. Witness
my hand the	day of
hundred and	one thousand eight

Stradbroke (Mr. Gissin).—The soil is heavy; some of the allotments are two acres where the family is large; the work is done by women and children, without losing a single day's work; I have five men, who don't lose more than three days in the year.

They are well cultivated; have an excellent effect on the tenants; the

only ill effect is that it makes it more difficult to identify stolen corn. The rent (2*l.* an acre) is too high at the present price of corn; but still there would be more applicants if there were more land; I have now nearly 50 applications, if I could find a purchaser of land who would divide it. Allotments make the tenants look to the rates themselves, and take an interest in the soil; each man ought to have a little bit of land, in my opinion; it is the means of checking many impositions; if a man asks relief who they know has other means of support, they come forward and expose him. As to distance, they range from a mile and a-half to half-a-mile from their homes; the tenants frequently work till 11 at night by moonlight in winter; they go on them at nine at night.

There is a strict system of supervision; no stock is allowed on the allotments; pigs are kept by the cottagers; without strict supervision they would be much mismanaged; my rule is to give notice to quit on the first instance of trespass on another's allotment. They are all planted with fruit-trees, which is a great objection; it makes boys trespass after the fruit, and injure the corn to get at it; they secrete themselves in it. An acre of land close to a man's own cottage would be 10*s.* a-year more advantage to him than an acre at a distance.

Framlingham (The Rev. J. Atwood).—I have tried it in a small way; the first portion of glebe I had at liberty I allotted; allotments give the labourer a door to improve his condition; the size is from a quarter to half an acre; married men with families, and old men, who have more time to spare, have half acres; I scarcely ever pass the field but I see some one in it,—an old man, a woman, or a child; mine are exceedingly well cultivated; rental paid very regularly, sometimes even before the day; it won't enable a man who can't get work to keep off the parish, but it will enable a man with a little road-work to live without relief through the winter, till he can get work.

Some farmers think that allotments make the men get up early and waste the best of his strength on his own land, and not on his employer's; but this, if true, corrects itself, for the employer will turn off a man who underworks; and in fact they only work at their allotments when they can't get other work, and on bad days when unemployed, and therefore not paid by the farmer.

Mr. John Peirson.—I think an allotment works well where the master allows the horses to plough with, and charges the man a day's work for a horse, *i. e.*, if he has two horses at work he'll charge the man two days' work; if the man has to dig it he could not do it for several pounds; it costs 4*s.* to plough it.

It works ill where the man has to walk half a mile to his land, and is forced to dig the whole.

Take wages at 12*s.* a-week; it takes a man two weeks to dig half an acre; there's 24*s.*; so it's much better worth his while to plough it, whatever may be the supposed advantages gained by digging over ploughing.

A man with five or six children told me that he would give up his allotment unless I would let him have horses to plough his allotment; for he was then earning 2*s.* a-day with me, and each day he gave up his work was 2*s.* gone; he had half an acre.

Another man, with children, had more than a quarter and less than half an acre; his children are better clothed since, and he could not have got through the winter without it; but then my brother (whose allotment it was) found him the ploughing.

Some object that it takes a man away from his master's work, or causes a clashing of interests,—that when the master wants his wheat cut, so does the man, &c. &c.

It depends on whether they have a goodnatured master; he should do something to help them; let them give him good notice beforehand that

they want to work on the allotments on such a day, and then let him strike off that day's work. In harvesting, my regular plan is to tell my harvestmen to go away at four P.M. from my work, and go and cut the allotment corn if they like, and help each other, and they do it cheerfully.

Half an acre of land won't maintain a man and three or four children without work; it's ridiculous talking of it.

Last year I bought all my allotment wheat except one man's, who had so very much; they said they had no proper place to keep it in; the rats and mice got at it, and it wasted.

This is a heavy soil.

Hunston (J. H. Heigham, Esq.).—The allotment system has been of much benefit; the fault committed (in my humble opinion) is giving allotments of an acre and a half; it is more than a labourer can cultivate with advantage, and will produce a race of pauper farmers; the occupation of a quarter of an acre, and in some instances of a half, has been marked with beneficial effects on the condition and habits of families.

Thorington (Mr. R. Appleton).—There are allotments of about one rood in almost every parish, but I think not to the extent that the system might be beneficially carried; they are dug; in general they are near their homes; but in some instances they are from a quarter to half a mile distant; the rent about the same as the adjoining farms; the nature of the soil varies in each parish; in this and the adjoining parish mixed soil predominates. The rent is generally paid at Michaelmas.

Halesworth.—The Report to the Board of Guardians from the parish in which the allotment has been most fairly and fully carried out, states as follows:—

The allotment system is acted upon to some extent in this parish; there are 44 allotments, a quarter of an acre each; the rent is as follows: 24 at 10s. each, and 20 at 12s. each, free of all parochial charges; the whole is under spade-husbandry; the average distance from the labourers' cottages, about a quarter of a mile; the rents have been well paid, with but three or four exceptions, in four years; in these exceptions there has been no loss incurred, but trouble to obtain the payments. Of all the means adopted of late years to improve the moral and social condition of the poor, this has been the most effective in this parish; it is most clearly demonstrated every day in the orderly and industrial habits of holders of allotments, in the better cultivation of their cottage-gardens, arising from the spirit of emulation, which is felt even by the young of the family, and also by the women, who are much employed on the allotments, each endeavouring to excel his neighbour in the quantity and quality of the produce; and it is believed that if from 40 to 60 roods of land could be allotted to each cottager in agricultural parishes, it would go far to dispauperize them. Distance from the cottage, if it be moderate, is not so great a disadvantage as is commonly imagined; the mere circumstance of 20 or 30 allotments lying beside each other leads to a better cultivation of the whole. A man may neglect his cottage-garden, but he would be ashamed to be the occupier of an allotment and see it worse cultivated than his neighbour's; and besides, industrial habits are encouraged in vacant hours, and the young of both sexes are better qualified "as domestic farm servants or apprentices." The preference is given to mixed or light-soil land for allotment purposes.

Beccles (Mr. Clarke).—The size of the allotments is a quarter of an acre; they are dug; they lie very near the homes of the occupiers; the rent is from 35s. to 45s. per acre, all rates included; they are paid quarterly; the effects on the condition and habits of the families who hold them are good; their condition is improved by them; the women and children work on them; the soil varies; it is mixed, light, and heavy.

Allotment System in different parts of *Norfolk*.

Necton (Col. Mason).—The size varies from a rood to an acre; they must use spade-husbandry; they must manure them each year; they may crop them as they like; the women and children work in them.

Attleborough (Mr. Salter).—Allotments are general; cultivated with the spade; seldom far from their homes; usually about 20 roods, sometimes 40; rent 3*d.* per rood, free of rates and tithe; soil is about the average of the neighbourhood; the effects are good.

Shotesham (Mr. W. Bateman).—Size a quarter of an acre; we don't give them indiscriminately; the merit, size, and nature of the family is regarded; no rents unpaid; perhaps 30 holders; very well cultivated; they dig it all; it's one of the conditions of the lease, so that a man takes no more than what he thinks he can manage; they are as near their homes as possible; but some are half a mile off; however, most of them are close to their premises; the two-journey system of work prevails here; they leave off from 11 A.M. till 1 P.M. in summer; then they work on their allotments. We began 12 years ago and got on by degrees.

Langley (Mr. Burton).—In Langley there were 80 cottages; each had 40 roods of land, generally speaking, close at their doors; rent very low; all well cultivated; rents all paid; the condition and conduct of tenants were much improved by them.

Blakeney (Mr. Sparham).—Norfolk not very well suited to the system, that is, the light soils, unless plenty of manure is close at hand and easily got. In heavy soils, spade-husbandry is much more productive than plough; in light soil not; I've tried it, and can see no difference. A quarter of an acre should be the limit; one-eighth enough if the man is in full employment. The system answers very well with us, because we have plenty of manure, owing to there being a good deal of traffic; besides, they get plenty of seaweed. The allotments are cultivated by the women and children.

Junton (Mr. Smith).—The system is general here; every cottager has some ground, where it is possible to give it within reasonable distance. The late Lord Suffield gave it as near the cottages as possible, at the same rent as the adjoining land, with merely the addition of tithe and rates; size, a quarter of an acre to an acre. I think it in no case should exceed half an acre. It has been made general here in the last ten years. There were allotments before, but only a few; we found that these worked so well that they made the tenants so much more thrifty than those without them that the late Lord Suffield made it general. It enables the cottager to live in comparative comfort. I am a strong advocate for it. I think I can show, perhaps, the largest cottage rental (in numbers) of any in Norfolk, and the smallest amount of arrear; the land is generally well cultivated; it is a mixed soil, with a cold bottom; we make it a main object to have them as near their houses as possible; I know cases where the land is at a distance, and I should say it does no credit to the occupiers on the system; a quarter of a mile off is better than having none at all, but the nearer the better.

Our people in summer leave off at 11 and go again at 2; between those hours they'll perhaps spend a couple of hours in their gardens.

I think it a great advantage to the community at large, for a quarter of an acre spade-husbandry will produce as much as an acre ploughed, though there's not so much difference on light soils.

Elmham (Mr. Money Fisher).—A quarter of an acre is enough for spade-husbandry; mine here are nearly all half; we divide a field into allotments; some are as far as half a mile off; there are 112 holders; the land is pretty well cultivated; rents regularly paid, only one in arrear; the soil is mostly good,—mixed.

The following conditions were found a little too stringent, but they form

Secondly, I advise no more than those quantities, because more will either take them away from their labour, or be badly farmed, or will become like that prejudicial Irish system, where a family lives on and out of an acre of ground. The more allotments you can lay together the better; it stirs up emulation, and they improve each other; besides, they can have a little chat together, which they like very much. By giving labourers land sufficient to grow potatoes enough for their own use, and a coomb of wheat, the benefits are so great that they are more careful of their own conduct, better behaved, and have a little stake in the country. If owners or agents attend to them and see they manage them well and properly, this system gives them the real comforts of life; but it should be mainly attended to and cultivated by the wife and children, and not take up the labourer's time, which belongs to his master. And this system should be adopted in proper situations and quantities, together with the labourer's having regular employment; for I am desirous to be understood that the allotment system should be in addition to their general employment, to give them comforts in addition to their daily wages. If this object can be attained, they become satisfied, well-behaved, and industrious in the highest degree. It often, in summer evenings, keeps the man from the beer-house. Generally speaking, farmers don't like it. They think it interferes with the labour they are entitled to; and many of them get pigs; and as the men have access to the corn, turnips, &c., on the farm, it is often supposed the temptation to help their own pigs may be too strong for some of them. I coincide in part with this last view; they gather and make manure enough for the land without a pig. A pig, no doubt, is a good thing, but, if possible, keep these people out of the way of temptation, and make their masters satisfied on that point. The allotments are generally cropped thus:—Alternate years, wheat and potatoes. An idea is abroad, that wheat can only be grown to any advantage once in four years. The allotment system disproves it altogether; for in this parish I have seen wheat and potatoes grown for the last 16 years, and they grow as much of both as they did the first year they had the land. This I have yearly seen, and had it measured after the wheat was threshed and the potatoes taken up.

Cranworth. (Letter from the Rev. P. Gurdon.)—The allotment system I estimate as one of the most effectual methods of bettering the condition of the poor that can be resorted to in an agricultural parish, provided it is done with caution and judgment.

From the experience which I have had, it might, I apprehend, be adopted with great advantage in the neighbourhood of manufacturing towns where the health and condition of the poor would be materially improved. In 1829, when I first resided here, I was forcibly struck with the discreditable appearance of the *poor land* and the *surveyor's land*, the former having been set out at the time of the enclosure for the benefit of the poor, the latter for the repair of the high-roads, although containing no material that could be applied thereto. At that time the labourers were perambulating the several parishes around in search of work, much in the same manner that they have been, in many parishes, this year, only to a greater extent. I called a parish meeting and succeeded in hiring the said lands for a term of years. Some of it might fairly be termed an unshapen mass of clay-pits and holes, whilst the other was badly farmed and flogged almost to ruination, growing only 16 bushels per acre of wheat and 25 of barley. I divided it into half acres, having levelled and trenched one of the fields with the surplus labourers; it was then allotted to those labourers who were men of good character and who had families, giving a quarter of an acre only to those who were team-men, they having less time to bestow upon them, and not likely to be spared by their masters for an occasional half-day as the former might. At the time that they were first established, I was not encouraged with the idea of a favourable result, a strong prejudice, I might say, existing amongst the employers of labour against the system; nevertheless, being forcibly

impressed with the propriety, as a clergyman, of assisting the poor during the want of employment, I deemed it advisable to persevere, guarding against the evils I was told would arise. With this object in view I intrusted them only to men of good character, to avoid the possibility of encouraging any dishonest propensity of corn-stealing, and so arranged the allotments that they were divided one from the other by a small ditch, each occupier having a narrow gate of his own, sufficient to admit a wheelbarrow only. This separation was made with the view of preventing the possibility of quarrels arising from trespass on each other's occupations, and I forbade the pasturing of any stock upon them for the same reason, whilst the small gates were placed to prevent carts and ploughs being introduced; these, together with other trifling arrangements, were made to ensure neatness and success; and the distance from the occupier's house varies, generally speaking, from 100 yards to a mile.

The conditions to cultivate the same with the spade, cropping them alternately with wheat and potatoes, at a rent of 13s., and some 14s., for the half acre, the same being tithe-free, the tenants paying the poor-rate, the headman collecting and carrying the same to the overseer. This plan of allowing them to pay the rate previous to the introduction of the New Poor Law had the salutary effect of checking relief to undeserving characters, which object I had in view, entertaining little or no hopes of the introduction of a law that would tend so materially to advance the independence of the poor as the new law has now nearly established.

The *women* and *children* have been employed to a considerable extent upon these allotments, and in some instances the work has been principally done by them. The land is of a fair good staple, with a clay subsoil, and consequently rather strong than not, and might be termed good wheat land when well tilled, though not of first-rate quality. The best crops that I have known upon the shift of a quarter of an acre, has been of copdock wheat and golden drop at the rate of $5\frac{1}{2}$ quarters per acre, weight 4 st. 8 lbs. per bushel; of oats, in lieu of wheat, at the rate of 11 quarters of Tartarian, weight $2\frac{1}{2}$ st. per bushel; and of Poland oats at the rate of 8 quarters, weight 3 st. per bushel, and of potatoes from 120 to 140 sacks per acre.

Each tenant is bound by his agreement to keep a pig not less than six months in the year, and consume the straw and spread the manure arising therefrom upon the land. This, with the spade-husbandry, has materially improved the condition of the land, which, generally speaking, is well farmed, whilst the rents are regularly paid. For the purpose of satisfying myself of the advantages accruing to the labourers in a pecuniary point of view, I one year requested them at Michaelmas to give me an account of the income and expenditure of the half acre, and I found that one or two had, after paying all expenses, netted 5*l.* and fatted four pigs weighing from five to six stones.

If the husband is well employed, I find that the work is very often done by the wife, and the bigger boys, who are often out of employment for a day or two. When, therefore, we take into consideration the frequent opportunities afforded in a winter like the present of applying their time and labour upon them, which otherwise would be entirely lost, and of employing the extra hands in a parish, as well as of teaching their own children to work and be industrious, there cannot, I think, exist a doubt of the general benefit arising from the allotment system, whilst the thankfulness of the poor, where they are bestowed, at once demonstrates the opinion entertained amongst that class of their advantages.

I can faithfully state that, with few exceptions, there is an ostensible difference in the moral condition, as well as in the general comfort, of those families which have them.

I have now in this and the two adjoining parishes, about 60 tenants of these allotments, and I know of no plan that I could have adopted that could possibly have so materially improved the welfare and respectability of

my parishioners; nevertheless I am sensible that they must be attended to, and, moreover, that the allotments must be let at a fair moderate rent, or they cause an additional outlay of physical strength for little or no pecuniary advantage, although a certain moral good must always arise from a continued practice of industry, which the allotment system will always ensure.

Allotment system in different parts of *Lincolnshire*.

Sleaford.—I think the opinion of the best-informed persons in that neighbourhood is, that the size of the allotments should be from a rood to half an acre; that it is an universal rule,—“If you give a man more work than he can do in his leisure hours, you do him a great harm.” The land should be good; it should lie near; if possible, it should be close to the house, and be a sort of garden; they are then more likely to take an honest pride in it, which is an excellent thing. Some persons object to corn being grown on the allotments; they say that in that case the labourers are always going away from their work to their allotments; that then they spend only a part of the day on the allotments and the rest in the alehouse; moreover, it leads to theft. Some, on the other hand, say that corn is a good thing, for this reason,—that otherwise potatoes will always be kept on the land, and will very soon impoverish it: corn also helps to supply manure for the land by providing straw for the pig. To this it is answered, that the employers usually give the occupiers straw for that purpose. It is considered the greatest possible benefit to them to keep a pig, with their potato-ground. They can feed a pig with half the money that a richer person can; and, moreover, they have an interest and a pride in it. A pig will manure a rood of land. If the allotments can't be close to their houses, they should never be more than half a mile off: the best thing then is to have five or six allotments in an acre. However, one of my informants said that the system answered well, where of 80 gardens the average number was two miles and a half from their houses.

Boston.—About this neighbourhood the labourers commonly have a garden and a rood of land. The allotments are there called roods; though they vary from one rood to half an acre. In this last case, one rood is sown with wheat, one with potatoes; and that system works well. The rents are usually 10s. a rood. The land is generally ploughed, the labourer hiring the plough.

Spilsby.—In this neighbourhood I was told that there were allotments in almost every village; that to the industrious labourer the benefit is almost beyond description; you find a fat pig in the house of every labouring man; two of my informants said they would not keep a man in their employ unless he would keep a pig; the size of the allotments vary from half a rood to an acre; sometimes they are cut out according to the size of the family; a rood and a half for a man with a family is the best size; it should never be less than a rood; the rents are from 30s. to 40s. an acre, and are usually well paid; the land is variously cultivated, but generally well, owing to the regulations; “we let them on that system that no man shall have a cottage-garden unless he keeps a pig.” The distance sometimes is half a mile; the women and children do most of the work; they are principally dug; where the size is half an acre, they are ploughed; then they borrow the plough from the master, who will always lend it to a deserving man.

Mr. Wingate said that the best system is to let the man have a rood of land anywhere; the master should prepare the land for them, and the men should set the potatoes. “My system is to let the men have a rood each, ready cultivated; they pay 20s. a rood; I carry the potatoes for them; this is best, because the men then don't waste any time cultivating their land, which is the case when they have gardens; but if they cannot get rood lands (which is sometimes the case), gardens are better than nothing.” We have

7th. Any disputes that may arise between the occupiers respecting the allotments shall be referred to the landlords, whose decisions shall be binding.

8th. Any occupier who may be convicted of an offence against the laws of his country shall be liable to be dispossessed of his allotment immediately, and be allowed such sum of money only as shall be deemed reasonable.

9th. No bushes or trees shall be planted in any allotment.

10th. The landlords shall have full power to enter upon and take possession of the above allotment, as well on the said 6th day of April, after due notice, as at any other time, at which, under any of the foregoing terms and conditions, they may be entitled to the possession of the same; and in case the said _____ shall interrupt the said landlords or their agent, collector, or servant, in taking such possession, or shall afterwards enter thereon, he shall be considered and treated as a wilful trespasser.

I accept of the above occupation, subject to the said terms and conditions.

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NOTE.—The rent will be received at the Town-hall, between the hours of 10 and 12 in the morning of the rent-day.

The Gang System, as practised at *Castle Acre*, in *Norfolk*.

Mr. *Hudson*, of *Castle Acre*. The gang-system, if well regulated, does not to my knowledge injure morals in itself. I think all out-door labour injures the female character; but I doubt whether idleness at home, or manufacturing work does not do so more. I daresay, and believe, that when they get together after the work is done, they may be bad enough; in fact, the place is an extremely depraved place. I think it is owing very much to the neighbouring landowners; in many parishes round, the whole parish belongs to the landlord; he will not allow any new cottages to be built, and he lets the old ones fall into decay. The labourers are by degrees forced to quit those parishes; they then come and settle in ours, which is an open parish. There are very many small tradesmen who let the land at large rents, 4*l.*, 4*l.* 10*s.*; and then new houses are built; and moreover it's a great hardship on the old parishoners, because the rents of all houses are raised by the competition; labour is drawn here from the surrounding parishes. There is no resident magistrate, nor one within many miles. The parish is a complete body without a head. The place is rather better since the police came.

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When I first resided here, the gang-system was not known; the work now done by them was performed by women, or rather it was left undone. But from one or two farmers cultivating their lands in a superior manner, getting their farms perfectly clean and free from weeds, many others have been induced to follow their example and employ more hands; and where there used to be 1*l.* expended in the cultivation of the land 20 years since, there are now 5*l.* expended for the same. *Castle Acre* has long, long been a very neglected parish. Dissent is very rife here: we have five different sects of Dissenters. This may probably be ascribed to the inertness of the clergymen whom we have had. Curates have been over this large parish till the present vicar came here.

Another widely-spreading evil arises from the largest occupier in the parish not employing labourers belonging to that parish for the last 16 years. Consequently his farm has been cultivated by the aid of the gangs,—young men and women of bad character, from all districts, congregating here for employment; and the other occupiers of the parish constrained to employ those men belonging to them.

To this combination of causes may be ascribed the widely-spreading evils

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Mrs. *Sculfer*, labouring woman at *Castle Acre*.—I have six children; three girls and three boys; my two eldest girls go out—most to my grief that I am obliged to send them. They worked for Mr. Fuller (the chief gang-master) more than for any one else. One now works for Mr. Moulton; both are large gangsmen. My second girl was 9 when she went out; a great many go out at the age of 7. Mr. Fuller has four or five overseers; he has 100 people in his employ. They go out at seven in the morning now at this time of the year; sometimes two-journey work. If two-journey day, they come back at twelve, go again to work at one, from one till dark. In height of summer, sometimes 9 o'clock. In summer they go out between six and seven, generally two-journey work then; but not more than an hour's rest.

They seldom come back to dinner; feed themselves; chiefly on bread.

Fuller works boys and girls together. I know that *now* is the case, because the lads come and call my girls. The lads pull turnips, and the girls set them up after them. I've never seen them at work myself. The lads who work with the girls are all ages. I know the gangs generally bear a very bad character; but I don't know myself that any ill-conduct goes on in the fields. It's my belief that it's the ruin of them. They never settle to anything after it.

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One of my children has been to Gayton twice this week. They walk there and back. They have been to Winch; then they ride. Fuller takes them in a waggon; then *they ought* to stop all night; but my husband won't allow it; for they sleep in barns or anywhere; that's what they said. There's pretty work for boys and girls! We would not agree for ours to stop, by no means; not if they lost their work.

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when my husband worked with him I was obliged to deal with him; my girls don't board themselves, else they'd be obliged to deal with him. He says he would give those who would deal with him 1*d.* a-day more.

My children's hands are so blistered pulling the turnips that I've been obliged to tie them up every night this winter. Pulling turnips blisters the hands very much; they're obliged to pull them up; they must not take turnip-cromes (a sort of fork), for fear of damaging the turnips.

There can't be healthier children than mine are; they can stand all weathers. I never heard any one who did not say they disliked it. The gangsmen (overseers) have 12*s.* to 15*s.* a-week in summer.

Mary Churchman and her Daughter (grown up, she had worked in the gangs) confirmed this evidence, and spoke very ill indeed of the gangs; of the language used in them: of what had gone on in the fields: of the conduct and character of Fuller, "till he became a Methodist and a Rechabite." The daughter said "I know there's scores of girls as he's ruined: some of the gangsmen are as big blackguards as there is anywhere."

Hannah Arnold, 19 years old, walked 7 miles to Barton; got breakfast as we went along; set off between seven and eight; left off at four, got home about six; got to work at nine or half-past, as soon as we got there; had no rest in middle of the day at all; we walked home. Children of the ages of 4, 5, 6, work in the gangs. Girls and boys earn 3*d.*, 4*d.*, &c. If we're idle he'd mob us, or send us home; he daresn't beat us.

John Todd, (overseer of one of Fuller's gangs). System has gone on 17 years; I was at the first beginning of it; I think it originated in the wish to get the work done cheap; its done all round about these parts.

Gangs are all boys and girls together, 20 or 30 of them; they may talk, but not bad language, nor so as to hinder them from work. If they won't obey, we send them home; they are soon glad to come too again.

If they go to work two hours and a-half, it's a quarter of a-day.

If they go a long walk, 7 miles or so, and it comes on a wet day, there is the walk all for nothing.

They earn 9*d.* a-day, the big ones; the small 4*d.*; children of 7 years old 3*d.* a-day. We keep rising them as they keeps getting bigger. The chief of the learning goes on at the Sunday schools.

All sorts of characters are employed in the gangs—some of all sorts. This is the coop of all the scrapings in the county. If a man or woman do anything wrong they come here, and they think by getting among them here, they're safe. The overseer usually sees them go to work, and come back from it. I don't think there's anything done amiss as they come from work; they are so tired, poor things, and glad to get home after walking 10 or a dozen miles. I believe that owing to the gang-system, 70 out 100 girls are very imprudent girls—prostitutes; they set working along with the lads in the day-time, and make appointments at night; but still if you was to come in among them when they're at work, you would not know, but that they were all very prudent women and girls.

Stone-gathering is nasty work; half a bushel of stones is a great weight for a woman to carry; they sometimes complain of straining their loins.

I should not like myself to take a wife out of the gang.

Samuel Peeling, labourer. The gang-system prevents one getting regular work, as on a farm; because if we could not get out-door work on a farm we should get in-door; but we can't in a gang, because we've only that particular bit of work to do, so we lose in time; I don't think it a good thing at all for the poor.

I have a daughter, turned 11, has worked 2 years along with the gang.

Pulling turnips is very back-breaking work; she's too young to pull turnips; she don't often pull 'em; the men pull and the girls set 'em up.

Wages 5*d.* a-day (in Moulton's gang); overseers can't always see or hear them, if they are ever so sharp; they are often a long way off. It's the ruin of a girl to be in such a place as that.

I have worked in the gangs since just the beginning of harvest; it's a very bad school for manners; it has ruined many a girl; it's a very bad system for girls.

I'm forced to let my daughter go, else I'm very much against it. I earn nothing myself; she does not like it at all, she hears so much black-guard bad language; and she's never used to hearing that at home.

She has complained of pain in her side very often; they drive them along—force them along—they make them work very hard. Gathering stones has hurt my girl's back at times. Pulling turnips is the hardest work; they get such a hold of the ground with their roots; when the land's strong, it's as much as we can do sometimes to get 'em out, pull as hard as we can pull. It blisters their hands so that they can hardly touch anything; my child's hands have been blistered by it.

Ganging is what leads 'em into so many bad ways; that's what causes many girls to be out of nights, when they ought to be at home. My girl went 5 miles yesterday to her work, turniping; she set off between seven and eight; she walked; had a piece of bread before she went; she did not stop work in the middle of the day; ate nothing till she left off; she came home between three and four o'clock. Their walks are worse than their work; she is sometimes so tired, she can't eat no victuals when she comes home.

Opinions of neighbouring Farmers and Clergy respecting it.

Mr. B. Francis, Litcham.—I am quite of opinion that out-door work unfits girls for domestic service; I abominate it; I always set my face against it; their morals are depraved very much by it, particularly in large gangs; where masses are congregated there is more depravity. Ganging is a sort of slave-driving system: a vile system: I am decidedly opposed to it. There must certainly be a superintendent to keep young persons at work. Formerly the mother used to superintend the children. I don't think there's any cruelty practised towards them. I think ganging sprung from singling turnips,—in short, from the high state of cultivation, though you might have it without; but ganging does it quickest. The women are mostly young, unmarried women; here it has prevailed 10 or 15 years; it quite unfits them from for wives and mothers. I think all field-work is injurious for girls of 16 and upwards; those are the characters that usually have bastards. I don't go quite so far against it as Mr. Fisher. (*See his evidence, at Elmham, in Norfolk.*)

Letter from the Rev. J. H. Bloom, (Vicar of Castle Acre).—In compliance with your request, I subjoin the names of some of the neighbouring clergy, in whose respective parishes the gangs, I believe, are employed. What their opinions may be I know not; but it should be borne in mind that the too general moral results of the system are not so immediately under their observation as under mine. Castle Acre, unhappily, is the nucleus, the stronghold, the centre from whence the baneful results of this ill-contrived system radiate to other and distant parishes. My reverend brethren round about have not the pest of a gang-leader, and the other constituent parts of a gang, *resident* in their own parishes, and thus its workings in a moral point of view do not fall so conspicuously under their notice, as they cannot fail to do here. My own opinion you are already in a great measure in possession of: my aversion to the system, *as at present constituted*, is decided and uncompromising. What the result might be under other and more stringent regulations, I am not prepared to say, for I am not insensible to certain *advantages* resulting from the practice. It is the moral effects only

at which I look, and some amelioration here ought to be promoted at any sacrifice.

Letter from the Rev. M. Hogge (Rector of South Acre.)—From your own recent investigation in the parish of Castle Acre, you must be well aware that the congregating together of such numbers as 70 or 80 in each of the two gangs now existing there, must naturally produce, from its very composition of good, bad, and indifferent, great immorality. I have been resident in this parish 40 years, and can, from my own personal knowledge, affirm that the gang-system has produced, and is still producing, on the rising generation, morally, physically, and intellectually, immense evils. I will state likewise another cause that produces the same ill effects, viz., the employing young girls from 15 years old and upwards in doing barn-work. In no part of the county is the gang-system carried to anything like the extent it is in this neighbourhood,—no less than seven parishes employing these two gangs in doing all the field-work. Why may not local gangs be established in each of these parishes? It has been adopted by a large occupier in this parish of 1200 acres (most of the farms are as extensive), and he assures me it has worked beneficially for himself, beneficially for his labourers' families, and has created a far better feeling; which is very desirable.

Local gangs give and furnish more work for labourers and their families, and more constant,—from nine to ten months; and, if properly regulated by the two or the three occupiers in each of these parishes, it would, no doubt, cause a very considerable reduction in the poor and other rates.

As I feel great interest in the reformation of the gang-system, if anything I have suggested is of use in framing your report, it will give me the sincerest pleasure.

Letter from the Rev. A. Gilbert (Vicar of Gayton.)—The gang-system is extremely injurious in most respects to the persons employed, who are mostly women, girls, and children; sometimes a few lads of 15 or 16 years old join the gang. The gangsmen, or leader, pays the wages of all employed in the gang, and of course makes his profit entirely from their labour, as the farmer takes care that the gang-system shall not cost him more than the common system of individual labourers. The leader's profit is sometimes, as I have heard, 15s. per day. The assembling of 25 to 30 women and children, and lads of all ages and conditions and characters together, has a most *fatal* effect upon their morals and conduct. Many girls leaving the school at the ages of 13 and 14, well instructed and well conducted, become altogether changed as to character, neglect church, acquiring habits of unneatness and immodesty, and clownishness (if I may so express it); very few girls and women ever seek in-door service after having been employed in gangs, or out-door work. I have known some run away several times from their places as in-door servants, when they have been compelled by their parents to leave out-door work for in-door service. The only advantages of the gang-system are to save the farmer the trouble of keeping his people at work, and forcing the persons composing the gangs to be industrious. All out-door work strongly indisposes young women for in-door service."

Letter from the Rev. E. J. Howman (Bexwell.)—The gang-system exists here to a great extent, and the only thing to be said in its favour is—that I believe the work could not be done without it, especially in the Fen. The mischief, I believe, is inherent in the system, and not attributable merely to the highly-demoralized state of the inhabitants of Castle Acre, though doubtless that is not without its effect. The fact is, the congregating numbers together, especially where the sexes are mixed, inevitably produces mischief. The gangs are almost universally composed of the idle and worthless, whom no master will have unless they can be kept constantly under the eye of a supervisor; and in general the leader of the gang is a loose unsettled person, who

takes to this mode of living because he cannot obtain a permanent situation. Some farmers in this neighbourhood have tried to mitigate the evil as far as they can by compelling the master of the gang to take the boys, and to send out the girls under the charge of his wife. The aspect under which the system presents the least evil is when (as is the case in some instances here) the farmer maintains a private gang, working for him alone, under the direction of one of his permanent labourers. But the evil of congregation is inseparable from the system; and a very respectable journeyman shoemaker, whose enormous family compels him to catch at every means in his power to procure a maintenance, told me the other day that were it not for absolute necessity, nothing should induce him to permit his girls to join a gang, and that it required all his care at home to prevent their being contaminated. There are but few grown-up women, and those of the worst characters, who join the gangs.

Letter from the Rev. R. Gurdon (Cranworth).—In these gangs you will rarely see the married men or old people of either sex. Near me they generally consist of some married women, but more generally of single girls from 16 and upwards; many of very dissolute characters; a few idle young men of loose habits, together with some boys and girls of 10 or 11 years of age. The gang is superintended by a lazy, idle fellow, of profligate manners, and a dishonest character. Such, at all events, are the characters of two in my own neighbourhood,—one of whom I married about two months ago to a woman who lived and worked with him, she being the mother of three or four natural children, whilst he had only just been tried for a felony. In a conversation which I had with him, he admitted that the view I had formed of the system was a *very just one* * * * As a clergyman, I am bound to say that the mischief these gangs cause to society is extensive, and very much to be deplored.

Letter from the Rev. T. Paddon (Dereham).—In whatever place, or under whatever circumstances, the gang-system is kept up, there cannot be a doubt but that the *very worst results* flow from it; and as under an arrangement of this kind, young and old, unmarried and married, boys and girls, are all associated together, it seems to me impossible to conceive a more prolific source of wickedness and immorality to all classes of society.

Letter from F. W. Keppel, Esq. (Lexham).—I have had with me a very great gang-master from Castle Acre this morning, a very clever fellow, who I have little doubt pays away towards 30*l.* in wages every week. He was a great drunkard, but has entirely reformed, and is a great leader amongst the teetotallers, and is making money, and purchasing property. He tells me that he makes all his people obey certain rules and regulations; swearing is prohibited, and a fine of 2*d.* is inflicted for every oath; if a person swears three times, he is dismissed from employment. He also will not allow talking in his gangs, particularly among the females—an Herculean labour to undertake! The people must work eight hours a-day; and he pays 12*s.* a-week to one gang for carting clay, and spreading 11 loads: another he is paying 11*s.*, another 10*s.*; of course this depends upon the difficulty of the labour. Youths of 18 or 19 years of age earn 9*s.* a-week, and to women he gives 9*d.* a-day: of course girls do not earn as much, though he assured me that many girls will earn more wages than many women. If his tale is correct—and I believe it is—he pays higher wages than the farmers are giving. His work is very laborious at times, and his people have often a distance to go. I dare say he employs 100 hands of all sorts, men, women, boys, and girls. I referred you to a 'History of Castle Acre,' by the Rev. J. H. Bloom, just published by Richardson, of Cornhill, for an account of the gang-system, p. 807, which certainly differs from my story. However, all gangs are not well conducted—some very badly, I acknowledge; and often some idle fellow, with a little shrewdness, will collect a gang, and undertake a few jobs; he

generally does his work badly, allows much bad conduct, and spends his time in the public-houses. This, of course, is not to be defended. I fear, however, that the gang-system will and must increase, particularly upon large farms, as the men not in gangs require more looking after than the farmer can afford, to see that the work is not slurred over.

There are two instances of the gang-system at Holbeach, in Lincolnshire ; but on quite a different plan, and, I believe, free from all objection : married women with families are there chiefly employed, and no men mixed up in the gang ; and the farmers pay the labourers, not the gang-master.

At Framlingham, in Suffolk, there are private gangs, the members of which all belong to the same parish, and are superintended by some confidential man, who merely sees that the children do not neglect their work and get into mischief. This, I believe, to be quite unobjectionable.

Mr. John Bird, of Yaxley, near Stilton, informed me, that in the neighbouring parish, Farcett, in the county of Huntingdon, the gang-system was practised very generally ; also in the parishes of Whittlesea and Thorney, both in the Isle of Ely, in Cambridgeshire. He adds, " I am quite certain that this system does and will continue to do great harm to the rising generation ; for when young people of both sexes work together in large companies, and have no one to correct them, except as regards their labour, all manner of vice is committed.

Letter from A. Hamond, Esq., of West Acre, Norfolk.—I should be extremely sorry that a wrong impression should go forth to the public on a subject which has of late become one of considerable importance—I allude to the employment in agricultural labour of women and children in gangs or companies. I have well known that parish, living in its immediate neighbourhood, and also in the exercise of my duty as a magistrate, both before and since the introduction of the gang-system, and I assure you the effects have been the very reverse of what you have been led to believe. There *was* not a more distressed and disorderly parish in the Hundred, and *now* there is no parish, with half its population, from which we have fewer complaints, and in which there is less distress. One of the prime causes of the increase of the gang-system (I may almost say its origin) was the New Poor Law ; for previous to that Act, if an able-bodied man could not maintain his family, the parish assisted him ; that assistance being withdrawn, it became necessary that all who could work should support themselves, and the improved system of agriculture (particularly as regards the cultivation of turnips adopted in this country) gave them an opportunity of so doing.

As regards the immoral tendencies of field-labour in gangs, I decidedly differ from some, who have given you information.

My belief is, that for one illegitimate child begotten of girls that work in gangs, ten are begotten of those in service.

I have had gangs working on my farms constantly during several years, and I cannot call to mind an instance of the most trifling pilfering, fence-breaking, or egg-stealing, which, when they worked in twos or threes, was perpetually the case ; now, the man who overlooks them is answerable for their conduct.

As for bad language, I *know* that silence is as strictly enforced as it can be among women ; indeed the work could not be properly done if chattering to any extent was permitted. It is not usual to work men and women together, except at particular seasons, such as harvest and hay-making.

As to their not making good servants, it is stuff ! I have taken several girls from the parish in which I live, who have worked in the gang, and have two in my house now, who have lived with me four or five years.

SIR F. H. DOYLE

ON THE COUNTIES OF

YORKSHIRE AND NORTHUMBERLAND.

To the Poor Law Commissioners.

GENTLEMEN,—I have the honour of submitting to you the information which I have collected relative to the inquiries which I was directed to make in Yorkshire and Northumberland.

I was instructed to examine into the sorts of labour at which women and children are respectively employed, the wages they receive, their hours of work, and any other similar facts which may tend to throw light on their moral and physical condition; my main attention was to be directed to the employment of children. I was instructed particularly to inquire into the ages at which they begin to work, the effects which their occupation in labour may produce upon their bodily health, as well as upon their opportunities for obtaining school instruction and moral and religious education. I was also directed to inquire into the condition of the children of agricultural labourers, who may have been apprenticed by the parish-officers of the two counties in question. As my commission was limited to 30 days, and the district assigned to me is of an extent which rendered a personal examination of it throughout hopeless within the time, I must beg to be understood as relying, in what I have to state, rather upon the knowledge and experience of those to whom I was referred as I went along, than upon any conclusions which I was enabled to draw for myself: and I take this opportunity of returning my best thanks for the kindness and courtesy with which I was everywhere received.

The modes of proceeding in Yorkshire, and the habits of the peasantry there, do not differ essentially from those in the neighbouring counties. The Northumberland system, however, is peculiar to itself and the south of Scotland; it has at any rate nothing in common with Yorkshire, so that it will not be possible to speak of the two counties together. Beginning with the latter, which I visited first:—

There is nothing in any of the strictly agricultural districts of

Yorkshire to call for particular remark; the people are reasonably well off; the depressed state of agriculture, indeed, caused many of the gentlemen with whom I conversed to anticipate distress, but there was little of it at the moment actually pressing upon the poor; how far since my return to town such gloomy anticipations may or may not have been realized, I am, of course, ignorant, and speak only to the condition of the different places which I visited as it showed itself at the exact period of my inquiry. The best method of presenting to your notice such facts as I have collected appears to be by tables, which will facilitate a comparison between one place and another in respect of the matters touched upon by the present inquiry. I would wish, however, in the first place, to make a few general remarks.

As the employment of women in field-work is partial and uncertain, the fact that, whilst employed, they receive 10*d.* a-day at one time and 1*s.* at another, affords no clue to the whole amount of their earnings, or to the extent to which the physical well-being of their families and themselves depends upon a continuance of such labour. I have endeavoured to approximate to the truth upon these points, by the help of an investigation which took place in one particular union. In the year 1837, at the formation of the Thirsk Union, an inquiry was made into the amount of wages received by the labouring population. By this it appeared that a woman's earnings would not, on a reasonable calculation, exceed 2*s.* a-week, or 5*l.* 4*s.* in the course of the year. As the rate of wages has not changed since that time, we shall perhaps not be far wrong (though labour is said to be less plentiful) in now taking 5*l.* as the annual product of a woman's average employment. Now as there is no material difference in the price of labour about Thirsk and in other parts of Yorkshire, we can apply this calculation (*mutatis mutandis*) to the entire county. At Thirsk the women employed, as compared with the whole female population, are quite as numerous as at any other place, except in the immediate vicinity of Goole, and possibly upon the wolds. At Goole, where vast quantities of potatoes are grown, sorted, and shipped for the London market, the women find employment all the year round, at good wages, and 10*l.* instead of 5*l.* would certainly not be too high an estimate of their yearly earnings in that neighbourhood. The wolds are a wide expanse of naked hills, which spread themselves over the northern half of the East Riding. Till within these 50 years they produced nothing but rabbits; they are now, however, in a high state of cultivation, being composed of a light friable soil, particularly well suited to the modern system of turnip-husbandry. On these hills women are employed quite as extensively, if not more so, than about Thirsk; their earnings therefore will exceed rather than fall short of the 5*l.* which I have taken as the common measure. Richmond, Northallerton, and Cleveland, rank with Thirsk.

In the eastern part of the North Riding, as at Helmsley, Normanby, &c., women are comparatively little employed; there, as in Holderness, where, except in harvest, female agricultural labour is scarcely known, a few shillings added to the 10s. or 12s. which they get, for perhaps three consecutive weeks, by following the scythe in the corn-field, make up their whole income from out-door work. Near York, and to the south-west, as at Doncaster, Rotherham, &c., they are somewhat more employed than in Holderness, but not to the same extent as upon the wolds, or in the turnip districts of the north. This general statement of the comparative quantity of work found for women in the different districts, is, I believe, accurate; but as it depends mainly upon the quality of the soil, and the nature of the crops principally grown round about, it fluctuates by the mile, and more than general accuracy is not to be looked for. To the north-west lie the Yorkshire dales, a purely pastoral district, of which hereafter.

Having made these preliminary observations, I beg to submit to your inspection the following tables, by which I have endeavoured to put together, in a convenient form, the information I have collected—first, with reference to the sorts of work in which women are engaged, their hours of work, the wages they earn, and the general effects of such occupation upon their health and character; secondly, the same as to the children; thirdly, the rent and comparative accommodation of their cottages.

Work.	Wages.
YORK.	
In spring, clearing the land of weeds and couch-grass; preparing it for potatoes and turnips; then hoeing turnips, hay-making, harvesting, taking up potatoes. In winter, they assist at the threshing-machine for in-door work. A few women take in washing, go out to char, as they call it, &c.; and in every village there is a certain proportion (near the towns a considerable one) of dress-making and bonnet-making.	Average wages in spring 9d. a-day; hoeing turnips and hay-making, 10d. to 1s.; harvest, 1s. 6d. to 2s. Corn, however, is very commonly taken by the acre, when the women assist their husbands, who earn good wages, varying according to the weight of the crops. For going out to char, 1s. and their food. In winter and early spring, the employment is scanty; as summer comes on, more are employed: in some parishes there is then full employment for all who like to work.
GOOLE.	
Dressing and shipping potatoes for the London markets; planting potatoes, weeding, hay-making, harvesting, taking up potatoes.	9d. or 10d. a-day in spring; 2s. in harvesting. In winter, 1s. a-day and three pecks of potatoes weekly. Full employment all the year round.
HOWDEN.	
Planting potatoes, weeding, potato-picking, hay-making, flax-spreading, flax-weeding, harvesting, taking up potatoes, assisting at the threshing-machine.	From 8d. to 10d. a-day in spring; then 1s. a-day. 2s. in harvest. No great amount of female agricultural labour.
HOLDERNESSE.	
Assisting at the threshing-machine, weeding and hoeing the spring-corn, and harvest.	Assisting at the threshing-machine, 1s. a-day and their meat; other spring-work, 10d. a-day. Harvest, 2s., sometimes more. Women but little employed in Holderness except in harvest; then, perhaps, one in four or five.
BEVERLEY, DRIFFIELD, POCKLINGTON, MALTON.	
Dressing turnips, gathering stones off the land, gathering quicks and flints off the wolds, weeding and depositing manure in turnip-rows, hand-weeding, hay-making, harvesting, assisting at the threshing-machine, dressing turnips, houseing mangel-wurzel and beet-root (here and there). At Pocklington, the women make gloves, &c.	From 10d. to 1s. a-day in spring; 1s. a-day in summer; 1s. 6d. and 2s. in harvest-time. About Beverley, the women employed are estimated at about one in four; on the wolds, in spring and summer, there is full employment for them; on the wheat-lands, but little. At glove-making they earn 2s. a-week. At Malton, wages as at Beverley. But little employment for women about Malton; at Malton perhaps three to 200 acres; to the north-west, as at Ebberston, Yeddingham, &c., it increases considerably.
THIRSK.	
Topping and tailing turnips, scaling the land, wicking, weeding, hoeing turnips, hay-making, harvesting, cutting turnips, assisting at the threshing-machine.	8d. a-day in spring; 1s. in hay-time; 1s. 6d. (occasionally more) in harvest. Nearly every wife of a labourer, and all widows who choose, in the summer-months, are employed about Thirsk.

Hours of Work, Moral Effects, &c.	Diet.
YORK.	
Work, in winter, from eight to four, or half-past eight to half-past four; one hour allowed for dinner. As the summer advances, they work longer hours. Health is not injured, nor is there any bad effects upon morals. The dress-makers and bonnet-makers are more unsteady than those who work in the fields.	Tea, coffee, bread, potatoes, bacon; fruit pies in summer, treacle, &c.
GOOLE.	
Hours same as at York. The effects are good in all respects.	Diet much the same as York, with more fresh meat.
HOWDEN.	
From eight till dark. Healthy, and not detrimental to morals.	Ditto ditto. Diet throughout Yorkshire, except in the dales, does not vary in any important degree.
HOLDERNESS.	
Hours of work from eight to four; then eight till six. Healthy, and not detrimental to morals.	Bread, potatoes, tea, broth. The men are fed in the farmers' houses, and the women and children probably suffer by it.
BEVERLEY, DRIFFIELD, POCKLINGTON, MALTON.	
From eight till four; then eight till six. Beneficial to health, and not considered injurious to morals. The glove-making at Pocklington injurious to morals.	Much the same as the above.
THIRSK.	
The women employed in out-door labour are disagreeably rough and rude in their manners.	Same as before.

Work.	Wages.
NORTHALLERTON.	
Topping and tailing turnips, scaling the land, wicking, weeding, hoeing turnips, hay-making, harvesting, cutting turnips, assisting at the threshing-machine.	8d. or 9d. a-day in spring; in hay-time, 1s. a-day; in harvest, from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. a-day, according to the demand for labour. In spring about one-fourth; tolerably full employment in summer.
RICHMOND.	
Ditto ditto; also sheaving the corn.	8d. to 10d. a-day; in harvest, from 2s. to 2s. 6d. a-day. In summer nearly all are employed.
HAWES.	
No out-door employment for women; they occupy themselves in knitting sailors' caps and jackets.	From 2s. to 3s. a-week.
SETTLE.	
No out-door employment for women; they employ themselves in weaving.	Not more than 2s. 6d. a-week.
WHITBY.	
Agriculture, fishing-trade. The women gather the bait, &c.	8d. a-day, and their victuals. The fishermen do not work for wages. Hay-making, 10d. a-day and their victuals; harvest, 1s. 3d. and their victuals. Perhaps a-third in summer are employed, if you exclude the fishermen's wives, &c.; otherwise not near so many.
STOKESLEY.	
As Thirsk.	8d. a-day; in hay-time, 10d. and their victuals; in harvest, from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. A large proportion are employed in out-door labour.
GUISBOROUGH.	
Gathering stones off the land, scaling in manure, setting potatoes, hay-making, harvesting, &c.	9d. a-day; in hay-time, 1s.; in harvest, about 2s. 3d.
WAKEFIELD.	
But little work; weeding gardens principally, and harvest.	9d. a-day; harvest wages higher. Agriculture employs very few.
ROTHERHAM.	
Weeding the land, harvesting, glean- ing, cutting turnips, &c.	10d. a-day; in harvest, 1s. 6d. and their victuals. Perhaps one-half go out to harvest.

Hours of Work, Moral Effects, &c.	Diet.
NORTHALLERTON.	
No bad effects noticed from out-door labour.	
RICHMOND.	
..	
HAWES.	
..	Oatmeal porridge, hasty pudding, cheap coffee, and milk.
SETTLE.	
..	Same as Hawes.
WHITBY.	
The legitimate out-door occupations are not of themselves injurious.	As about York and elsewhere.
STOKESLEY.	
The morals of the agricultural labourers are better than those of weavers.	
GUISBOROUGH.	
The occupations are healthy, and not generally prejudicial.	
WAKEFIELD.	
The morals of the garden-girls are much as those of the factory-girls,—not better.	..
ROTHERHAM.	
Not immoral.	..

Work.	Wages.
HELMSLEY.	
Assisting at the threshing-machine, manuring the land, hay-making, harvest, &c.	Wages as at Thirsk. The number of women employed is not above 5 per cent.
BRIDLINGTON.	
Ditto, ditto,	Wages and employment as in Holderness. To the east, women are more employed as on the wolds.

CHILDREN.

Hours of Work, Moral Effects, &c.—Healthy. Whenever work offers, they are taken from school; no other mischief observed. They do not, in Yorkshire, go out before 10, except quite accidentally, to light work; about 13 they begin to work regularly.

Diet.—Their diet is the same as that of the women.

Work.	Wages.
YORK.	
Children weed, help the women, &c.	| Earn, on the average, 6d. a-day.
GOOLE.	
The children sort potatoes, and assist the women.	| 6d. a-day in summer and winter; 1s. in autumn.
HOWDEN.	
The boys weed, help to plant potatoes, &c.	| 5d. a-day.
HOLDERNESS.	
Tending birds, &c.	| 4d. to 5d. a-day.
BEVERLEY.	
Weeding, picking stones, clearing the land, helping the women.	| 6d. a-day when hired first; as yearly servants they get from 20s. to 30s. a-year.
DRIFFIELD, POCKLINGTON, MALTON.	
..	| From 4d. to 6d. a-day.

Work.	Wages.
THIRSK.	
Children help the women.	| 6d. a-day.
NORTHALLERTON.	
But little employed till going out to service.	| 4d. to 6d. a-day.
RICHMOND.	
Not much work till going to service.	| 4d. to 6d. a-day, or their meat only.
HAWES.	
The children knit.	| And earn 2d. to 3d. a-day.
SETTLE.	
The children work in factories.	|
WHITBY.	
Weeding, &c.	| 6d. a-day.
STOKESLEY.	
Few children employed; they work at weeding, tending birds, helping in hay-field, &c.	| 6d. a-day.
GUISBOROUGH.	
Ditto, ditto.	| 4d. to 6d. a-day
WAKEFIELD	
Children but little employed except in factories.	|
ROTHERHAM.	
Partially employed.	| 5d. or 6d. a-day.

COTTAGE ACCOMMODATION.

Rent.	Allotments.
YORK.	
Cottage accommodation good.	Allotments at Donnington, Sutton-on-Derwent.
GOOLE.	
Two low rooms and two bed-rooms, 4 <i>l.</i> per annum.	
HOWDEN.	
Cottages vary from 3 <i>l.</i> to 4 <i>l.</i> per annum. The small ones will have two rooms, the larger three or four.	There are a few allotments near Howden of one rood a-piece.
HOLDERNESS.	
The rent of cottages is from 3 <i>l.</i> to 4 <i>l.</i> A day-room from 12 to 14 feet square.	In many villages the labourers have all gardens; the more prosperous, land to keep a cow.
BEVERLEY.	
The rent of cottages varies from 1 <i>l.</i> to 7 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i> The average is about 3 <i>l.</i> 3 <i>s.</i> The better ones have four or five rooms.	There are allotments at Cherry Barton and Kilnwick, one rood each: 1st, at 4 <i>l.</i> per acre; 2nd, at 2 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i> per acre.
DRIFFIELD.	
In some villages on the wolds the cottages are very bad.	
POCKLINGTON.	
Four rooms, 9 feet by 12, from 2 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i> to 3 <i>l.</i> a-year.	There are some allotments near Pocklington, containing each one rood; rent, 20 <i>s.</i> per annum.
MALTON.	
3 <i>l.</i> a-year.	Some allotments at Rillington half an acre.
THIRSK.	
From 1 <i>l.</i> to 4 <i>l.</i> The small cottages have sometimes only one sleeping-room.	There are some allotments at Newby-Wisk, of a quarter of an acre, let at the same rate as to the farmer.
NORTHALLERTON.	
From 2 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i> to 4 <i>l.</i> For 4 <i>l.</i> , a good common room, with chamber above. A coal-house, &c.	Allotments of one-sixth of an acre at Northallerton; others at Bedale, Kirkby-Fleet-ham.
RICHMOND.	
Cottage accommodation about Richmond indifferent.	Allotments at Richmond of one rood; rent from 9 <i>s.</i> to 1 <i>l.</i> 5 <i>s.</i> per annum.

Rent.	Allotments.
HAWES.	
About 1 <i>l</i> . 10 <i>s</i> . Cottages good for the price.	|
SETTLE.	
About 2 <i>l</i> . 10 <i>s</i> . per annum.	|
WHITBY	
Cottage accommodation good.	|
STOKESLEY.	
With two lower and two upper rooms, from 2 <i>l</i> . to 3 <i>l</i> . a-year.	|
GUISBOROUGH.	
Cottages pretty good, from 30 <i>s</i> . to 3 <i>l</i>.	|
ROTHERHAM.	
From 2 <i>l</i> . 10 <i>s</i> . to 4 <i>l</i>.	| Allotment at Greasbrough.
HELMSLEY.	
About 1 <i>l</i> . 15 <i>s</i> .; accommodation limited.	|

Having put you in possession of these facts, I have still to speak of the effects of out-door work on education, the treatment of parish apprentices, and to refer to one or two little matters which have come under my notice, and my business with Yorkshire is ended.

As to parish apprentices, they are now so rare that little mention of them need be made. In some places, particularly at Alwick, in Holderness (*see* the evidence of the Rev. Mr. Browne), premiums are given; in one or two others, suits of clothes, &c. Occasionally they receive wages during the last year of their apprenticeship, but this is uncommon. Many people admitted that, under the old poor-law, great recklessness was shown as to what became of them; but it was unanimously said, that now, whenever it did so happen that parish boys were bound apprentices, due caution was exercised in their behalf, and that, in fact, they had nothing to complain of, which appears to be the case. As to education, its general condition is anything but good, (if book-knowledge be of the value which it is the fashion to suppose).

It is very discreditable to the country that so large a proportion of its inhabitants should be left, as they are left, in profound ignorance. The simple fact, that in a large majority of cases the question, "How is what the children learn in youth kept up afterwards?" had to be evaded, or answered by ringing the changes upon "I am afraid I must say it is generally forgotten," needs no comment. The word education must, in such cases, be taken to mean really little more than a certain amount of physical deterioration, incurred by wasting time in crowded and unwholesome rooms. I feel bound to say, however, that meagre and unsatisfactory as the instructions given commonly are, this matter is improving rather than the reverse. Infant schools here, as elsewhere, are becoming more frequent. These institutions are certainly of great value; the tempers of the children are softened, and their faculties awakened, so that they come afterwards into the day schools with habits, more or less formed, of docility and self-control. Night schools also, where a few—a very few—of the grown-up labourers struggle gallantly with the difficulties of their position, and endeavour to maintain what they have learned, seem to be on the increase. In particular places, also, where the neighbourhood of a gentleman's house, whose family interest themselves about the poor, or the labours of an energetic clergyman have produced their natural effects, education may be, in some degree, more impressive in its progress and more successful in its result; but, generally speaking, what the children of the poor learn is worth little to them, and as such is thrown aside and rapidly forgotten. The object of education, as I understand it, is to fit a man for the condition of life to which he is called, as well as circumstances admit of. Without undervaluing it in the proper sense of the word—without even denying that mere discipline, no matter to what ends, has its own advantages—a question may arise whether "reading made easy," bad writing, and worse arithmetic, are the best preparations for a labourer's life or not—whether the time spent at school might not be better filled up by practical instruction, upon totally different principles—whether, in short, the boys (girls are taught to sew) can help thinking no more of much which they are supposed to learn, as soon as they find it irrelevant to their actual condition. If education does not quicken the faculties, it leaves its intellectual object unaccomplished—if the method of quickening the faculties by books be, under all circumstances, the best possible method, let it be properly applied; but where a people of much natural acuteness seem to make a point of forgetting in manhood what they are taught in youth, the action upon the faculties must be so very imperfect as to make the instruction they receive, intellectually speaking, no education at all. With reference to the degree in which out-door labour interferes with

this education, the question is easily answered. School, as as might be supposed, is invariably sacrificed to work. If a farmer has, even for one day, a pig or a cow to keep from straying, away goes a boy from his books to tend the animal. In this respect one school is just like all the rest. In winter it is tolerably well frequented; as the spring advances, first one scholar drops off, and then another, till towards harvest, when, in places where children are much employed, half the school is in the fields: it then shuts up for six weeks altogether. After harvest it re-opens; the attendance at first is thin, but it keeps getting better till about November, when it is at its height again. Still, however, though these interruptions in the case of intelligent children may be vexatious to an active master, I do not think that a village boy gets more holidays, though he may spend them less agreeably to himself, than as a gentleman's son he would have found at any of the great schools. In fact, to return to my Thirsk calculation, this can be pretty clearly shown. A woman's wages being on the average 10*d.* a-day, except in harvest, when we will suppose her to receive 30*s.* in three weeks, this will give her, in round numbers, work for 15 weeks of the 52 to earn her 5*l.* Now, as field-labour for children is everywhere more irregular and scanty than for the women at Thirsk, a child not working 15 weeks out of the 52 does not get 15 weeks' holidays on that account; but six weeks at Midsummer, six at Christmas, and three at Easter, are the usual holidays at our schools. If, therefore, time were all that was wanting to educate the children of agricultural labourers properly, there would, I think, be time enough.

With regard to the manners and morals of the women, the tables above inserted will have shown that no particular evil is supposed to result from their labouring in the fields. It is against the glove-makers and dress-makers, as a class, that charges of unsteadiness are made. One or two gentlemen think that the genial times of harvest tempt somewhat to levity — others, that women, much employed in out-door work are disagreeably rough and rude in their manners; but the Yorkshire women generally do not seem to be unchaste, nor do the turnip-hoers and corn-weeders fear a comparison in this respect with those who earn their bread by what may be thought more feminine occupations. The principal cause of this, no doubt, is, that girls as a class do not go out to work. It is easy to conceive that where unmarried women and young men work together, much mischief may ensue, even without deliberate vice. Girls who come out perfectly virtuous and well-intentioned may find themselves in an atmosphere of impurity, where each, as she happens to be seduced or surprised, helps to keep up and propagate the evil; but as it is not the system for women to work in the fields till they are married, and as young wives are com-

monly employed in attendance upon their children, the main body of agricultural women-workers is composed of widows and matrons whose characters for good or evil are probably formed, and who have, at any rate, nothing to apprehend from ignorance and inexperience. The girls almost invariably enter into domestic service: this has its own dangers, but they are so obvious and so unavoidable that it is unnecessary to refer to them at length. Where they are not unavoidable, it is to be hoped that the good sense and right feeling of the farmers will be exerted to lessen them. For instance, some of the masters are represented as being unpardonably reckless about the places where men and women servants respectively sleep, so that young girls occasionally go astray under circumstances of unnecessary exposure, who, but for that, would have probably continued steady and discreet. Upon the whole, however, it does not seem, from my information, that women of the labouring class in agricultural Yorkshire are otherwise than well behaved. I should attribute this, partly to their being in a condition comfortable enough to give value to a good character, and partly to the fact that their cottages are not so small or inconvenient as to render delicacy and decency impossible.

The subject of allotments, as will be seen by the foregoing tables, engaged my attention in some degree. There is a prejudice against them in the minds of many farmers, which, when the allotments are too large, is not wholly unreasonable. When a man has to grapple with a piece of land, which, added to his daily work, is more than he can manage, it is probable that his land will be ill cultivated, and his work ill done; but with this limitation they seem to produce advantages which it is difficult to estimate too highly. Of course, the landlord must not be rapacious, for small pieces of land may be called allotments, and yet let at a rent which makes a profit much less certain to the occupier than to the owner; but where the allotment is small enough—say one rood—and has a just rent put upon it, it seems to produce unmixed good, moral as well as physical. Even where there is no regular system of allotments, there may yet be practical approximations to it of similar though not of equal use. For instance,—

In the more prosperous districts most of the cottages have gardens, many cow-gates, as they are called. It is also common for the farmers to allow their labourers so many yards of land to grow potatoes, on condition of receiving from them the manure of the pig which the potatoes in question feed, which is something like a rough sketch of the allotment system, exhibiting, as far as it goes, many of the same advantages. Of such a pig, the first product of allotment, garden, or potato head-land, it is the fashion among political economists to speak disrespectfully. Now, whatever might be the superior profit to the cottager, of saving the money which he spends upon his pigs, and buying

his bacon in the market, this, as it never has been and never will be so saved, we may dismiss.

In the meantime his pig, besides its usefulness, is also a real pleasure to him—it is one of his principal interests in life—he makes sacrifices to it; he exercises self-control for its sake; it prevents him living from hand to mouth, stupidly careless of the future. I am persuaded that a greater act of cruelty could hardly be perpetrated than the discountenancing this practice, or rather amusement and enjoyment, among the poor.

It only remains, before I pass on to Northumberland, to say one word about the Yorkshire dales; first, however, I must advert to a mode of paying wages in the East Riding, of which I cannot but disapprove. The labourers are fed in the farm-houses, and have a certain proportion of wages deducted to pay for their meat; this proportion (1s. a-day), if we take wages at 13s. a-week, which was as high as they were in January, amounts to $\frac{1}{13}$ ths of the man's entire income from work; so that setting aside her husband's food, half and a fraction of his earnings is all that a woman has with which to confront the rest of life: her food, that of her children, the rent of the cottage, fuel, schooling, medical attendance, have all to be provided for out of a sum only just larger than what is retained for the bare meat and drink of an individual labourer. The farmers like this system, either because they profit by it, or because they have a notion, which I believe to be unfounded, that men work better in proportion as they are heavily fed. The men like it, because no doubt they get a better dinner than would otherwise fall to their share; but upon the women and children it must, and I am assured it does, operate for evil. To use the words of a man whom I asked about it at Malton, "Poor things, they cannot live well; I defy them." It must also tend to generate selfishness, and to loosen family ties; I am bound to say, however, that several intelligent gentlemen, persons quite incapable of upholding such a practice from sinister motives, stoutly defended it, but without convincing me that it was in any respect a desirable system.

There is a district in the N.W. of Yorkshire called the dales, where there is no tillage: the whole country is one large grazing and breeding farm. With the exception of a few men employed in draining, there are no labourers, properly so called—the house servants of each farm being sufficient to accomplish all that is requisite. This state of things has driven the people to seek subsistence by in-door occupation, viz., by knitting stockings, jackets, sailors' caps, &c. There is a manufactory of that nature at the small town of Hawes, the master of which delivers wool to the villagers as far as 10 miles round; they work it up at home, and bring back the articles, when finished, to the mill. A clever knitter might perhaps earn 3s. in any given week by incessant toil; but on an average it would require industry and skill to

realize 2*s.* 6*d.* in that period; a child, according to its age and proficiency, earns 6*d.*, 9*d.*, up to 1*s.* 3*d.* in the same time. The people, I need not say, are poor and live hard, but the small amount of their earnings is in some degree compensated by the cheapness of provisions and the low rent of their cottages; milk costs little, and is to be had in any quantities, and good beef was selling in Hawes market the day I was there at threepence-half-penny per lb. Under these circumstances they are more nearly on a level with the rest of Yorkshire than their money receipts, if taken alone, would indicate.

Of Settle, however, which lies to the west of Hawes, I cannot say the same things. The people were in great distress. The farms beyond Settle are small,—from 30*l.* to 50*l.* a-year. As may be judged, such farmers employ no labourers, finding it a hard matter to live themselves; those beneath them, of course, are still worse off,—most of them, in fact, receive parish relief. Settle, however, being inhabited principally by weavers, is a manufacturing, not an agricultural district; and, as such, foreign to the scope of the present inquiry. I need therefore say no more about it; and as this brief notice of the hill district of the west completes what I have to say of Yorkshire, it remains only to submit to you the condition of Northumberland.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Of the women who work in the fields, a few (such as the extra hands in busy times) are hired by the day as elsewhere, at varying wages, according to the bargains which they drive; the majority, however, of those regularly employed are, to use the local phrase, the bondagers. These bondagers being an important part of the Northumberland system of agriculture, in order to understand the position they occupy, a few words of explanation will be required.

Farm-servants in Northumberland, as in the southern counties of Scotland, are engaged upon a system different from that which prevails in other parts of England. In the absence of villages (which are rare), to supply occasional assistance, each farm must depend upon its own resources; a necessity is thus created for having a disposable force of boys and women always at command, which is effected in the following manner:—Each farm is provided with an adequate number of cottages having gardens, and every man who is engaged by the year has one of these cottages; his family commonly find employment, more or less; but one female labourer he is bound to have always in readiness, to answer the master's call, and to work at stipulated wages: to this engagement the name of bondage is given, and such female labourers

are called bondagers, or women who work the bondage. Of course, where the hind (as such yearly labourer is called) has no daughter or sister competent to fulfil for him this part of his engagement, he has to hire a woman servant; and this, in some senses of the word, may be a hardship to him; but, in the first place, this is not very common; and in the second, the advantages of the system, even with this draw-back, are unquestionable. This system, as a whole, is as follows:—

Each man, instead of working for weekly wages, is hired for a year. He is, as I have already said, provided with a cottage and small garden upon the farm, for himself and family, several of whom in many cases are engaged for the year, as well as himself. The wages of the hind are paid chiefly in kind; those of his sons, &c., either in money, or partly in money and partly in kind; the conditions of this engagement vary slightly in different parts of the county, but a woman to be found by the hind as bondager is universally one of them. I subjoin the conditions, as given me by Mr. Grey, of Dilston, near Hexham, the resident agent for, and administrator of, the Greenwich Hospital estates in that quarter; secondly, by Mr. Fenwick, of Netherton, near Morpeth; and thirdly, by Mr. Hindmarsh, an extensive farmer in the neighbourhood of Wooler.

MR. GREY.	MR. FENWICK.	MR. HINDMARSH.
36 bushels of oats.	10 bushels of wheat.	36 bushels of oats.
24 „ barley.	30 „ oats.	24 „ barley.
12 „ peas.	10 „ barley.	12 „ peas.
3 „ wheat.	10 „ rye.	6 „ wheat.
3 „ rye.	10 „ peas.	1000 yards of potatoes.
36 to 40 bushels of potatoes.	A cow's keep for a year.	A cow's keep.
24lbs. of wool.	800 yards of potatoes.	House and garden.
A cow's keep for the year.	Cottage and garden.	Coals led.
Cottage and garden.	Coals led.	5 <i>l.</i> in cash.
Coals carrying from the pit.	3 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i> in cash.	
4 <i>l.</i> in cash.	2 bushels of barley in lieu of hens.	

The following, which is a specimen of the half-year's account between Mr. Hindmarsh and one of his labourers, will put the condition of the hinds of Glendale before your eyes much more clearly than anything I could say. I should remark, that the stipulated wages of the bondager over the greater part of Northumberland are, 10*d.* a-day for what is called small work, and 1*s.* a-day for harvest.

WILLIAM HINDMARSH, ESQ.

Dr. to JOHN THOMPSON.

	£.	s.	d.
Jane Thompson (the bondager), 121½ days at 10 <i>d.</i>	5	1	3
Catherine Thompson (a child), 24 harvest-days at 1 <i>s.</i>	1	4	0
„ „ 73½ „ 5 <i>d.</i>	1	10	7½
Elizabeth Thompson (a younger child), 7½ days.	0	1	9½
Isabella Thompson (a dress-maker at other times), 35¾ days at 1 <i>s.</i>	1	15	9
„ „ 20 harvest-days at 2 <i>s.</i> 3 <i>d.</i>	2	5	0
Wife, 9 harvest-days	1	0	3
His old father, 52 days	3	18	0
John Thompson's half-year's cash	2	10	0

£19 6 8

What follows are the half-year's accounts of several hinds resident upon a considerable farm in another part of Northumberland, being a surplus arising from the labour of all the members of the family who remained at home, which they had not found it necessary to call for in the course of the half-year, but left in their masters' hands till the settlement at Martinmas.

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
George Cranston	8	3	6½	Thomas Robson	4	3	11
Alexander Tunnah	15	0	4¼	James Cranstone	6	12	4½
John Redpath	9	7	11½	Andrew Young	7	2	5½
Samuel Ewart	5	5	9½	Edward Davison	5	15	1
Andrew Gray	7	14	4½	George Chernside	5	16	7
Andrew Elliot	23	2	2	Thomas Middlemas	4	9	10½

Thomas Fullerton, in debt to his master 7*l.* 9*s.* 8½*d.* Thomas Fullerton had lost a valuable cow by death, and his master had lent him 10*l.* to replace it.

This system, which in its effects (except in one respect) appeared to me deserving of all the commendation which the gentry and practical farmers of Northumberland united in bestowing upon it, has not however escaped animadversion. Cobbett, towards the close of his life, attacked it, and others have since echoed his opinions; they enlarge upon the misery and iniquity of bondage on the free soil of Britain, and topics of a like description; as, however, this bondage is simply an engagement for a year, upon specified terms, it indicates, I think, some confusion of thought to speak of it as slavery: an outcry, however, on this and other grounds, was raised against the system, and many of the hinds were thus induced to resist it. Mr. Jobson, of Chillingham Newton, whose local situation rendered him independent of it, yielded to the wishes of his men, and hired them at certain wages, with regular employment for the year; and, singular enough, before the year was out, they desired one and all to be replaced on their original footing; in fact there can be no doubt that, owing to the thinness of the population, the great farmers who have suddenly sprung up on the borders find some such system necessary in order to carry on their agricultural operations, and the labourers receive an equivalent for submitting to it.

In one respect, however, it is open to some objection; the cottages are rent-free, as a part of this system; now, though benevolent gentlemen here and there may consult the happiness of their labourers rather than their own pecuniary interests, I think it might have been anticipated that, if throughout a large county cottages were held gratis, many of them would be unfit to live in. Northumberland justifies this anticipation; the ordinary cottages contain but one room,—perhaps 17 by 15 feet; in point of construction and ventilation there is nothing to be said for them; but as the Northumbrians are, in spite of everything, a healthy

and vigorous race of men, such inconveniences do not amount to a crying evil; but when we find that a whole family,—father and mother, and children of both sexes and of all ages, live together, and have to sleep together in one and the same room, any degree of indelicacy and unchastity ceases to surprise, and the only wonder is that the women should behave as well as they do. The restraints of religion, which in this province is Scotch in spirit, and indeed, usually in form also, exercise a more than common influence upon life, and probably mitigate an evil which would otherwise be of the most serious character; but mitigated or not, I fear that in this respect the Northumberland character is not exempt from reproach.

What I saw of the northern peasantry impressed me very strongly in their favour: they are very intelligent, sober, and courteous in their manners; their courtesy, moreover, is not cringing, but coupled with a manly independence of demeanor; added to this, crime, as I was told, and as indeed from the annals of the Northern Circuit I was previously aware, is all but unknown in agricultural Northumberland; but, in spite of this, it was not denied that breaches of female chastity were somewhat common,—more common, for instance, than in agricultural Yorkshire, though in general moral habits the Northumberland people have the advantage. This, though it has escaped the farmers, may be in part attributable to the common employment of young unmarried women in field-work,—a thing, as I have stated, unusual in Yorkshire, and which I understand is elsewhere thought to demoralize; but still more I think must the cottages in question be in fault. And as these cottages do not appear to be bad accidentally, but to owe their defects to the prevalence of a system otherwise worthy of approbation, the upholders of the system, who are zealous and numerous, should increase their exertions to provide a cure. Now, the remedy for this, which I would call misfortune rather than vice, is in the hands of the Northumberland gentlemen, and the responsibility of its continuance rests upon them: it has, I know, attracted their attention; a cottage-improvement society has been formed, and many proprietors are now doing their duty in this respect; among others, Sir Walter Riddell, a practising barrister in London, has found leisure to think of the comfort and morals of his tenantry in Northumberland, and has built for them some cottages near Rothbury, of which, though I did not see them, I heard the people of that town speak in terms of high, and I doubt not, well-merited praise. Mr. Carr, Dr. Gilly, and others, have exerted themselves zealously to bring about an improvement; but what people are accustomed to, they often look at merely as a fact, without regard to its nature or probable consequences; it is not therefore to be wondered at if the progress of improvement is not so rapid as it ought to be. I hope, however, and believe, that the landowners of Northumberland,—and not of

Northumberland alone,—are becoming every day more deeply impressed with the feeling, that some sacrifice of time and thought, and even of amusement, in order to promote the general well-being of their dependents, is not a charity, but a duty,—the moral rent-charge attached to their properties by the state, from which they were derived. It is to the spread of this feeling, which from its present activity I cannot but confidently anticipate, that we must look for, among other advantages, a complete re-organization of cottage economy in Northumberland.

With reference to the kinds of work on which women are employed, it is not necessary to say much; the evidence will show that, as in Yorkshire, they clear and manure the land, pick weeds, hoe turnips, win hay, and in winter attend the barn-work; in harvest-time they also shear the corn, which is not usually a woman's work in Yorkshire. It is not considered, by those whom I consulted, that the bondagers are less chaste than the other women of the county, though their occupations render them somewhat masculine. "Never take a household servant from north of Bremish (the river Till)," a saying among the Northumbrians, implies that the turnip-hoe and the scythe do not train up girls to be neat-handed in-doors; children are not employed to the same extent as women; and in neither case can it be said that the occupations are unwholesome or beyond their strength.

The food of the peasantry in the north of England, as might be expected from the kinds of grain which they receive in lieu of wages, consists chiefly of oatmeal porridge, bread made of barley and pea-meal mixed, potatoes, and occasionally bacon; in the southern counties the pea and barley bread would probably not be liked; it is, however, wholesome and nutritious, and really by no means disagreeable. The "conditions," as they are called, under which the hinds engage, are proved in innumerable instances to be adequate under a proper economy,—which economy the system, it is said, has a tendency to produce—to the support of a man, his wife, and any ordinary number of children. It often happens, indeed, that a hind with but few in family has at the end of the year a good deal of corn to dispose of, for which his master is always willing to give him the market price.

The education in Northumberland is very good; the people are intelligent and acute, alive to the advantages of knowledge, and eager to acquire it; it is a rare thing to find a grown-up labourer who cannot read and write, and who is not capable of keeping his own accounts. In the north, especially, this is the case; and not merely is this so, but they are represented to me as being men of thoughtful and earnest minds, who take interest in grave matters, and are particularly prone to religious speculations. I shall conclude with a quotation upon this subject from a pamphlet lately published by Mr. Grey, of Dilston, on the state of agriculture in Northumberland, to which I am already much indebted.

STATE of some SCHOOLS near HEXHAM, furnished by JOHN GREY, Esq., of DILSTON.

NAMES OF SCHOOLS.	SCHOOLMASTERS.	Amount of the Hos- pital's Annual Sub- scription.	Average number of Scholars in the Summer half- year.			Average number of Scholars in the Winter half- year.			Scholars learning reading only.	Charge per Quarter.		Writing and com- mon Arithmetic.	Charge per Quarter.		Higher branches of Arithmetic and Ma- thematics.	Charge per Quarter.	
			Boys.	Girls.	Total	Boys.	Girls.	Total		s.	d.		s.	d.		s.	d.
Corbridge School . . .	William Temple . .	10	40	47	87	59	49	108	54	1	7½	46	1	7½	2	1	7½
Whittonstall ditto . .	William Ord. . .	10	20	12	32	25	20	45	9	5	0	34	6	0	3	7	0
Bagraw ditto . . .	G. W. Dixon . . .	6	8	9	17	15	13	28	7	4	0	20	4	6	1	5	0
Dean Raw ditto . . .	James Davison . .	10	29	14	43	41	15	56	17	2	0	23	2	6	16	3	0
Grindon ditto . . .	A. Cranston . . .	10	35	4	39	34	13	47	9	4	6	28	5	6	8	6	6
Alston High ditto . .	Wm. Grey . . .	10	60	30	90	60	30	90	30	4	0	50	5	0	10	6	0
Alston Charity ditto .	John Laidler. . .	20	54	46	100	64	46	110	50	Nothing.		50	{ 5 0 }	{ 5 6 }			
Nenthead ditto . . .	Thomas Carr . . .	10	71	89	160	80	85	165	89	1	0	67	1	0	4	1	0
Nenthall ditto . . .	Thomas Gill . . .	10	22	15	37	38	12	50	17	4	0	24	5	0	3	6	0
Garrigill-gate ditto. .	J. Parmley . . .	10	46	27	73	55	35	90	38	3	0	52	{ 4 0 }	{ 5 0 }			
Leehouse Well ditto .	W. Maughan . . .	10	22	16	38	28	14	42	14	3	0	28	{ 4 0 }	{ 5 0 }			
Leadgate ditto . . .	Richard Forster . .	10	11	12	23	14	11	25	11	3	6	13	{ 4 6 }	{ 5 6 }			
Ayle ditto . . .	Robert Nixon . . .	5	10	6	16	12	5	17	10	4	0	5	{ 5 6 }	{ 6 }	1	5	6
Whitlaw ditto . . .	J. Harrison . . .	5	4	8	12	6	10	16	8	5	0	8	5	6			
Milfield School, belonging to John Grey, Esq., . . .	Archibald Hills . .	..	..	..	65	..	..	90	..	3	3	..	{ 4 4 }	{ 5 5 }	..	{ 9 2 }	{ 11 4 }

The children of the labouring poor charged half-price.

“In contrasting the condition of the peasantry in the southern, with those of the northern parts of the kingdom, it would be highly improper to pass over unnoticed the superior education of the latter, and the effect which is produced by it upon their worldly circumstances, as well as upon their moral and religious character. No greater stigma can attach to parents than that of leaving their children without the means of ordinary education, and every nerve is strained to procure it. In the school attached to almost every village, one finds children not only able to read and write at a very early age, but most expert in all the common rules of arithmetic, and not unfrequently capable of extracting the square and cube root with great expedition and accuracy; and even the young men who labour in the fields all the day often spend a couple of hours in the evening in school, to advance themselves in such acquirements. If occupation alone is a valuable antidote against idle and vicious habits, the acquirement of useful knowledge, and the cultivation of the mental faculties, must be still more so; and where these are prosecuted, not by gratuitous means, but by the produce of economy and toil, it bespeaks a state of society where sobriety is habitual and intelligence held in estimation.”

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient Servant,

FRANCIS HASTINGS DOYLE.

Serjeants' Inn, 1st March, 1843.

P.S.—I send in, by way of Appendix, a labourer's accounts, kept carefully by himself, for a whole year. A gentleman with whom I am acquainted being anxious to get an insight into cottage life, offered a reward to the man in question, an intelligent and industrious person, if he would keep his accounts for a year; this was done, and I have obtained the result, which I beg to lay before you in its original spelling. It will be for you to judge whether it is worth noticing. Bolton Percy, near York, is the village to which it applies.

APPENDIX.

Accounts kept by *John Allen*, an Agricultural Labourer, from 1st March, 1841, to 28th Feb., 1842.

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
March 1. 2 stone of flower . . .	0	5	0	Mar. 15. Flower 3½ stone . . .	0	5	4
Yest 2d., ½ soap 3d.	0	0	5	Bacon 2s., yest, sugar . . .	0	3	0
Suger 9½d., coffe 4d.	0	1	1½	'Tatoes 2s., coffe 6d.	0	2	6
3. ½ lb. candles	0	0	3½	Milk 1s., salt 2d., yest . . .	0	1	3
5. Panchean 3d., candels . . .	0	0	9½	Worsted 2s., sugar 9½d. . .	0	2	9½
8. Yest 3d., coffee, ½ sope . . .	0	0	7	Soape 3d., butter 7d.	0	0	10
Oatmeal 1 stone	0	2	4	22. 'Tatoes 3s., meat 5s. 3d. .	0	8	3

	£.	s.	d.
Candels $3\frac{1}{2}d.$, yest $3d.$,			
suger	0	1	$3\frac{1}{2}$
Flower $10s. 8d.$, tea $9d.$	0	11	5
Milk $5d.$, soape $9\frac{1}{2}d.$,			
butter $8d.$	0	1	$10\frac{1}{2}$
Total for 3 weeks	2	18	5
Mar. 29. Coffee, candles $7d.$	0	1	1
Suger $8d.$, seane (senna)			
and salts	0	0	3
Flower 3 stone at $2s. 8d.$	0	8	0
'Tatoes $8d.$	0	0	8
April 5. Sugar $8\frac{1}{2}d.$, coffee $6d.$	1		$2\frac{1}{2}$
Flower 4 st. at $2s. 8d.$	0	10	8
Candels $6d.$, milk $7d.$,			
yest $2d.$	0	1	3
Bacon $2s.$, boys' school			
$2s. 6d.$	0	4	6
6. Pade for house-rent	2	0	0
12. 3 stone of flower	0	8	0
'Tatoes $2s. 9d.$, candels			
$7d.$	0	3	4
Treackel $6d.$, brimstone			
$2d.$	0	0	8
Sugar $8\frac{1}{2}d.$, soape $6d.$	0	1	$2\frac{1}{2}$
Eggs $3d.$, tape $3\frac{1}{2}d.$,			
brush $1s.$	0	1	$6\frac{1}{2}$
19. Coffee $6d.$, suger $8\frac{1}{2}d.$,			
tea $5d.$	0	1	$7\frac{1}{2}$
4 st. of flower at $2s. 8d.$	0	10	8
4 lb. of bacon at $8d.$,			
yest $3d.$	0	2	11
Milk $2s.$, eggs $3d.$	0	2	3
Total for 4 weeks	4	19	10
26. 4 stone of flower	0	10	8
Oatmeal $1s. 3d.$, suger			
$8\frac{1}{2}d.$	0	1	$11\frac{1}{2}$
Soape $6d.$, coffee $6d.$	0	1	0
Meat and leather	0	5	10
Buter $6d.$, milk $2s.$	0	2	6
Tea $9d.$, cotton $1s.$, eggs			
$3d.$, yest $3d.$	0	2	3
May 3. 4 stone of flower	0	10	8
1 lb. of soape $6d.$, meat			
$3s.$	0	3	6
Leather $2s. 7d.$, 2 lb. of			
suger $1s. 2d.$	0	3	9
Tea $7\frac{1}{2}d.$, paper $6d.$,			
come $6d.$	0	1	$7\frac{1}{2}$
Yest $3d.$, cap $9d.$, milk			
$3\frac{1}{2}d.$, eggs $3d.$	0	1	$6\frac{1}{2}$
'Tatoes $3s. 8d.$	0	3	8
Coles $6s. 6d.$	0	6	6
10. 3 stone of flower	0	8	0
Meat $2s.$, soape $6d.$	0	2	6
Milk $3\frac{1}{2}d.$, yest $3d.$	0	0	$6\frac{1}{2}$
Worstit $2\frac{1}{2}d.$, slip $7d.$	0	0	$9\frac{1}{2}$
Butter $6d.$, seane (senna)			
$1d.$	0	0	7
Total for 3 weeks	3	7	4

	£.	s.	d.
May 17. 2 stone of flower	0	5	4
Meat $2s. 7d.$, suger $2s.$			
$1d.$	0	4	8
Tea $1s. 3d.$, coffee $6d.$	0	1	9
Leather $2s. 7\frac{1}{2}d.$, 2 caps	0	4	$3\frac{1}{2}$
Butter $6d.$, worstit $1s. 3d.$	0	1	9
Eggs $3d.$, milk $3d.$	0	0	6
Soape $6d.$, yest $3d.$	0	0	9
24. 3 stone of flower	0	8	0
Meat $2s.$, 'tatoes $2s.$	0	4	0
1 lb. of soape $6\frac{1}{2}d.$,			
$\frac{1}{2}$ cand (sand)	0	0	9
Eggs $3d.$, milk $7d.$	0	0	10
Coles $2s. 2d.$, yest $3d.$	0	2	5
Butter $5\frac{1}{2}d.$, pots $1s. 2d.$	0	1	$7\frac{1}{2}$
31. 3 stone of flower	0	7	6
Meat $3s.$, 1 lb. of soape	0	3	6
Butter $9d.$, suger $1s.$	0	1	9
Milk $10d.$, eggs $3d.$	0	1	1
Self, 1 hat $7s.$	0	7	0
Shous making $4s.$	0	4	0
Total for 3 weeks	3	1	6
June 7. 3 stone of flower	0	7	6
Meat $3s.$, soape $6d.$	0	3	6
Butter $9d.$, milk $3\frac{1}{2}d.$	0	1	$0\frac{1}{2}$
Candels $3\frac{1}{2}d.$, peper $2d.$	0	0	$5\frac{1}{2}$
Child's slip $1s. 6d.$	0	1	6
Eggs $3d.$, suger $7d.$	0	0	10
14. 3 stone of flower	0	7	6
Meat $2s. 6d.$, suger $7d.$	0	3	1
Soape $6d.$, candels $2d.$	0	0	8
Yest $3d.$, milk $3\frac{1}{2}d.$	0	0	$6\frac{1}{2}$
Butter $5d.$, coffee $6d.$	0	0	11
21. 3 stone of flower	0	7	6
Cord $8d.$, cotton $10d.$	0	1	6
Cotton for 1 shirt	0	2	6
Worstit $1s.$, meat $2s. 6d.$	0	3	6
Suger $7d.$, tea $6d.$, milk			
$3\frac{1}{2}d.$	0	1	$4\frac{1}{2}$
Yest $3d.$, soape $6d.$	0	0	9
Butter $5d.$, treacle $3d.$	0	0	11
Total for 3 weeks	2	5	7
28. 4 stone of flower	0	10	0
Meat $2s. 6d.$, suger $7d.$	0	3	1
Butter $5d.$, yest $3d.$	0	0	8
Milk $3\frac{1}{2}d.$, coffee $6d.$	0	0	$9\frac{1}{2}$
Coles $4s.$, cotton $1s.$	0	5	0
Soape $6d.$	0	0	6
July 5. 3 stone of flower	0	7	6
Meat $2s.$, suger $7d.$	0	2	7
Butter $9d.$, milk $6d.$	0	1	3
Coffee $6d.$, soape $6d.$	0	1	0
Yest $3d.$, a print $8d.$	0	0	11
12. 3 stone of flower	0	7	6
Meat $2s.$, butter $9d.$	0	2	9
Black corrons $1s.$, suger			
$1s.$	0	2	0

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
Soape 6d., tea 6d., milk 3½d.	0	1	3½	Sept. 13. Flower 2½ st. at 2s. 10d.	0	7	1
Yest 3d., stockings 1s.	0	1	3	Meat 2s., suger 1s.	0	3	0
Total for 3 weeks	2	8	1	Milk 3½d., butter 6½d.	0	0	10
July 19. 3 stone of flower	0	7	6	Tea 6d., coffee 4d., yest 3d.	0	1	1
Meat 2s., sugar 1s.	0	3	0	20. 3 stone of flower at 2s. 10d.	0	8	6
Butter 6d., coffee 6d.	0	1	0	Meat 2s., suger 1s., tea 6d.	0	3	6
Soape 4d., milk 3½d.	0	0	7½	Coffee 6d., milk 3½d., butter 6½d.	0	1	4
Berres 3d., yest 3d.	0	0	6	Yest 3d.	0	0	3
Showes 10s.	0	10	0	Total for 4 weeks	2	18	8½
26. 3½ stone of flower	0	8	9	27. 3 st. of flower 2s. 8d.	0	8	0
Meat 2s., suger 1s.	0	3	0	Meat 2s., suger 1s., tea 6d.	0	3	6
Talor for cloes making	1	5	0	Coffee 4d., soape 4d., yest 3d.	0	0	11
Butter 6d., teas 6d.	0	1	0	Milk 3½d., butter 6½d.	0	0	10
Yest 3d., milk 3½d.	0	0	6½	Come 6d., pepper 1d., ginger 2½d.	0	0	9½
Aug. 2. 3 stone of flower	0	8	0	Candels 6½d., apples 1s.	0	1	6½
Meat 2s., butter 5d.	0	2	5	Oct. 4. 3½ stone of flower at 2s. 6d.	0	8	9
Suger 1s., tea 6d.	0	1	6	Meat 2s., butter 6½d., suger 1s.	0	3	6½
Soape 4d., yest 3d.	0	0	7	Coffee 6d., milk 3½d., yest 3d.	0	1	0½
Salt 1d., coles 4s.	0	4	1	Soape 4½d., candels 3½d.	0	0	8
Milk 3½d.	0	0	3½	Schooling for boy 1s.	0	1	0
Total for 3 weeks	3	17	9½	11. 3½ stone of flower	0	8	9
9. 3 st. flower 2s. 8d.	0	8	0	Meat 2s., suger 7½d.	0	2	7½
Meat 1s., leather 1s. 6d. suger 1s.	0	3	6	Soape 3d., candels 6d.	0	0	9
Candels 1s., braces 4d.	0	1	4	Butter 6½d., milk 3½d.	0	0	10
Sweeping brush 1s. 10d.	0	1	10	Yest 3d., tea 4½d., coffee 4½d.	0	1	0
Coffee 6d., soape 6d., peper 2d.	0	1	2	11. Paid for house-rent	2	0	0
Cotton 1s., milk 3½d.	0	1	3½	Total for 3 weeks	4	4	6½
Butter 6d., yest 3d.	0	0	9	18. 3 stone of flower 2s. 6d.	0	7	6
16. 3 stone of flower	0	8	0	Meat 2s., suger 8d., milk 3½d.	0	2	11½
Treacle 8d., tea 9d., coles 4s.	0	5	3	Candels 3½d., soape 4d.	0	0	7½
Meat 1s. 1d., milk 3½d.	0	1	4½	Yest 3d., butter 6½d.	0	0	9½
Butter 6½d., sugar 7d.	0	1	1½	Tea and coffee 9d.	0	0	9
23. 2½ st. of flower 2s. 10d.	0	7	1	Stockings 2s., grindline (ground linseed)	0	2	3
Meat 2s., 1 lb. of sugar 7½d.	0	2	7½	25. 2½ stone of flower at 2s. 8d.	0	6	10
Coffee 6d., soape 6d., rice 3d.	0	1	3	Sugar 8d., soape 4d.	0	1	0
Milk 3½d., yest 3d.	0	0	6½	Candels 3½d., butter 1s.	0	1	3½
Butter 6½d., cotton 1s. 3½d.	0	1	10	Tea and coffee 9d., milk 3½d.	0	1	0½
Print 1s. 10d.	0	1	10	Nov. 1. 2½ stone of flower	0	6	10
Total for 3 weeks	2	8	9½	Meat 2s., suger 8d.	0	2	8
30. 2½ st. of flower 2s. 10d.	0	7	1	Coffee and tea 9d.	0	0	9
Shoes 10s., tea 9d.	0	10	9	Soap 4d., butter 6½d.	0	0	10½
Treacle 8d., suger 7½d.	0	1	3½	Candels 7d., milk 3½d.	0	0	10½
Butter 6½d., milk 3½d.	0	0	10	Yest 3d.	0	0	3
Soape 4d., yest 2d., salt 1d.	0	0	7	Total for 3 weeks	1	17	6½
Meat 1s.	0	1	0				
Sept. 6. Flower 2½ st.	0	7	1				
Meat 2s., suger 7d.	0	2	7				
Soape 3d., tea 7d.	0	0	10				
Butter 6½d., milk 3½d.	0	0	10				
Yest 3d.	0	0	3				

	£.	s.	d.
Nov. 8. 3 st. of flower at 2s. 8d.	0	8	0
Meat 2s., sugar 7d.,			
soape 3d.	0	2	10
Milk 3½d., butter 6½d.	0	0	10
Candels 6d., yest 3d.	0	0	9
Tea and coffee 9d.,			
apples 5d.	0	1	2
15. 2½ stone of flower.	0	6	8
Meat 1s. 6d., sugar 7d.	0	2	1
Candels 6d., soape 3d.	0	0	9
Tea and coffee 9d., milk			
3½d.	0	1	0½
Butter 6½d., yest 3d.	0	0	9½
Gloves 1s., leather 2s. 2d.	0	3	2
22. 2½ stone of flour.	0	6	8
Meat 2s., sugar 7d.	0	2	7
Butter 7d., milk 3½d.	0	0	10½
Tea 4½d., coffee.	0	0	1½
Soape 3d., candels 7d.	0	0	10
Apples 9d., yest 3d.	0	1	0
Total for 3 weeks.	2	0	9
29. Flour, 3 stone at 2s. 8d.	0	8	0
Meat 2s., sugar 7d.,			
yest 3d.	0	2	10
Candels 3½d., butter 8d.	0	0	11½
Soape 3d., milk 3½d.	0	0	6½
Shoes (shoes) 5s.,			
chees (cheese) 3s.	0	8	0
Dec. 6. Flower 3 stone.	0	8	0
Meat 2s., sugar 7d.	0	2	7
Soap 4d., candels 7d.	0	0	11
Milk 3½d., butter 8d.	0	0	11½
Yest 3½d., tea and			
coffee 1s. 6d.	0	1	9½
Oatmeal 7½d., salt 3½d.	0	0	11
13. Flower, 3 stone.	0	8	0
Meat 2s., sugar 9d.	0	2	9
Candels 3½d., soap 4d.	0	0	7½
Pattons (pattens) 1s.,			
worstit (worsted) 7d.	0	1	7
Potts 7d., yest 3d.	0	0	10
Tea and coffee 9d.	0	0	9
	2	10	0½
20. Flower, 3 stone.	0	8	0
Meat 2s., tea and			
coffee 9d.	0	2	9
Sugar 1s., candels 3½d.	0	1	3½
Yest 3d., raisins 6d.	0	0	9
Treackel 8d., rice 5d.	0	1	1
Peper 3d., thread and			
tape.	0	0	9
Soape 3d., milk cow			
1s. 8d.	0	1	11
27. 3 stone of flower.	0	8	0
Meat 2s., sugar 8d.	0	2	8
Candels 6d., yest 3d.	0	0	9
Soape 3d., Prayer book	0	1	2
7½ yards blue print.	0	4	4½
Ledder (leather).	0	2	0

	£.	s.	d.
Jan. 4. Flower, 2½ stone.	0	6	8
Meat 2s., oatmeal 1s. 3d.	0	3	3
Sugar 7½d., yest 3d.	0	0	10½
Candels 7d., tea and			
coffee.	0	1	4
Soape 4d., butter 6½d.	0	0	10
Coals 7s. 6d.	0	7	6
Total for 3 weeks.	2	16	0
11. Flower 2½ stone.	0	6	8
Meat 2s., sugar 7d.	0	2	7
Soape 7d., candels 6d.	0	1	1
Boys schooling 2s. 6d.	0	2	6
Tea and coffee 9d.,			
yest 3d.	0	1	0
17. Flower 2½ stone.	0	6	8
Meat 2s., soape 3½d.	0	2	3½
Sugar 7d., candels 3d.	0	0	10
Yest 3d., tea and coffee			
9d.	0	1	0
Tailor, for making			
clothes.	0	10	0
Treacle 4½d.	0	0	4½
24. Flower 2½ stone.	0	6	8
Meat 2s., candels 4d.	0	2	4
Sugar 7d., treackel 2d.	0	0	9
Butter 6½d., yest 2d.	0	0	8½
Oatmeal 7½d., soape 3d.	0	0	10½
Cotton 1s., tea and			
coffee 9d.	0	1	9
'Tatoes.	0	0	6
Total 3 weeks.	2	6	7
31. Flower, 2½ stone at			
2s. 6d.	0	6	8
¼ oatmeal 7½d., sugar			
7d.	0	1	2½
Meat 2d., candles 6d.	0	0	8
Soape 4d., yest 2d.	0	0	6
Apples 6d., coals 10s.	0	10	6
¼ oatmeal 7½d., meat 2s.	0	2	7½
Feb. 7. Flower, 2½ stone.	0	6	8
Sugar and treacle.	0	0	7½
Yest 3d., soape 3d.	0	0	6
Tea and coffee 9d., 'tates			
1s.	0	1	9
Butter 7½d., candels 4d.	0	0	11¼
Cotton for shirts.	0	1	1
Flour, 2½ stones.	0	6	8
Meat 2s., sugar 7d.	0	2	7
Candels 6d., yest 3d.	0	0	9
Oatmeal 7½d.	0	0	7½
Treackel 2½d., coffee			
and tea.	0	0	11½
'Tatoes 1s., soape 3d.	0	1	3
	2	6	10¼
Feb. 21. Flour, 2½ stone.	0	6	8
Meat 2s., candels 3d.	0	2	3½
Sugar 7½d., tea and			
coffee.	0	1	4

	£.	s.	d.
Feb. 21. Yest 3d., soape 4d.	0	0	7
Butter 7d., salt 4d.	0	0	11
28. Flower, 2½ stones .	0	6	8
Meat 2s., tea and coffee	0	2	9
Sugar 7½d., yest 2d.	0	0	9½
Soape 4d., candels 6d.	0	0	10
Sceanea (senna) 2d., soadee (soda) 1d.	0	0	3
	1	3	1
Paid into the clothing- club 4d. per week	0	17	4
	2	0	5

WAGES RECEIVED, 1841.

Mar. 8. Joseph Allen . . .	0	14	0
Wife	0	2	6
22. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	9	0
Wife, 2 dayes . . .	0	1	8
Boy, 10 dayes . . .	0	6	8
April 5. Self, 12 dayes at 2s. 4d.	1	8	0
Wife, 6 dayes at 10d.	0	5	0
Boy, 12 dayes at 8d.	0	8	0
19. Self, 13 dayes at 2s. 4d. per day	1	5	8
Wife, 11 dayes . . .	0	9	2
Boy, 11 dayes . . .	0	7	4
May 3. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
Wife, 11 dayes . . .	0	9	2
Boy, 11 dayes . . .	0	7	4
17. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
Wife, 11½ dayes . . .	0	9	7
Boy, 12 dayes at 6d.	0	6	0
	11	5	1
31. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
Wife, 11 dayes . . .	0	9	2
Boy, 12 dayes . . .	0	6	0
June 14. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
Wife, 11½ dayes . . .	0	9	7
Boy, 11½ dayes . . .	0	5	9
28. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
Wife, 9½ dayes . . .	0	7	11
Boy, 12 dayes . . .	0	6	0
July 12. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
Wife, 11 dayes . . .	0	9	2

	£.	s.	d.
Boy, 12 dayes . . .	0	6	0
July 26. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
Wife, 12 dayes . . .	0	10	0
Boy, 12 dayes . . .	0	6	0
Aug. 9. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
Wife, 12 dayes . . .	0	10	0
Boy, 12 dayes . . .	0	6	0
	13	1	6
23. Self, 12 dayes at 2s. 4d.	1	8	0
Wife, 11½ dayes at 10d.	0	9	7
Boy, 12 dayes, at 6d.	0	6	0
Sept. 6. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
Wife, 11½ dayes . . .	0	9	7
Boy, 12 dayes . . .	0	6	0
20. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
Wife, 12 dayes . . .	0	10	0
Boy, 12 dayes . . .	0	6	0
Oct. 4. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
Wife, 11½ dayes . . .	0	9	7
Boy, 12 dayes . . .	0	6	0
18. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
Wife, 7 dayes . . .	0	5	10
Boy, 5 dayes . . .	0	2	6
Nov. 1. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
Wife, 12 dayes . . .	0	10	0
Boy, 6 dayes . . .	0	3	0
	12	12	1
15. Self, 12 dayes at 2s. 4d.	1	8	0
Wife, 8 dayes at 8d.	0	5	4
Boy, 9 dayes at 6d.	0	4	6
29. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
Wife, 10 dayes . . .	0	6	8
Boy, 12 dayes . . .	0	6	0
Dec. 13. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
Wife, 10 dayes . . .	0	6	8
Boy, 12 dayes . . .	0	6	0
27. Self, 11 dayes . . .	1	5	8
Wife, 4 dayes . . .	0	2	8
Boy, 3 dayes . . .	0	1	6
Jan. 10. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
24. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
Feb. 7. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
21. Self, 12 dayes . . .	1	8	0
28. Self, 6 dayes . . .	0	14	0
	13	13	10

The varcas expinces belonging to Houskeeping for seven in famale; kept by Joseph and Jane Allen. Begun March 1, 1841; ended February 28, 1842.

EVIDENCE COLLECTED.

Evidence of the Rev. *Wm. Lund*, *Dunnington*, near *York*.

WOMEN.

What sort of out-door employment are women generally employed in in each month of the year?—From March to October (both inclusive), raking, hoeing, and weeding the various crops, hay-making and harvesting, and taking up potatoes at the respective seasons.

What wages do they earn?—Harvesting, 1s. 6d.; hay-making and potato-gathering, 1s.; at others, 10d. per day.

What are their usual hours of work?—From 8 A.M. to 6 P.M., summer; and from 8 A.M. to 4 P.M. winter.

What is their usual diet and meal hours?—They find their own provisions, and have one hour at noon both summer and winter.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—Out-door labour conducive to health.

Is there any domestic employment, as plaiting, spinning, &c.?—No domestic employment of the kind specified.

Have you any allotments?—if so, what are the effects on the condition of families?—Yes; several garden allotments, of about one rood of land each, to the poor belonging to the parish, chiefly to those who have not gardens attached to their cottages. Very useful to their families. They are readily sought after when any are at liberty.

Is out-door work preferred to in-door, and why?—As there is no domestic employment out-door is wished for.

What proportion of females are employed in out-door work to the total number in the parish?—Of the labouring class about two-thirds usually go to out door work.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—No difference whatever.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do they go out to work?—From 12 to 14 years of age.

Do they learn anything before going to work?—They attend the parish school.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in generally?—Boys generally employed in protecting corn from birds, gleaning, &c., in harvest, and gathering potatoes at the proper season. Girls generally employed at home, except gleaning in harvest.

What are their hours of work?—From 6 A.M. to 6 P.M. in summer.

What is their diet and meal hours when at work?—They meal at home; one hour at noon for dinner.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Out-door employment conducive to health.

What wages do they get?—Lads generally receive 6d. per day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work?—During harvest the school is closed, when the children who are able generally find employment; at other times the children are occasionally kept from school to earn something by work.

Have you any domestic employment, as spinning, &c.?—No domestic employment such as specified.

Do the allotments afford any employment for children?—They do not afford much employment.

Have you any parish apprentices?—There are no parish apprentices.

Evidence of Sir *William Milner's Steward, Dunnington.*

WOMEN.

What is the description of out-door labour in each month?—Weeding and hay-making, harvesting, &c., according to the season.

What wages do they earn?—About 8*d.* per day.

What are their hours of work?—From 8 to 12, and from 1 to 5.

What is the usual diet and meal hours when at work?—Milk, tea, coffee, potatoes, bread, and a little animal food. One hour for dinner, from 12 to 1.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Generally good.

Is there any domestic employment, as spinning, &c.?—A little spinning and knitting.

What do they earn at it?—From 4*d.* to 6*d.* per day.

Is there any allotment system?—No.

Is out-door labour preferred to in-door?—Out-door preferred; the little in-door to be obtained is washing, &c.

What is the proportion of females employed in out-door work to total number in parish?—About one-half.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—No difference.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do children go out to work?—From 9 to 12.

What do they learn before going out to work?—Reading, &c.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in?—Agricultural labour.

Do they work separately or together; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—Generally together; no bad consequences observed.

What are their hours of work?—From 8 to 12, and from 1 to 5.

What their diet and meal hours?—Milk, tea, coffee, potatoes, and bread; from 12 to 1 to dinner.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Generally very good.

What wages do they earn?—From 4*d.* to 6*d.* per day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept there though they might earn something by work?—Taken from school when any employment offers.

Is there any domestic employment, as plaiting, &c.?—None.

What do they do when not at school or employed out of doors?—Knitting occasionally.

Are parish apprentices common?—There are not any.

Evidence of Mr. *George Rudston Read, Sutton.*

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of employment for women in each month?—The principal employment of women during the winter months, November, December, January, February, and March, is in assisting the farmers when they have a threshing-machine at work; they have to fork the corn off the stacks to the man who serves the machine. They are sometimes employed to

pull turnips, or the turnips are let to a labourer at so much per acre to pull up, top, and tail; and he and his wife, and perhaps as many of his family as are not otherwise engaged, set to work at them, and often earn good wages. In the months of April and May they are employed to pick up quicks, if the weather is suitable; hoe corn, pull up thistles, &c., in the corn. In June they hoe turnips, either at so much per acre or by the day, but most frequently the former, as the turnips are generally let to the husband. In July, hoe turnips and make hay, which generally employs them to near harvest, which commences here about the middle of August, at which they work with their husbands, who reap the corn at so much per acre. The harvest generally lasts until the middle or third week in September. After the harvest is finished, there is nothing for them to do until the potatoes are taken up in October, at which they are always employed.

What wages do they get?—The wages vary from 9*d.* to 1*s.* per day. When I employ women I generally give 9*d.* in winter, and 1*s.* in summer. I do not think the farmers generally give more than 10*d.*

What are their hours of work?—They generally go to work at eight o'clock in the morning, and leave about six in the evening in summer, and when dark in winter.

What is their usual diet?—Bread, fruit pies, potatoes, broth, and a little fresh meat sometimes, or bacon if they have it. Most of the labourers feed a pig and keep a cow in my parish. I suppose they use the milk after it has been skimmed, though I believe many had rather give the milk to the pig than use it themselves.

What are their meal hours when at work?—Breakfast 7 o'clock, and generally take an hour for dinner, 12 to 1.

What are the effects of such employment when at work?—I think they are more healthy when at work.

Have they any in-door occupations?—No domestic employment, except young unmarried women, who turn dress-makers, if they do not get hired, and very often turn out unsteady.

Is there any allotment system in your neighbourhood?—There is an allotment to most families, varying from one acre to one rood of land; the families who have land are certainly much better off than those who have none.

Is work agreeable or not,—out-door preferred to in-door, or *vice versa*,—and why?—All the women are ready to work at either in-door or out-door work, that are able or qualified.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—I do not know that there is any difference.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children here go out to work?—As soon as they can get any sort of employment after 12 years of age; perhaps a few under 12.

What are they taught before they go out to work?—The ordinary learning of a village school.

What sort of work are boys employed in generally?—Boys are employed to frighten crows and birds off corn; and if hired, feed cattle in the farm-yards, and look after various little things about the farms; steady girls are seldom employed unless hired, and when hired generally have to feed calves, besides the in-door work.

What are the hours of work?—From six in the morning to six in the evening.

What is their usual diet and meal hours when at work?—Bread, fruit pies, and milk, and when hired they live the same as other farming servants; they breakfast before they go to work, dine at 12, and sup after work is done.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Generally very healthy.

What wages do the children earn?—Boys when hired, 4*d.* to 6*d.* a-day, or their meat only.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work?—Taken from school, if they can earn one day's wages.

Is there any domestic employment?—No domestic employment.

If not, what do they do when not at school or employed out of doors?—They idle their time about the village.

Does the allotment system afford any employment for children?—There does not appear to be any employment for children in the allotments, except perhaps a few days occasionally.

Are parish apprentices common?—Not very common, though there are a few; blacksmiths, shoemakers, and carpenters are the principal trades.

Evidence of Mr. *George Hammond, Strensell.*

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour in each month?—Nothing but agriculture.

What wages do they get?—About 9*d.* a-day.

How many hours do they work?—Ten hours a-day.

What are their meal hours when at work?—One hour for dinner.

Have they any domestic employment?—Knitting, sewing, &c., for their families, or any one else.

Is work agreeable or not,—out-door preferred to in-door?—They are very glad to work when employment can be had.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—Not any.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do they go out to work?—From 10 years old.

Do they learn anything before going out to work?—Reading, writing, knitting and sewing.

What work are they employed in?—Agricultural out-door work.

Do they work separately or together; and if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—Not any either way.

What are their hours of work?—About 10 hours.

What are their meal hours when at work?—One hour for dinner.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—Good.

What wages do they earn?—6*d.* a-day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept there though they might earn something by work?—Always taken away when work can be had.

Are parish apprentices common?—Not any.

Acaster.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children go out to work?—About nine years old.

What do they learn before going to work?—Generally the children are sent to school, where they are taught to read, and the girls to sew; but as they are sent to out-door work whenever employment is offered them, the boys soon forget what they have learned.

What sorts of work are boys and girls employed in?—The boys are em-

ployed to guard the new sown corn from the birds, attend sheep, and drag and cut turnips during the months of November, December, January, February and March; but there is no employment for girls during these months, consequently they have a great advantage at school over the boys, and more frequently retain what they learn.

Do they work separately or together; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—The children of agricultural labourers are sent to service at an early age, prior to which time no bad effects arise from their working together.

What are their hours of work?—From half-past seven to four during the winter, and in summer from six to six.

What is their usual diet and meal hours?—Almost every family here keeps a pig, and having an allotment of ground on which they grow abundance of potatoes, they are enabled to keep their children on bread, bacon, and potatoes; several cows are also kept by agricultural labourers. Twelve to one for dinner.

What are the effects of employment on health?—The employed are very healthy.

What wages do the children earn?—The amount of wages paid for boys' labour commences with 3*d.* per day, which is generally in the summer, clearing the land of weeds and roots, and progresses till he is worth as much as a woman, after which it is expected that he goes out to service.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept there though they might earn something?—In this village (Acaster Malbis), there is an endowed school where 14 children are required to be taught gratis, but too frequently these children are taken from school to go out to work, and so the good intention of the donor is defeated.

Is there any domestic employment?—Not any.

What do they do, then, when not at school or employed out of doors?—No employment for boys, except working the garden or allotment ground, in which they are profitably employed by their parents.

Are parish apprentices common; if so, about how many annually, and to what trades?—Parish apprentices are not common here, and have hitherto seldom been attended with good effects; but the caution now used by the Board of Guardians under the New Poor Law in selecting respectable tradesmen and mechanics with whom to apprentice the boys, will remove the evil.

What premiums are paid with them?—10*l.* and 15*l.* are sometimes paid with them.

Do they receive any wages?—Not any wages are paid by masters to their apprentices.

How are they generally treated?—The present mode of apprenticing boys will generally ensure proper treatment by the master; but such has not been the case under the old system, there being few instances of their remaining the proper time, and much fewer still of their being respectable and good workmen in after-life; and this is commonly to be attributed to the improper treatment by their masters.

Evidence of Mr. J. Boyes, Clerk of the *Beverley Union*.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women in each month?—In January, February, and March, dressing turnips, and in open weather gathering stones from the land; April, gathering quicks and flints on the wolds; May and June, weeding and depositing manure for turnips; July, hand-weeding and hay-making; August, hay-making and harvesting; September, harvesting and gleaning; October, harvesting, gathering flints and

potatoes, and drawing straw for thatch; November, gathering flints and drawing thatch; December, dressing turnips, and in one or two townships in the Union housing mangel-wurzel and beet-root.

What wages do they get?—10*d.*, 1*s.*, and 1*s.* 6*d.* a-day.

What are their hours of work?—From eight to four in winter, and eight to six in summer.

What is their usual diet and meal hours?—Principally bread from wheaten flour, milk, broth, and bacon, with one hour at noon for dinner.

What are the effects of such employment on the morals and health of the girls of 15 and upwards?—Beneficial to health, and considered not injurious to the manners or morals of either women or girls.

Have they any in-door occupations, as spinning, &c.?—Knitting, plain sewing, washing, and charing.

What are their earnings from it?—From washing and charing about 8*d.* a-day and meat.

Have you any allotments; if so, of what extent, and what are the effects on the condition of families, at what rent, and if regularly paid?—Only in two parishes, Cherry Barton and Kilnwick. Allotments, one rood each, close to the cottages; rent, former parish, 4*l.* an acre, latter, 2*l.* 10*s.*, and regularly paid; considered of advantage to the labourer, and generally cultivated by himself, with perhaps a trifling assistance from his family.

Is work agreeable or not, out-door work preferred to in-door, and why?—Generally agreeable; out-door work preferred.

Can you tell the proportion of females employed in out-door work compared to total number in parish?—It is estimated at about 1 in 4.

Is any difference made in rate of wages to married and unmarried labourers?—Yes, about 2*s.* weekly more to married labourers.

What are the rents of cottages?—From 1*l.* to 7*l.* 10*s.*

What is the nature of cottage accommodation, and size of rooms?—The lowest rented only two rooms, and a few only one room. The middling and highest rented, four or five rooms: two below, and two or three above. The rooms about 12½ feet square by 9 feet high.

Have you any benefit clubs or clothing clubs?—A few benefit clubs, but not generally entered into; it is thought that on the whole they are on the increase. Clothing clubs very rare.

The labourers and their families in this district are considered generally to bear, if not a religious, at least a good moral character. Almost in every village in this Union there is a good day school, at a low rate, for the education of the children of poor parents. By far the greater part of the children of labourers are put to school by the richer portion of the inhabitants; and it is a rare occurrence to find any children but what go to school. On the Sunday, the labourers with their families, for the most part, either attend the parish church or some chapel for religious worship; where there is a day school, there is generally also a Sunday school.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children go out to work?—From 8 to 10.

What do they learn before going out to work?—Reading, writing, and arithmetic for boys, and reading, writing, and common sewing for girls.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in?—Boys, tending cattle and birds, and assisting their mothers in gathering quicks, flints, &c.; girls also occasionally go along with their mothers in weeding, quicking, &c.

Do they work separately or together in gangs?—Generally along with their mothers in gangs.

What are their hours of work?—From eight to four in winter, and eight to six in summer.

What is their usual diet and meal hours?—Milk, and bread from wheaten

flour, broth, and sometimes a little bacon, with one hour at noon for dinner.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Beneficial.

What wages do children earn?—Flints, paid by ton, 1*s.* 4*d.*; hand-weeding, 6*d.* a-day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work?—When work is to be had they generally go out.

Is there any domestic employment?—Knitting and plain sewing.

If not at school or employed in any domestic work, what do they do?—Gleaning, in harvest.

Are parish apprentices common?—None at all.

Evidence of Mr. *Jeffreys*, a Farmer, *Acaster*.

WOMEN.

What sort of out-door labour are women employed in in each month?—Weeding in the fields, and hay-making as the seasons advance.

What wages do they earn?—About 8*d.* per day.

What are their hours of work?—From eight to twelve, and one to five.

What is their usual diet and meal-hours when at work?—Tea, coffee, bread, potatoes, and a little animal food; dinner-hour, from twelve to one.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Generally good.

Is there any domestic employment, as spinning, &c.?—No.

Is work agreeable or not, out-door preferred to in-door, and why?—Generally agreeable; out-door preferred, because they have no in-door work except washing.

What is the proportion of females so employed to the total number in your parish?—About one-third.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—Not any.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children go out to work?—From 9 years to 12 years.

Do they learn anything before going out to work?—Generally reading and writing, &c.

What sort of work are they generally employed in?—Agricultural labour.

Do they work separately or together?—Generally together, with their parents.

What are their hours of work?—From eight to twelve, and from one to five.

What is their usual diet and meal hours?—Milk, tea, coffee, bread, and potatoes; from twelve to one, for dinner.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—Generally good.

What wages do they earn?—From 4*d.* to 6*d.* per day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept there though they might be earning something by work?—Taken from school as soon as they can earn anything.

Is there any domestic employment for children?—No.

Then what do they do when not at school or at out-door work?—Knitting or sewing plain work.

Are parish apprentices common?—Not common.

Evidence of Mr. *Smith*, *Acaster Malbis*.

WOMEN.

What sorts of out-door work are women employed in each month in your parish?—The out-door employment of women during the months of No-

vember, December, January, and February, is very scarce, and almost entirely confined to assisting in the threshing-machine, dressing corn, and taking in stacks to the barn; but in the other months labour is plentiful and women scarce. From March to June they are employed hoeing and weeding the growing corn, preparing the land for potatoes and turnips, clearing the land of weeds, up to July; when they are engaged at 1s. per diem, with which they are employed until the harvest, when the wages for reaping corn are calculated by the acre. When women are hired by the day in harvest, from 1s. 6d. to 2s. are paid to them.

What wages do they get generally?—This question partly answered as above. When employment is scarce, those who have it do not obtain more than 9d. per day. This was the rate in October last—now reduced to 8d.

What are their hours of work?—From half past eight to four, or half-past four.

What is their usual diet, and what hours are they allowed for their meals?—They provide for themselves, and their diet consists of bread, milk, potatoes, and bacon. Several agricultural labourers keep cows, and are always sellers of milk. They usually take their breakfast before going to work; and the dinner hour is twelve o'clock, when they are allowed one hour.

What are the effects of such employment on their health, and on the morals of girls of 15 years and upwards?—I would here observe that there is a great disinclination on the part of the women generally to go out to work during the winter months, and, as may be supposed, those only who have not young families are enabled to do it. The health of such as are so employed is good, and the condition as to neatness and order of their houses and family is quite as good and often better than of those who refuse to go out to out-door labour. The children also are more eligible as workers when the mother goes out to work with them.

Have they any in-door occupation, or earnings from it?—Not any.

What is the general character, moral and social, of those who have no out-door employment or regular domestic occupation?—The morals of the women in this neighbourhood are anything but improved by our contiguity to York. One-third of the girls are brought up as dress-makers and straw-bonnet-makers, and if they marry agricultural labourers they are not equal to any out-door work. Such other of the girls who are placed out to service in farm-houses, become, at the age of 18 or 19, not inclined to take a place in a "farm house," or "won't go out to milk," or "won't go where there are children." Situations in town are generally preferred, and the difficulty of getting respectable female servants is much greater than formerly; but whenever an agricultural labourer's wife has lived long in farmer's service, she is much better able to perform out-door labour, and very commonly the best poor man's wife.

Is there any allotment system in your neighbourhood?—The proprietor of this township has kindly allotted a portion of land to each of several families, and which may be advantageously extended to others. It is attended with every good; and even a boy of 12 or 14 years of age, when first placed out to service, is much more eligible where his father has an allotment of land to cultivate, the great probability being that the boy has acquired habits of industry.

Is out-door work preferred, or otherwise?—Replied to in answer, not.

What proportion of females employed in out-door work compared with the number in the parish?—Not more than one-third.

Is there any difference in the rate of wages to married and unmarried labourers?—Not any.

Evidence of Rev. C. Ingle, Osbaldwick.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women in each month in your parish?—The women in this parish are very generally employed in husbandry—in field-work. In the spring their work is moulding (breaking up and scattering clods, manure, &c.), setting potatoes, cleaning land, especially by what is called “wicking”—that is, working out and destroying that indiscutible weed called wick. In summer, hay and harvest; winter, gathering potatoes, pulling turnips, cleaning land again. It may be reckoned that the women are pretty regularly employed in these operations for three-fourths of the year. This I give on the authority of one of my most intelligent farmers.

What wages do they get?—The wages for ordinary work is 10*d.* per day; in hay-time, 1*s.*; in harvest, 1*s.* 6*d.*

What are their hours of work?—From nine to six, except hay-time and harvest, when from eight to six.

What is their usual diet?—Pies, bread and milk, bacon, cakes, &c. In harvest and hay-time an allowance is given from their employers of bread and cheese, and ale.

What are their meal hours when at work?—Meal time generally from 12 to 1 when at work.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—Generally speaking, as may be supposed from the nature of the employment and the fresh open air, favourable to health.

Have they any in-door occupations?—We have in this parish no in-door employment by which profit is made—no articles made for sale.

Whether work agreeable or not, out-door preferred to in-door, or *vice versa*, and why?—It may, I think, be safely stated that the women like going out to field-work.

Have you any allotments?—We have no allotments, but many of the cottages have small gardens annexed.

Can you say what proportion of females are employed in out-door work compared to total number in the parish?—I should say four-fifths of those women capable of employment are employed as above stated.

Is there any difference made in the wages of married and unmarried labourers?—There is no difference, whether men or women.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children go out to work?—Children are generally employed between 12 and 14.

Do they learn anything before going out to work?—Before that age they learn here hardly anything but simple reading and writing.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in?—Boys in husbandry in the field and farm-yard; girls in nursing and keeping the house.

Do they work separately or together; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—There is no employment that I am aware of bringing boys and girls together, or, indeed, that brings together any number of either one or the other.

What are their hours of work, when regularly employed?—As the women.

What is their usual diet and meal hours?—The same as the women.

What wages do the children earn?—At first their victuals are their wages; then, if fortune highly favours them, 6*d.* per day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept there

though they might earn something by work?—Taken from school for the most part when a *farthing* is to be got.

Is there any domestic employment?—No; sometimes in a large family some will be kept idling at home; but these cases, in this small place, are few.

Are parish apprentices common?—Apprenticeships are so rare in this place that an intelligent parishioner tells me that there have not been above four in 40 years.

Evidence of Rev. *John L. Walton*, Incumbent of *Selby*.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women in each month?—The out-door labour of the women in the agricultural district is almost entirely confined to the summer months, and consists principally in assisting in hay-making, harvest, getting in the potato crops, &c., and in gathering weeds and rubbish off the land, and the fallow and turnip lands.

What are their wages?—In hay, corn, and potato harvest, their wages will average about 1s. per day; for other occasional work, about 9d. or 10d.

What are their hours of work?—Eight or ten hours per day.

What is their usual diet?—Diet depends much on their earnings, and the extent of their families.

What are their meal hours when at work?—Dinner, 12 noon; allowed an hour, and half an hour in the afternoon for refreshments.

What are the effects of employment generally, and especially of out-door labour, on the manners and morals of girls of 15 and upwards?—The manners and morals of the women, and particularly of girls of 15 and upwards, cannot be said to suffer by out-door employment; they are seldom if ever congregated in great numbers, as in the manufactories, and, in those cases, where numbers of both sexes are necessary, they are generally under the immediate eye of their employer.

Have they any domestic employment, as spinning, &c.?—Weaving or plaiting are little practised in this district. Family duties, knitting and sewing, are the chief occupations.

Is there any allotment system?—The allotment system is not in operation; but in the few instances to be found, the men have the entire management.

Is work agreeable or not, out-door preferred to in-door, or *vice versâ*, and why?—The preference seems generally to be given to in-door employment, as being more peculiarly feminine; but necessity compels the cheerful performance of out-door labour as well, and no great difficulty exists in procuring female labour when required.

What is the proportion of females employed in out-door work, compared to total number in parish?—The proportion of females employed in out-door work is very small; but varies according to the season.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—No difference.

Are there any prevalent diseases; if so, are they attributable to any of the occupations common about you?—There are no prevalent diseases.

What is the usual rent of cottages?—Cottage rents may be stated at about 1s. per week and upwards, in proportion to the conveniences they possess. They vary materially; and in the strictly rural portion of the district are lower than in the town of Selby.

What is the nature of your cottage accommodation, number and size of rooms?—The lowest class of cottages will usually contain two or three rooms on the ground-floor; principal room from eight to ten feet square. Sleeping rooms generally smaller.

Are benefit or clothing clubs commonly entered?—Clothing societies are

well supported; but nearly altogether by the richer classes, for the benefit of the poor; there are few clubs maintained by the poor themselves. Benefit or money clubs are general, and rather extending themselves.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children go out to work?—Boys at 10; girls for in-door work at about the same age; for out-door service rather later. The necessities of the individual families prevent any fixed rule on this subject.

Do they learn anything before going out to work?—Where parents can afford it, their children are generally sent to school so young as to obtain some little learning before going out to service; whether kept up or laid aside, chiefly depends on the situations they enter. The majority of children, perhaps, it may be said, have at least attended a Sunday school previous to their going out.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in generally?—Many in Selby in the factories; as to the rest, boys as soon as they are fit to go out to service, and such also of the girls as are not required at home. During the summer months such as are not so employed assist in out-door agricultural labour, according to their ability; except in factories, they do not work in gangs; indeed the nature of agricultural labour here prevents it.

What are their hours of work?—As to those in factories, the legislature has regulated their hours of employment; the others, not in regular service, work about eight or ten hours per day, according to their situation and circumstances.

What is their usual diet?—Milk, bread, and potatoes, in the rural districts, form the principal food of young labourers; at a more advanced age their diet is influenced by their situation and employment, and the circumstances of their parents.

What are their meal hours when at work?—Except in factories, no particular regulation can be said to exist as to meal hours.

What are the effects of employment on health?—In the agricultural districts the children are generally healthy.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept there though they might earn something by work?—This depends almost entirely on the circumstances of the parents; it may be stated generally, that the disposition is to give their children all the advantages of education which can be allowed.

Is there any in-door employment, as spinning, plaiting, &c.?—In this district no particular mode of in-door employment can be said to be generally in use.

Then what do they do when not at school or employed out of doors?—Girls when not out at service, or work, after leaving school, are usually assistants in household arrangements. It is less easy to define the occupation of boys.

Is there any allotment system; if so, does it afford any employment for children?—No allotment system in this district affords any occupation for children.

Are parish apprentices common?—The system of putting out parish apprentices is almost obsolete, chiefly owing to the New Poor Law.

Evidence of *James Rev. D. Dixon*, Incumbent of *Thornes*.

WOMEN.

What is the description of out-door labour in each month?—The women are chiefly employed during the autumn in weeding market-gardens, but

they have also employment during the summer months in various sorts light garden-labour, such as preparing vegetables for market, planting, &c.

What wages do they earn?—From 10*d.* to 1*s.* per day.

What are their hours of work?—From six A.M. to six P.M.; with a kind master, from seven A.M. to six P.M.

What is their usual diet?—They always in this district find their own victuals.

What are their meal hours during work?—To breakfast, half an hour from eight A.M. Dinner an hour, 12 to 1. Drinkings half an hour from four P.M.

What are the effects of employment on health, and especially of out-door labour on the manners and morals of girls of 15 and upwards?—The effect on health very good; they are all healthy; of the effect on the manners and morals we can only speak comparatively, and say that in this district they are very superior to the factory girls.

Is there any domestic employment?—No domestic employment of any kind, factories having swallowed up all the home employment, excepting perhaps as washerwomen.

What the effects, moral and social, of no out-door employment, or of any regular domestic employment?—The effect, both moral and social, of a want of domestic employment, is certainly very bad, the habits of the women generally being unsatisfactory; the bulk of the women have had little education, and the consequence is such as might be expected,—no control is exercised over the children, and very little management manifested in the disposal of the weekly wages.

Have you any allotments in your district?—Unfortunately no allotments have been attempted as yet.

Is work agreeable or not, out-door preferred to in-door, and why?—The women generally like out-door work. It is more healthy, and as they work generally in gangs, they are enabled to have intercourse and conversation with each other; and besides, they get better wages.

Can you tell me the proportion of females employed in out-door work to total number in parish?—The number is so small that it would be impossible to state any proportion. The whole number of women employed in out-door labour in this district does not exceed 40, or at the very utmost 50, out of a population of at least 2700 people.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—No; all working by the day, and living at their own houses, with very few exceptions.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children go out to work?—Generally from 10 to 12 years of age.

What do they learn before going out to work—if kept up or forgotten?—The boys learn but little before they go out to work, and from my experience at an adult school, I should say forget that little, except the reading, very soon.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in?—Boys and girls employed alike, in weeding, setting potatoes, and light garden-work.

Do they work separately, or together in gangs; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—They generally work together in gangs; and where this is so the effect is decidedly bad. I know one master who employs children, who always separates the boys and girls, and keeps a most careful watch over them, thereby preventing bad consequences.

What are their hours of work?—The same as the women.

What is their diet?—They live entirely at home.

What are their meal hours when at work?—The same as the women.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Very healthy.

What are their wages?—From 6*d.* to 1*s.* per day, according to age, ability, and kind of work.

Are they taken from school to earn anything by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work?—They are seldom taken from school to out-door work; but this may arise from the fact that there is very little demand for children in out-door work.

Is there any domestic employment for children?—Not any.

If not, what do they do when not at school or employed in out-door work?—There is nothing but mischief done when out of school, as the parents, with very few exceptions, exercise no control over their children at all.

Are parish apprentices common; if so, how many annually, and to what trades bound?—Occasionally there are parish apprentices put out, perhaps three in two years, and always to artisans of different kinds, never to farmers or factories. Parish apprentices would be more common, but that there are noble charities in Wakefield, which provide for many poor boys annually; and, of course, that has the effect of greatly relieving the out-townships, as well as the town of Wakefield.

Are any premiums given by the parish?—Not any.

Do they receive any wages from their masters?—They are fed and clothed by the masters, but no money payment is stipulated for.

How are they generally treated by the masters?—Their treatment depends upon the master they are bound to; sometimes they are well treated, sometimes the very reverse, and this perhaps more frequently than the former.

Evidence of *Rev. John Lister*, Minister; and *Mr. George Streak*, Churchwarden, *Stanley*.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women, in each month?—Weeding in market-gardens chiefly, sometimes working for farmers.

What wages do they get?—About 9*d.* per day.

What are their hours of work?—From seven in the morning to six in the evening.

What is their usual diet?—The best they can get.

What are their meal hours when at work?—One hour for dinner, from twelve to one.

What are the effects of employment on the health and morals of girls of 15 and upwards?—Out-door employment beneficial for health; but the effects on manners, and especially on morals, is far from good. The morals of those working in gardens are no better, if so good, as those employed in factories; but it ought to be also taken into consideration, that those employed are generally such as would not be taken for domestic servants.

Have they any in-door occupations?—A few make lace, but very few.

What do they earn from it?—From 3*d.* to 6*d.* per day.

What are the effects, moral and social, of no out-door employment, or of any regular domestic occupation?—Demoralizing.

Is there any allotment system here?—No.

Is out-door work preferred to in-door, and why?—Working in factories generally preferred to working in gardens.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—No difference.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children here go to work?—From six years.

What do they learn before going to work; do they keep it up, or is it forgotten?—Forgotten: but very little learnt before going out.

What sorts of work are boys and girls employed in?—Girls in weeding and factories, boys in coal-pits and in working for farmers.

Do they work separately or together?—Separately.

What are their hours of work?—Those employed in out-door labour from seven in the morning to six in the evening.

What is the usual diet and meal hours?—Bread and milk chiefly: dinner from twelve to one.

What are the effects of employment on health?—They are generally healthy.

What wages do children earn?—From 4d. to 1s.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept there though they might earn something by work?—Always taken from school when they can earn anything.

Is there any domestic employment, as spinning, &c.?—Not any.

Are parish apprentices common?—Very uncommon.

Evidence of Sir *William Pilkington's* Steward, Parish of *Sandal Magna, Wakefield.*

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children go to work?—From 6 to 10 years, varying according to the capability of the parents to keep them at school.

What do they learn before going out to work?—The learning obtained before going to work is somewhat in proportion to the respectability and religious knowledge of the parent: the more ignorant and careless prefer the money accruing from their labour.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in?—But a small proportion of the number of girls weed in gardens or fields, as also boys: the description of employment given them wholly depends upon whether the neighbourhood they live in is agricultural or manufacturing: in the former the employment is more rare.

Do they work separately, or together in gangs? If the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—The preferable plan is to work them separately, or in small companies, with an aged person to instruct them: the effect is that twice the work will be done, and much better.

What are their hours of work?—Generally from seven in the morning to six in the evening.

What is their usual diet?—It varies from milk and bread to potatoes.

What are their meal hours during work?—From half-past nine to ten in the morning, and from twelve to one at noon.

What are the effects of such employment on health? No doubt the health is much better from out-door work.

What wages are they paid?—From 3d. to 9d. per day.

Are they taken from school when there is any work to be had?—Generally taken from school at from 7 to 8 years of age in agricultural districts.

Is there any domestic employment, as spinning, &c.?—In few cases; namely, the industrious parents require it of their children.

If not, what do they do when not at school or at out-door work?—Idleness and bad habits are the consequences.

Are there any allotments: if so, do they afford any employment for children?—Allotments would add but little to the employment of children.

Are there any parish apprentices?—Some few are apprenticed to the lower trades.

What premiums are generally given?—Vary according to the respectability of the trade, the means of the parents, but generally not more than 6l.

Do they receive any wages?—None during apprenticeship.
How are they treated?—It is difficult to ascertain.

Evidence of Mr. *Eric Rudd, Thorne.*

WOMEN.

What sort of out-door labour, if any, in each month?—From January to the end of March, assisting occasionally in turnip-cutting and dressing meadows, &c.; at other times in weeding, and in the hay and corn harvests.

What amount of wages do they receive?—On an average about 9*d.*

What are their hours of work?—From seven to eight hours in winter, in summer ten.

What is the usual diet?—Bread, potatoes, tea, &c., and so far as their wages admit, in meat.

What are their meal hours when at work?—One hour at dinner-time.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Generally conducive to health.

What is the nature of domestic employment, if any,—as spinning, plaiting, &c.?—These employments are not customary here; there is a sacking manufactory, employing about six females.

What are their earnings from it?—10*d.* to 1*s.* per day.

What are the effects, moral and social, of no out-door employment, or of any regular domestic occupation?—No particular effects to remark, being what is usually found in an agricultural district.

Work agreeable or not, out-door preferred to in-door, or *vice versâ*, and why?—Perhaps among the younger class, out-door work preferred.

What is the proportion of females employed in out-door work compared to total number in the parish?—About one-fifth in summer, not so many in winter.

Is there any difference in the rate of wages to married or unmarried?—Not any.

Are there any prevalent diseases in your neighbourhood?—No.

What is the average rent of your cottages?—About 2*l.* 10*s.* per annum.

What is the nature of your cottage accommodations, number and size of rooms?—Cottage accommodation is pretty good; about four rooms in each.

Are there any benefit or clothing clubs; if so, are they commonly entered into; whether they are on the increase, or remain stationary?—One "Female Provident Society," supported by subscriptions among the wealthier class. Stationary as to the question asked.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children go out to work?—From 10 to 14.

What is learned before going out to work?—Some take advantage of school when not employed.

What sorts of work are boys and girls employed in?—The former in agriculture, except apprentices; the latter in household work, &c.

Do they work separately, or together in gangs; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—Separately, except in harvest-time.

What are their hours of work?—About seven or eight hours in winter; ten in summer.

What is their diet?—Same as the women.

What are their meal hours during work?—One hour for dinner at noon.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Generally favourable.

What wages do they get?—From 4*d.* to 8*d.* per day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work?—Generally taken from school.

Whether any in-door employment, as plaiting, &c.?—None.

Are parish apprentices common?—Not any lately.

What premiums are given?—If taken from the Union workhouse, two suits of clothes.

Do they receive any wages from the masters?—Not any.

How are they treated?—There are no complaints.

Evidence of Rev. *Edward Trueman*, Vicar, Parish of *North Grimstone*.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour in each month?—Generally weeding corn and harvest-work, according to the seasons.

What wages do they get?—9*d.* per day.

What hours do they work?—From eight till five P.M.

What is their usual diet and meal hours?—Bread and bacon; meat occasionally, and flour; breakfast at eight, dinner at twelve, supper at six.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—Very good.

Have they any in-door occupations?—Knitting, sewing, &c., for their own families.

Have you any allotments?—There are no allotments; generally a small garden.

Is out-door work preferred to in-door?—In-door most preferred.

What is the proportion of females employed in out-door labour compared to total number in parish?—About eight in twenty.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—Not any.

What is rent of cottages?—About 5*l.*

What is the nature of your cottage accommodation?—Two or three rooms, from 12 to 14 feet.

Have you any clothing clubs; if so, are they entered into freely; are they on the increase, or stationary?—Commonly entered into; stationary.

What is the description and character of the soil?—Very mixed; clay and limestone; condition generally good.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do children here go out to work?—At about 10 or 11 years.

Are they taught anything before going to work; if so, do they retain it?—Reading, writing, arithmetic; also Sunday tuition at the Sunday school kept up.

What work are they generally employed at?—Weeding corn and tending birds.

Do they work together or separately; if together, do any bad consequences arise?—Together; we have no instances of mischief.

What are their hours of work?—From eight A.M. to five P.M.

What is their usual diet and meal hours when at work?—Fruit pies, bread and milk; breakfast eight, dinner twelve, supper six.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Good.

What wages are they paid?—From 4*d.* to 6*d.*

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept there though they might be earning something?—Taken away to earn something by work.

Is there any domestic employment, as spinning, &c.?—None.

Are parish apprentices common?—There are none.

Evidence of the *Rector*, of *Hunmanby*.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women in each month?—In January, February, and March, cutting turnips for the sheep, and at the threshing machine; this work is not regular, and is generally performed by the wives of the labourers whom the farmer employs, if they will take it, which is not always the case.

In April, May, and June, potato-planting, manuring for the drill-rows, in turnip sowing, quicking—that is, raking and burning the roots of the quick grass on the turnip ground, weeding the corn; in May and June the employment is tolerably full; the demand is equal to the supply.

In July hay-making, August and September harvest-work, generally following or gathering after a scythe. In October harvest and gleanings, according to the forwardness or lateness of the season.

In November and December occasionally days at the machine and turnip-cutting, and also in the early part of November potato-picking.

What wages are they paid?—10*d.* per day, except in hay-making and manuring for turnips, then they have 1*s.*, and such as follow a scythe in corn-harvest will have at the least 12*s.* per week for three weeks.

What hours do they work?—From eight to six, except in harvest, when they are fully twelve hours in the field.

What is their usual diet?—Before they go out, coffee or tea and wheaten bread, buttered for the most part, cold pie at noon, and tea or coffee at night, with a little bacon.

What are their meal hours when at work?—One hour at noon, and half an hour in the afternoon in harvest-time.

What are the effects of employment on health and morals of girls of 15 and upwards?—The labour, for the most part, appears to be conducive to health; and as it increases the means of providing things honestly, it is morally beneficial rather than otherwise; few unmarried women ever go to the kind of labour I have mentioned; they are generally refused if they apply. Farm or other yearly service is thought best and most reputable for them, and very few who are willing to oblige are ever out of place.

Have you any in-door occupations, as spinning, plaiting, &c.?—We have little spinning and no plaiting in the East Riding of Yorkshire; not any spinning on the wold district; the only in-door employment is nursing a child, or washing and mending for a farm-servant who has no mother, or one at too great a distance to benefit by her exertions.

What are their earnings from it?—For washing and mending they have 1*l.* each per annum.

What are the effects, moral and social, of no out-door employment, or of any regular domestic occupation?—It is difficult to say; all may occasionally go out to char and nurse, or wash, who can; there is no full domestic employment, except for their own families, as neither out-door nor in-door employment is so uniform as to prevent an industrious person in health attending her domestic concerns; the moral and social feelings are benefited by employment.

Is there any allotment system in your neighbourhood?—We have no allotment system; it would scarcely work well among the large farms in the wolds, where labour, or rather the demand for labour, is much more uniform than in grazing districts; but many of the cottages have gardens, and some, perhaps one-seventh, a cow.

Is work agreeable or not, out-door preferred to in-door, and why?—Out-door work is generally preferred to charring and washing at home, on the ground of immediate payment and more fixed hours; some prefer the other way, because they get their meat and 8*d.* per day.

Can you tell the proportion of females employed in out-door work,

compared to the total number in the parish?—It is impossible to say; in the time of weeding, turnip-sowing, or drilling, hay-time, harvest and gleaning, as many as can and will go, perhaps one-third of the adults in the parish; in gleaning more, with their children in addition.

If any difference in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—Not any; but there is a feeling against employing unmarried girls, except the mother be dead, and she attends to the domestic management of her father's cottage; and even that is a very rare case.

What is the rent of an average cottage?—From 1*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* per annum.

What is the nature of your cottage accommodation?—Seldom more than two bed-rooms and two below, and an area of seven yards by four, or four and a-half; the convenience for cooking is generally good; most bake bread at home.

Have you any benefit or clothing clubs?—I have a clothing club for the heads of families only, who get a bonus on their deposits at Martinmas; it is freely entered, and has increased one and a-quarter the last year; it has been about five years in operation.

What is the description of the soil generally?—My replies must for the most part be understood as applicable to the wold district, a chalk soil, but flinty and good in quality, and in a high state of cultivation; though near the sea we have clay, and on the slope good sward.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children here go out to work?—They go out to place,—that is, service, from 12 to 15 years old.

Do they learn anything before going out to work; if so, do they forget it or retain it?—Knitting, sewing, reading, writing, and accounts; in many cases generally retained.

What sort of labour are boys and girls commonly employed at?—There is no labour for boys and girls in common, except in the harvest-field and gleaning, and there they are under the superintendence of their parents or elders.

Do they work separately or together; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—A few girls go in summer time to the brick-yard or tile-yard, and of course are much among the men; but they have for the most part lost caste before as household servants, from idleness, incivility, or worse causes.

What are their hours of work, usual diet, and meal hours?—The same as the women.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—They are generally robust, and very healthy.

What wages are children generally paid?—At the brick-yard 1*s.* per day; the work, however, is by no means general; and there is little work except assisting their parents in harvest and gleaning, before they go to service.

Are they taken from school to work, or kept there when they might be employed?—Taken away in harvest to glean, and assist their parents when they have contract work, which is commonly the case.

Is there any domestic employment?—Not any.

What do they do when not at school and otherwise employed?—Spinning or knitting, or nursing.

Are parish apprentices common?—No parish apprentices here or on the wold district generally, to which my answers will more strictly apply, though I do know Holderness: the great feature of difference between Holderness and the wold, is, that on the wold they meat their labourer, and in Holderness the labourer often meats himself; and from comparison I infer that the farmer supplies too much animal food, if he errs at all.

Evidence of Mr. *W. Weatherill*, Clerk, of the *Guisborough Union*.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women, in each month?—They are employed generally by the farmers in the neighbourhood in clearing the land, gathering stones, scaling in manure, setting potatoes, and making hay, shearing corn, &c.

What wages do they get?—9*d.* per day, excepting in hay-time and corn-harvest; during the former they have 1*s.* 1*d.*, and the latter about 2*s.* 3*d.* per day.

What are their hours of work?—Eight hours.

What is their usual diet?—The labourers engaged in out-door employment find their own victuals generally, and I have no means of ascertaining how they live.

What are their meal hours when at work?—One hour for dinner; they begin work at eight o'clock in the morning, and leave about five or six in the evening.

What are the effects of employment on health?—The women generally work distinct from the men, except during the hay and corn harvest; the occupation is healthy, and not generally prejudicial.

Have you any domestic employment, as spinning, &c.?—No employment in spinning or plaiting, &c.; the unmarried girls are generally employed as farmers' servants.

What are their wages from such employments?—Domestic servants are kept in victuals, lodging, and washing by their masters, and wages vary from 5*l.* to 10*l.* per annum.

What are the effects, moral and social, of no out-door employment, or of any regular domestic occupation?—There is not much difference in the social and moral habits of women engaged in domestic employment, as contradistinguished from out-door employment.

Have you any allotment system; if so, what are the effects on the condition and habits of families; are they dug or ploughed; what rent; if regularly paid, &c.?—Small allotments of about a quarter of an acre for each family in the immediate neighbourhood are let by the lord of the manor to the labouring population, which is cultivated by the spade by the family of each tenant generally in spare hours. The effects are decidedly beneficial to the habits, moral and social, of the occupiers; those holdings give them an interest in the soil, and beneficial employment in hours which would otherwise be spent in idleness and probably dissipation. They have also a motive to behave themselves properly, as in case grave offence is committed the party committing it loses his allotment.

Is work agreeable or not, out-door preferred to in-door, or *vice versâ*, and why?—Those who prefer out-door labour can have it the greatest part of the year, and those who prefer domestic employment can easily obtain situations; they make these occupations agreeable to themselves; in-door labour is generally followed, and seems agreeable to the married women.

What is the rent of an average cottage?—From 1*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* per annum.

What is the nature of your cottage accommodation?—Pretty good, there is no uniformity with respect to the size of the cottages and number of rooms: very comfortable cottages, with a sitting-room and two or three bedrooms each, with a garden attached, may be had for 3*l.* per annum.

Is there any clothing or benefit clubs?—A clothing society is established here on a small scale, which appears not to be improving. The Society of Odd Fellows and Foresters established in this neighbourhood seems to be beneficial.

What is the description of soil?—A clayey loam; the condition generally good.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do children go out to work?—When about 12 years of age, they are partially employed in nursing children, and in domestic and farm labour.

What do they learn before going out to work?—They are generally sent to a free school here till they are of the age above stated, and receive a plain but useful education.

What sort of employment are boys and girls engaged in?—The boys are apprenticed to trades, such as shoemakers, blacksmiths, &c.; are hired by the year as farm-servants, when of proper age; and the girls are generally hired as domestic or farm servants.

Do they work separately or together?—They are engaged separately.

How many hours do they work?—About eight hours.

What is their usual diet?—Generally good; but this will of course depend upon the masters with whom they are engaged; the diet of the boys will be milk and bread for breakfast, meat for dinner, and milk and bread, or meat pie, for supper. The girls will have tea in the morning and evening, instead of milk.

What are their meal hours when at work?—One hour for dinner.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—Generally good.

What wages are they paid?—From 1*l.* to 4*l.* per annum for children under 15 years of age, who are kept in victuals, clothing, washing, and lodging.

Are they kept at school, though they might be earning something by work, or taken away when they can get any?—They are generally kept at school till they are 12 or 13 years of age; they probably might earn a little if taken from school earlier.

Is there any domestic employment?—None.

Are parish apprentices common?—Not general; scarcely any.

At what ages do children go out to work?—Much depends on the industrious habits of the parents. Boys are frequently employed in summer very young to frighten birds from the corn; they generally go into situations as servants from 12 to 14 years of age. Girls go to place about the same age, and often as nurse-maids younger. When at home parents employ them in any way they are capable of, and to assist them in any work they are doing.

What do they learn before going out to work, if kept up afterwards, or forgotten?—The work they are employed in when at home may be considered initiative, and the commencement of the work by which they afterwards obtain a livelihood.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in respectively?—Boys are employed as assistants to the elder men-servants, driving the plough, &c. Girls, in farmers' service, are employed in the lighter works in the fields, &c.; in the house, their masters or elder servants generally accompany them; but if not in place, the elder girls remain at home to nurse and take care of the younger children, to enable their mothers to go to the field to work; and if employed to assist in the fields (which is only common in harvest), their parents are generally present.

Do children work separately or together in gangs; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—They never work in the fields or other outdoor work in gangs, nor yet separately, whilst living with their parents, except as mentioned above.

What are their hours of work, usual diet, and meal hours during work?—The same as their parents, or other servants.

What are the effects of their employment on health?—Beneficial.

What wages are they generally paid?—Boys, when employed whilst residing with their parents, earn from 4*d.* to 6*d.* per day, and it is not uncommon for boys to be hired by farmers in the summer months for their meat and

lodging. Girls are seldom employed in the fields, when so resident, so as to earn separate wages.

Are children taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work?—Children about ten years of age are very commonly taken from school in summer, or attend very irregularly. In harvest both boys and girls are employed to assist their parents, and to glean after the fields are cleared of the corn; and some schools are closed for a month at this season of the year in consequence.

Is there any in-door employment, as spinning, plaiting, &c.?—None.

What do they do when not at school or employed out of doors?—Nothing, unless their parents can find a job for them.

Is there any allotment system?—None, except at Newby-Wisk.

Are there any parish apprentices; about how many annually, and to what trades?—Parish apprentices are uncommon, three boys only having been apprenticed since the Union was formed in 1837,—two to shoemakers, one to a farmer, and all to parties in the township in which they were settled. The tradesmen taking apprentices are generally tailors and shoemakers; and, as they are entirely dependent on the farmers and other rate-payers, are afraid of giving offence by taking a lad an apprentice whose settlement is in another township; the settlement, therefore, by service under parish indentures, acts injuriously, is often a source of expensive litigation, and ought to be abolished.

What premiums are given?—In one of the cases mentioned above, 8*l.* was given, and 5*l.* in another.

Any wages from masters?—None.

How are they treated?—There has been no report of treatment; but, speaking from observation, should say they are well used.

What is the nature of cottage accommodation, number and size of rooms?—Occasionally one room only, generally two, though it not unfrequently occurs that there is only one bed-room; where there are two, there are two lower and two upper rooms; their being crowded together by night without any reference to sex, has unquestionably an influence in weakening, if not of destroying, the modesty of the female sex.

What is the usual rent paid for such cottages?—From 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.*; towns houses are often let without rent, and sometimes at a nominal rent of a few shillings.

Have you any benefit or clothing clubs?—Yes; they are on the increase.

Evidence of Mr. *H. Powell*, Clerk of the *Pocklington* Union.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women in each month in your parish?—Flint-gathering on the wolds, cutting turnips, weeding corn, hay-making, turnip-hoeing, and harvest at the proper seasons of the year.

What wages do they get?—From 10*d.* to 1*s.* per day.

What are their hours of work?—From eight morning to six evening.

What is the usual diet and hours allowed for meals?—Shambles meat, bacon, bread, and potatoes, &c.; from 12 to 1 o'clock for dinner.

What are the effects of the employment on the health and morals of girls of 15 and upwards?—Girls of 15 and upwards are not employed in out-door work, being generally hired as domestic servants previous to attaining that age.

Have they any in-door occupation?—Glove-making and knitting stockings.

What do they earn from it?—2*s.* weekly.

What are the effects, moral and social, of no out-door employment, or of any regular domestic occupation?—Bad.

Is there any allotment system in your neighbourhood?—Yes, allotments of one rood each, and dug, between 300 and 400 yards from houses; 1*l.* rent per annum, and sometimes less; regularly paid; good effects on the condition, conduct, and habits of families; women and children assist in cultivating allotments; the soil is very good and well cultivated.

Is work agreeable or not, out-door preferred to in-door or not?—No objection to work; some prefer out-door, others in-door work, according to their bringing up.

Can you tell me the proportion of females employed in out-door work, compared with the total number in the parish?—The variation is great as to the different parishes in this Union.

Have you any diseases prevalent in your Union?—No particular disease.

What is the usual rent for an average cottage?—1*s.* to 1*s.* 2*d.* per week.

What is the nature of your cottage accommodation?—Pretty good, consisting of four rooms; size, 9 feet by 12.

Have you any clothing clubs in your Union?—Clothing clubs are commonly entered, and are on the increase.

What is the description of the soil?—Generally good, and well cultivated.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children here go out to work?—From 12 to 14.

What do they learn before going to work; do they keep it up or not?—Reading and writing; not kept up afterwards; generally forgotten.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in?—Gathering flints, and agricultural purposes.

Do they work separately or together?—Separately.

What are their hours of work?—From 8 o'clock morning to 6 evening.

What are the usual diet and meal hours?—Shambles meat, bacon, bread, potatoes, &c.; from 12 to 1 for dinner.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Very good.

What wages do children earn?—6*d.* per day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept there though they might earn something by work?—Generally taken from school when they can earn anything.

Is there any domestic employment, as spinning, &c.?—No domestic employment in spinning, &c.

Is there any allotment system; if so, what employment for children?—Allotment system affords little or no employment for children.

Are parish apprentices common; if so, what premiums are given?—Not any.

Evidence of Mr. Dalline, Rudston.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women, in each month, in your parish?—In winter the out-door employment is hoeing up the bottoms of turnips; but not more than one woman would be employed on each farm topping and tailing turnips, where farmers may want to heap them; these employments are, however, uncertain, and but for a short time; in spring women are employed in wicking, sodding, weeding wheat and the spring corns; in summer some, whose husbands have taken turnips to hoe, will assist them; women are employed in the harvest-field as gatherers or binders; in fact, women are not generally employed in out-door operations.

What wages are they generally paid?—From 10*d.* to 1*s.* per day; such as are employed in the harvest-field are engaged for the month, or at per week, and have their food found them.

What are their hours of work?—In winter from light to dark; at other times, except in harvest, from eight A.M. to six P.M.; in harvest they vary.

What is their usual diet, and what hours are they allowed for their meals?—Women in all cases, except as stated above, find their own provisions; fruit and meat pies, bacon, potatoes, and wheaten bread are the staple; the only meal taken when out at work is at noon; in harvest they have four meals in the day.

What are the effects of such employments on health?—The employments are healthy; young girls of 15 and upwards are seldom or ever employed; few of that age are disengaged as domestic servants.

Have they any in-door occupations?—They have no domestic employments, as spinning, plaiting, &c.

Can you tell me the proportion of females employed in out-door work compared with the total number in the parish?—Women are only occasionally employed in out-door work; I suppose they take it voluntarily, and cannot state the proportion to the total number in the parish.

Is there any difference in the rate of wages to the married and unmarried labourers?—I believe rather higher wages are given to married labourers, but, generally speaking, the ability of the labourer regulates the wages; but here it is necessary to observe that the term labourer bears, in this district, rather a different sense to what it does elsewhere; all yearly servants are boarded and lodged with the farmer; these are the chief, and vary in number from 5 to 20, according to the size of the farm; all other hands are hired from the married men in the village, and these are called labourers, each farmer employing several. Those engaged to thresh take their work at per quarter, and are seldom out of the barn; those engaged for general purposes are hired from Martinmas to May-day, for a certain sum, or at per week, besides which the farmer feeds them with his other servants, they receiving three good meals a-day. I should think the labourer, besides his food, is not now receiving less than 8s. 6d. per week, *i. e.*, on the average. At May-day weekly agreements are made till turnip-hoeing begins, and other take-work is ready. For harvest, wages are fixed by agreement, according as the man is employed; after harvest, they are engaged, either for a sum, or at per week, till the return of Martinmas.

N.B. Whatever the engagement be, the labourer has always his food—*three good meals per day*, except when at piece-work.

Have you any system of allotment in your parish?—The allotment system has not been tried in this parish.

What is the nature of your cottage accommodation, and what rent is paid for an average cottage?—I cannot state the exact number,—say about 50; their accommodations vary; some are four-roomed, others but two rooms, but on the whole they are far superior to the cottages in some villages; rent from 2*l.* to 4*l.* 4*s.* a-year.

What is the description of soil generally?—Light and sandy, but in some places approaching to a sort of clay; condition, pretty good.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children here go out to work?—About 12 years of age.

What do they learn before going to work?—They attend the school, either gratuitously or are put by their parents, in which they are taught as boys usually are.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in respectively?—A boy is first hired by a farmer to do little jobs about the house, such as serving pigs, cows, or stalled beasts, &c.; girls are readily hired as soon as they are old enough,—say 12 years, or thereabouts,—as household servants, where one or two besides are kept.

Do they work separately, or in gangs together?—There is no gang-work.

What wages do they in general earn?—A boy, at first going off, will re-

ceive from 20s. to 30s. a-year, a girl about the same; they are considered yearly household servants.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work?—Boys will sometimes be taken from school to scare birds from corn, &c., in the fields, for which they generally are paid at the rate of 6d. per day and their meat.

Is there any domestic employment, as plaiting, spinning, &c.?—Not any. Are parish apprentices common?—There are no parish apprentices.

Evidence of Mr. *James Little*, Clerk of the *Patrington Union*, Parish of *Patrington*.

WOMEN.

1. Little or no out-door work in the winter, but in the spring there is employment for the industrious in gathering twitch, and weeding on arable lands; in the summer and autumn making hay and reaping corn, and afterwards gleaning for themselves.

2. Spring 10d., hay-making 1s., corn-reaping 2s. per day.

3. From eight in the morning to six in the evening, subject to an hour for rest at noon; but the hours of labour are prolonged an hour or more in the hay and corn harvest.

4. Wheaten bread, milk, tea, potatoes and other vegetables, with a little animal food.

5. Seven to eight in the morning, dinner at noon, supper at six or seven in the evening.

6. The labour in the field is healthy, and leads to rest and repose, which tend to prevent immorality, and promote sobriety and virtue.

7. Partial employment in knitting and sewing.

8. The average of such earnings may be laid at from 2d. to 3d. per day.

9. Demoralizing.

10. None; but many cottagers have gardens, which are very beneficial to them, and it would be well if every cottager had a garden or allotment.

11. Maid-servants object to out-door work; married women in general gladly avail themselves of such employment.

12. About one in four of the able-bodied females in the population of this parish are employed in out-door work at the proper seasons.

13. Good workmen, that are married, have better returns in general for their labour than the unmarried; the former are more experienced, and often turn themselves to lump-work.

14. Nothing peculiar, except ague and slow fever, not attributable to any occupation.

General Questions.

1. Rent is from 3l. to 4l. per annum; in general the latter rent will embrace a small garden.

2. Some of them belong to the employers, but generally otherwise; a place for coal, &c., a day-room and bed-room, from 12 feet to 14 feet square, brick and tile, clean and comfortable, with a few exceptions.

3. Two years ago the rector's sister, Miss Kitchingman, instituted a clothing club with benefit to the needy depositors, from benefactions, and it has been well attended to, with great advantage to the parties. There are now 124 depositors.

4. The land is strong and sound, and of good produce.

CHILDREN.

1. From 9 years to 14 years, according to constitution of body and mind.

2. The boys have all an opportunity of learning to read, &c., at Sunday

schools on the National system, and many of them are taught writing and arithmetic on the week days, especially the boys in the Union workhouse.

The girls have the same opportunities, except that knitting and sewing must be substituted instead of writing and arithmetic. Seeing the ignorance that prevails amongst husbandry servants, one cannot but fear that early instruction is afterwards too little thought of, and therefore not kept up.

3. Boys in agricultural employment, except those whose parents are able to bind them to trades. Girls in domestic and agricultural work, chiefly in-door.

4. They work separately, in general; there may be instances of their weeding and twitching in small companies, but that is rare.

5. From morning, at eight to noon, and from one o'clock to six in the evening, varied a little according to the season of the year.

6. Wholesome and nutritious; wheaten bread, milk or tea, animal food, with potatoes or other vegetables.

7. Breakfast about eight; dinner at noon; third meal at six, or later, evening.

8. Conducive to health; agricultural pursuits more so than sitting trades.

9. Wages of stout boys and girls are to the amount of food and clothing; the younger and delicate are sometimes put out to a humane master or mistress, and have clothes given them by the Guardian of the Union.

10. In the summer and autumn months the stronger children are taken from school to earn something by work.

Mr. *Thomas Watson*, Land Agent, one of the Guardians, and a Practical Farmer, *Northallerton*.

WOMEN.

1. In the spring months, scaling and moulding the grass land, and preparing the ground for turnips, after the sowing of which they are engaged in hay-making. Then comes hoeing of turnips and harvesting, till the end of September; they then gather the potatoes as they are taken up. In the winter months they are not much employed out of doors; occasionally they pull a few turnips, and assist a little in the barn, when the threshing machine is at work.

2. 8*d.* or 9*d.* per day commonly. In hay-time 1*s.*, and in the harvest months from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.*, according to the demand for them.

3. From eight A.M. to five P.M.

4. Tea night and morning; bacon and potatoes, and sometimes shambles meat; a considerable quantity of milk is used, and in the fruit season they generally make their dinners of fruit pie and milk, and sometimes bread and cheese.

5. Breakfast before going to work; one hour for dinner, and tea or supper after work time.

6. No bad effects noticed from out-door labour. Girls do not go generally out to work; it is thought that out-door labour, with steady women, so far from injuring their morals, would be beneficial to them.

7. No in-door employment but washing and charring.

8. When engaged thus they have generally 1*s.* per day and their meat, commencing from four or five in the morning till seven in the evening.

9. Some attend better to their families, when not employed out of doors, while others gossip about.

10. There is a system of allotments on a small scale, but only of one year's standing. One acre is divided into six allotments, for one of which the rent is 10*s.* per annum, clear of all rates, tithes, &c., appreciated by and beneficial to the population; last year all the fields appropriated were not let;

this year there were more demands than could be satisfied; all work in in them,—men, women, and children. The soil is a light loam. The allotments are but short distances from the cottagers' dwellings.

Conditions of Allotment to the Poor of Northallerton.

is permitted by the Rev. T. B. Stuart, (Vicar of Northallerton), to occupy, as tenant at will, a plot of ground, No. at the rent of per annum, from Candlemas, 1841, on the terms and conditions hereunder mentioned, viz. :—

1st. Every occupier shall keep in good order and condition the fences, ditches, and drains pertaining to his plot of ground.

2nd. No occupier shall *sub-let* his plot of ground.

3rd. The land shall be cultivated by manual labour alone.

4th. No work shall be done on the said ground on Sundays.

5th. The rent shall be paid to Mr. Thomas Watson, the vicar's agent (without being asked for), by two equal half-yearly payments, on the 29th day of September, and the 25th day of March, in each year, or within ten days of the said date, the first half-yearly payment thereof to begin and be made on the 29th day of September next, after entering upon the said ground.

6th. The occupiers of the said ground shall abstain from encroachments or depredations on each other's property, theft, breach of the peace, profane language, drunkenness, or any gross immorality.

7th. On failure of any of these conditions, the Rev. T. B. Stuart, or his agent, shall be at liberty immediately to take and resume possession.

11. Out-door labour preferred in summer.

12. In the spring months not a quarter are employed; in hay-time almost all are.

13. The difference is according to the age and ability of the individual.

14. A little typhus fever; but by no means caused by the nature of their occupations.

CHILDREN.

1. Not before they are 13; but they are very little employed in this district before they go out to service.

2. If their parents can afford, they are sent to the National school (which is the case with most of them), but removed or kept away as soon as they can earn anything.

3. Boys occasionally drive the plough; but neither boys nor girls are much employed here previous to going to service.

4. In the hay-field and harvest-field they work in gangs, but being generally under the eye of the master, no particularly bad consequences are observed.

5. From eight A.M. to five P.M.

6. Diet: milk and tea, bacon, potatoes, and bread.

7. Breakfast before going to work, one hour for dinner.

8. Conducive to health.

9. Wages, from 4*d.* to 6*d.* per day.

10. There is no inclination to employ children, and so the parents' disposition in this respect is not put to the test. Most might go to school, if sent.

11. No such in-door employment.

12. They are running about, but many go to school.

13. They assist their parents: the elder by digging, the younger by weeding.

14. None recently.

Answers to General Questions.

1. Rents of cottages vary from 2*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* Some are as low as 30*s.*

2. A cottage rented at 4*l.* or 4*l.* 10*s.* will contain a good low room, with chamber above it, and some little conveniences, such as coal-house, &c. In the country villages a small garden is added. All the cottages in the town belonging to Lord Harewood and Miss Pearce are supplied with plots of garden-ground at a trifling rent.

3. A clothing club is just commenced.

N.B. The foregoing statement will apply generally with regard to women and children, to the agricultural villages adjacent to Northallerton, Brompton, Romanby, &c. At Brompton most of the children go to the National school, few or none being employed out of doors. They perhaps go out to glean in harvest; assist in the barn a little in winter, and now and then drive the horses in the plough; but this sort of employment is uncommon. Generally speaking, the poor in the neighbourhood are pretty well off, though some farmers have reduced the wages of the day-labourers, from 12*s.* to 10*s.* per week. Provisions are much cheaper.

Evidence of Mr. J. B. Bainton, Beverley.

WOMEN.

What sort of labour, if any, in each month?—Weeding corn, March, April, and May; hay-making, June and July; harvesting, August, September, and October.

What are their wages?—8*d.* per day.

What are their hours of work?—From eight in the morning to six in the evening.

What is their diet usually?—Cakes, with probably a small quantity of animal food.

What are their meal hours when at work?—Seven, morning; 12 at noon, dinner; six, evening, supper.

What are the effects of employment generally, and especially of out-door labour, on the manners and morals of girls of 15 and upwards?—Healthy, and more bold than those employed in in-door.

Effects, moral and social, of no out-door employment, or of any regular domestic occupation?—More domesticated and modest.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—It is believed not.

Is there any allotment system?—To a very small extent.

What is the rent of a cottage?—From 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*, the average probably about 3*l.* 10*s.*

What is the nature of cottage accommodation, number, and size of rooms, &c.?—Generally two rooms, averaging about 12 feet square.

Have you any benefit or clothing clubs; are they commonly entered into; are they on the increase, or remain stationary?—Very little, and on the decrease.

Nature of the soil, and condition of land in your neighbourhood?—Every variety, but principally clay.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do they go out to work?—At 10 or 11 years old.

What do they learn before going out to work; is it kept up, or forgotten?—To read, knit, and sew; the first very frequently forgotten.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in?—Weeding, hay-making, and harvesting.

Do they work separately or together; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—Chiefly together, and in company with some elderly persons.

What are their hours of work?—From eight in the morning to six in the evening.

What is their usual diet?—Animal food.

What are their meal hours during work?—Breakfast seven o'clock, dinner 12, supper six.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Very good.

What wages are they paid?—Under 15 years, for their meat.

Are they kept at school, or taken away when they can get work?—Sent to work as soon as they are able to earn anything.

Are parish apprentices common; if so, about how many annually?—Very few.

What premiums are paid?—From 2*l.* to 8*l.*

Do they receive any wages from the masters?—Generally none.

How are they treated?—Generally as part of the family.

Evidence of Mr. *George Wray*, of *Kenningham*, in *Ottringham*, a Guardian, *Patrington Union*.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of labour women are employed in?—In the spring months they are employed in weeding, which lasts perhaps six weeks, after which they work in the hay-field; and in harvest-time the men take work, and their wives assist them. In the winter season there is little out-door work for women; they are now and then engaged in pulling turnips, as well as when the threshing machine is at work.

What are their wages?—Earnings from 10*d.* to 1*s.* per day.

What are their hours of work?—They work from 8 A.M. to 6 P.M. in summer; in winter not later than $\frac{1}{2}$ past 4 P.M.

What is their usual diet and meal hours when at work?—Tea, coffee, bread and butter, and a fair proportion of shambles meat; they breakfast before going to work, and are allowed one hour for dinner, from 12 to 1.

What are the effects of such employment on the health and morals of girls of 15 and upwards?—Girls of that age are not often employed out of door in Holderness. If there is no employment, children above the age of 13 are taken into the workhouse, till they go out to service.

Is there any allotment system in this parish?—None in Ottringham, but there is in some of the adjacent places.

Is work agreeable or not; out-door preferred to in-door?—Women are glad to get out-door when an opportunity offers.

What do you consider to be the proportion of females employed in out-door work, compared to total number in parish?—All that are able to get out are employed in the spring, as well as in hay-time and harvest.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married and unmarried labourers?—There are no single labourers; unmarried men all go to live out by the year.

What are the general rents of cottages?—They vary from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* per annum.

What is the nature of your cottage accommodation?—In a cottage rented at 2*l.* 10*s.*, there will be a low room and kitchen, with chambers above, and those pretty good; rents rise to 4*l.*, in proportion to the quantity of land annexed as garden-ground.

Have you any clothing clubs?—Not any.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do children go out to work?—When 10 years old, they begin to go out to weed with their mothers.

What do they learn before going out to work?—There are good opportunities for charity education, or for the children of the poor obtaining a pretty good education at a trifling cost; they generally go to the Sunday school, and to a day school, where they learn to read, &c., before they are 10 years old.

What sort of work do they generally do?—Weeding in spring, and making bands in harvest-time.

Do they generally work together or separately?—Generally together with their mothers, and if not, under the eye of a man who superintends them.

What are their hours of work, diet, and meal hours?—The same as their mothers.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—Decidedly conducive to health.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work?—As soon as ever they are able, they are sent out to work, taken from school for that purpose, and parents would look more at anything their children might earn than at any benefit they might derive from going to school.

Are parish apprentices common?—There are no parish apprentices.

Humbleton, in the Patrington Union.

The following is an extract of a letter from Mr. Dunn:—

Here there is more employment for women than there are hands, but the women are not, generally speaking, willing to go out to work; their wages are never less than 1s. a-day; perhaps many would not turn out for 1s. 6d. In harvest-time a woman expects 2s. 3d. or 2s. 6d. a-day; girls of the age of 15 go out to service, but out-door employment for such is not productive of bad effects either on the health or morals, rather the contrary; both as regards parents and children, out-door work is not preferred in Humbleton, for not more than three in the parish go regularly out, though there is employment for all, if they would go out. There is a difference in the wages to married and single; a man with a family is allowed more than a single man, in proportion to his family. There are not any allotments, but most of the cottages in Humbleton, belonging to Lord Hotham, are let very advantageously to the poor; many cottages have one acre, and some as much as two acres of land attached to them. A common cottage with one acre lets for 2l. 10s. or 3l. per annum; if there are two acres of land, the same sized house will be let for 4l. There is a clothing club on a small scale, and many of the hardest working families avail themselves of it.

Children go out to work when about 10 years old, and before they go they do not learn much more than what is acquired at the Sunday school; the poor here have good opportunities for educating their children at a trifling cost, but few avail themselves of the means, and keep their children at home; parents are not willing to send their children to a National school, because the education is almost free, and they have an idea that charitable education is good for nothing. Boys are employed in weeding, girls not, and earn 6d. a-day, or their meat, which they please; boys are employed in driving machine horses, and harrowing; as soon as they are able, girls go out to service; women, boys, and girls, all work together, but a man generally superintends them; as soon as they are capable of earning anything, they are taken from school, but when not employed out of doors, or away from school, they are doing nothing.

At Humbleton, there is a fund set apart for binding out apprentices, vested in certain trustees; 10l. is allowed for every boy, and either 7l. or 10l. for every girl that wishes to be bound out, to learn any business, subject of

course to the approval of the trustees; no wages are given by the masters; and the boys, generally speaking, are treated well. There has been only one cause of complaint this year, and in that case a boy absconded, and took with him some of his master's property.

There is a free school at Humbleton.

The wages to men are regulated by the price of flour, one stone per day being the rate after which they are paid.

Evidence of Mr. Christopher Sykes, Roos, near Patrington, Holderness.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women in each month in your parish?—From November to April, the general employment of the women is assisting in the threshing machine, and in drawing the wheat straw, after the corn is threshed out, to be tied up in loggings for the use of the stables. In the spring months the out-door work is in gathering and raking, and burning the quick grass after the harrows on the land, preparing for turnips and potatoes, in picking up the stones on grass land, in setting potatoes, and stubbing up stubbles and weeds growing in the wheat and spring corn, in putting in manure in the turnip drill-husbandry. This work, and others of a similar nature, occupy them till the cutting of red clover and the grass crops, which in this country commences about the beginning of July; after this the harvest commences; as most of the wheat in Holderness is sheaved, the women assist their husbands in cutting, and the children make the bands. In mowing oats, the same in raking after the scythe, and also in cutting beans; this generally takes place in September and October,—I mean the bean harvest; the women and children, when not employed, go out to glean.

What wages do they earn?—Wages in winter and spring 10*d.* a-day, in hay-time 1*s.*; the sheaving wheat averages from 9*s.* to 11*s.* per acre; oats from 5*s.* to 6*s.*; a man and his wife, and two children from 8 to 12 years of age, will earn about 6*s.* a-day in sheaving oats, and beans about 5*s.*

What are their hours of work?—From half-past eight to twelve morning, one to six evening.

What is their usual diet?—They breakfast either on tea or coffee, and bread made into cakes, and butter; the dinner, bread-cake and potatoes, or apple pies, bacon, and mutton seldom, only in harvest, when their wages will afford it; supper, tea or coffee, and milk when those that do not keep a cow can procure it.

What are their meal hours when at work?—Breakfast at eight, dinner at twelve, supper six or seven.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—I should say beneficial to health, as most of the women that have been accustomed to out-door work live to great ages.

Have they any in-door occupations?—No domestic employment, except sewing, and knitting stockings for their husbands and children.

What can they earn from it?—No earnings from the above, except dress-makers, who earn about 1*s.* 6*d.* per day; and if they go out to work 1*s.* a-day and their meat.

Is there any allotment system in your neighbourhood?—No allotment system in Holderness, except at Sigglesthorne; the farmers in many instances allow their labourers a small piece of land to grow potatoes, and many of the cottagers have gardens attached to their houses.

Is work agreeable; out-door preferred to in-door?—I should say out-door work is preferred, and also agreeable to them, from the frequent applications for work.

Can you tell the proportion of females employed in out-door work, com-

pared to total number in the parish?—In spring and summer months almost all go out to work, excepting the aged, and those who have children at the breast.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—No difference in point of wages between married and unmarried; of the latter there are few, as most of the young women are in farmers' service.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children go out to work?—From 10 to 14 years.

What do they learn before going out to work?—They generally go to village schools.

What sorts of work are boys and girls employed in?—A girl at 12 years generally goes into a farmer's service to take care of his children, at 14 is hired as an under-girl, and so on till she learns to be an upper servant; the boys at 10 are generally employed in tending the corn from the birds; in the autumn tending pigs on the stubbles; at 12 or 13 get into farmers' service.

Do boys and girls work separately or together; if the latter, do any bad consequences arise from it?—They work together, but no evil consequences arise from it, as the parents are in general present.

What are their hours of work?—From 8 till 12 morning, and 1 to 6 evening; in farmers' service, in winter, from 7 to 12, breakfast included; from 1 to 6 evening; in summer and autumn, from 5 till 12, and from 1 till 7.

What is their usual diet and meal hours when at work?—If not hired, they live with their parents; if hired, meat, bread and milk for breakfast at 8 o'clock; dinner at 12, meat and bacon pies; supper at 7, bread and milk, and apple pies and meat.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—No children are more healthy than boys and girls in farmers' service.

What wages do the children earn?—Boys tending birds and pigs 6*d.* per day; when they go into service, at 12 years of age, the first year their meat, the second, about 30*s.* wages, the third year about 2*l.*, and go on increasing, according to their abilities and strength; a good plough-boy will get about 6*l.* wages, or nearly 8*l.* A girl that has been five years in place, and can milk, will get about 6*l.* or 7*l.* wages.

Are they taken from school to work, or kept there when they might be employed?—Boys are generally taken from school when they can be employed, and can earn anything, and return to school when not employed.

Is there any domestic employment?—No domestic employment, except sewing and knitting for the girls.

Are parish apprentices common, about how many annually, and to what trades?—Parish apprentices are not common, excepting when a boy is not strong enough, and will not be able to gain a livelihood by out-door labour; then they are generally put to shoemakers and tailors.

What premiums are given with them?—From 5*l.* to 10*l.*

Do they receive any wages from their masters?—No; except perhaps the last year or two.

How are they treated?—Generally very well.

Evidence of Mr. *England*, Clerk; Mr. *Carter*, Vice-Chairman; and Mr. *Duckley*, Farmer, *Howden Union*.

WOMEN.

What sort of out-door labour for women in each month?—From Lady-day to Midsummer the out-door work for women is weeding, moulding, and potato-picking; from Midsummer to Michaelmas, flax pulling and spread-

ing, and harvesting; from Michaelmas to Christmas, potato gathering and sorting; in winter no general employment.

What wages do they earn?—In spring from 8*d.* to 10*d.*; in summer 1*s.* per day.

What are their hours of work?—They work from eight A.M. till dark in winter, and at other times from eight to six.

What is their usual diet?—They subsist principally on bread, potatoes, and a fair proportion of fresh meat (bacon frequently); tea and coffee to breakfast, and tea in the evening.

What are their meal hours when at work?—They are allowed one hour for dinner, from 12 to 1 o'clock.

What are the effects of such employment on the health and morals of girls of 15 and upwards?—The effects are healthy, and not detrimental to the morals.

Have they any in-door occupations?—None.

Is there any allotment system in your neighbourhood; if so, what are the effects on the condition of the families?—The allotment system has been adopted on a small scale at Howden, but is not general in the neighbourhood. The labourers who have allotments at Howden have shown considerable industry, and cultivate them with the spade as gardens. The extent of each is one rood, and they are all situated near the town; the rent is 1*l.* per year, regularly paid, and the soil is good.

Is work agreeable or not, out-door preferred to in-door, and why?—The women prefer in-door work, but in-door work is very scarce.

What is the proportion of females employed in out-door work to total number in parish?—A very small proportion.

Is there any difference in the rate of wages to married and unmarried?—The wages to unmarried women, as labourers, are the same as to married; but wages to single women, as domestic servants, are greater than the earnings of married women.

Is there any particular disease prevalent in your parish?—There is no particular disease more prevalent than another; the neighbourhood is generally healthy.

What is the rent of an average cottage?—Rent of cottages vary from 3*l.* to 5*l.*

What is the nature of your cottage accommodation?—The smaller cottages have a house and parlour on the ground floor, or a house and bedroom. The latter sort of houses will have a house and small kitchen, and two rooms up stairs.

Are there any benefit or clothing clubs?—There are no clothing clubs, and only one registered benefit club, the members of which are about stationary, from the formation of other clubs, in the nature of friendly societies, the rules of which are not enrolled. These clubs are on the increase, and eagerly entered into.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children here go out to work?—They go out to work when 10 years old.

What do they learn before going out to work?—Most learn to read and write before going out; if not, it is not from want of opportunities to acquire such knowledge.

What sort of work are they generally employed at?—Much the same as the women.

Do they work separately or together; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—Generally with their parents, and then no bad consequences.

What are their hours of work, diet, meal hours, and effects of such employment?—Much the same as their parents.

What do they earn?—Average wages 5*d.* a-day

Are they kept at school when they might be earning something by work?—It depends on circumstances, on the character of their parents, and their anxiety to procure education for their children.

Is there any domestic employment?—None.

Then what do they do when not at school, or employed out of doors?—Running about, and getting into mischief.

Are parish apprentices common?—Parish apprentices are nearly obsolete; there has been only one instance, in four parishes, in six years.

There is a free school at Howden for 14, and a good National school.

In addition to the foregoing information under No. 1, respecting employment of women; in the winter months they are preparing the potatoes for shipping, and putting them on board vessels at Goole for exportation, and 1s. per day is allowed them when potato-gathering. Most of the poor are able to keep a pig. Women are glad to get out, and girls of 15 prefer, in some instances, going out to work to going to service.

Rents of cottages vary from 2*l.* to 4*l.*; old low cottages, with two rooms on the ground-floor, let for 2*l.* now; most are with two rooms below, and two over them, for 4*l.* per annum.

Children work gathering potatoes as young as eight years; one woman perhaps will take her three children with her to gather potatoes, in doing which they will earn from 4*d.* to 6*d.* per day, according to age. They are taken from school as soon as they can earn anything. They are kept most at school in winter, and in summer nearly all are out in the fields. They work with their mothers; and if a gang of boys and girls are out together, they are generally under the eye of a superior, and consequently the system is attended with no particular bad effects.

School at the Church.

At present 51 boys and a few girls; the latter go principally to learn to write; 10 of the boys are educated at the expense of Mr. Reschell, of Reed House, by the vicar. In the summer months, owing to the children going out to work in the fields, the number does not often exceed 25, and that perhaps is the case from April to October. One month's holidays in harvest, to enable them to go out to work in the fields; the 25 who attend are generally the very youngest children, who are not capable of doing anything; but as soon as ever boys or girls are capable of earning anything, they are taken from school. There is no National school; the people seem to be prejudiced against education as a charity, and would rather send their children where something is paid. After leaving school, boys and girls mostly go out to service. If the parents are pretty well off, the girls are kept at home, and do nothing; nothing taught before going to school.

There is a girls' school, in which there are near 30 girls, 20 of whom, Miss Aullestand of Hales pays for. The numbers in the school generally fall off about one-half in the months from girls going out in the fields; they leave school, and go to service; taught at school to read and spell, plain sewing, and marking, and some afterwards go to a master to learn to write. Parents teach them nothing before going to school.

Evidence of Mr. J. Wilson, Clerk of the Goole Union.

WOMEN.

What sort of out-door labour are women employed in in each month?—From January to April, dressing potatoes for London market, &c.; from

April to June, planting potatoes; from June to October, weeding, hay-making, harvesting, &c.; from October to January, dressing the potatoes and gathering them.

What wages do they get?—From January to wheat-harvest 9*d.* per day, during harvest 2*s.*, from October to December 1*s.* per day and three pecks of potatoes per week, in December 9*d.* (for those from 10 to 60 years).

What are their hours of work?—Nine hours, and three extra during wheat-harvest.

What is their usual diet?—Flesh, fruit pies, bread and cheese, tea, &c.

What are their meal hours when at work?—One hour at dinner.

What are the effects of such employment on the health and morals?—Good in general in all respects.

Have they any in-door occupations?

Is work agreeable or not, out-door preferred to in-door, or *vice versa*, and why?—Agricultural out-door work preferred on account of health.

What proportion of females are employed in out-door work, compared to the total number in the parish?—All employed who are willing to work, in this and the neighbouring townships.

Is any difference made in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—Not any.

What is the average rent of cottages?—About 4*l.* per annum.

What is the general accommodation?—Two low rooms, one 14 feet by 15 feet, and one 6 feet by 6 feet, and two bed-rooms above.

Have you any clothing or benefit clubs?—Yes; I consider them of great benefit.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children go out to work?—At about 8 years old.

Do they learn anything before going to work?—Reading, sewing, knitting, and some writing, kept up in general by attending Sunday schools.

What sort of work are they generally employed in?—Agricultural occupations, such as hand-weeding, planting potatoes, clearing them through the summer, taking them up during the autumn, and picking them for the London market during the winter.

Do they work together or separately?—Together, without any injurious consequences.

What are the hours of work?—Nine hours.

What their diet and meal hours when at work?—Flesh, fruit pies, bread and cheese, tea, &c., with one hour for dinner.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Good.

What wages do they earn?—6*d.* in summer, 1*s.* in autumn, and 6*d.* in winter on the average, for those of from eight to ten years old.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they may earn something?—Generally at school when not employed.

Is there any domestic employment?—None.

Are parish apprentices common?—There are no parish apprentices.

Evidence of Rev. *Francis Lundy*, Rector, Parish of *Lockington*.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women in each month?—In spring, weeding and hoeing corn; in summer, clearing turnips, hay-making, &c.; in the autumn, harvest-work; in the winter months, gathering stones from the land, and pulling turnips in open weather.

What wages do they earn?—From 10*d.* to 1*s.* per day, excepting harvest, when the rate is about 2*s.*

What are their hours of work?—From eight A.M. to six P.M., harvest-time excepted, when of course they work longer.

What is their usual diet?—They provide their own diet, except in harvest-when they very generally have their meals at the farmer's.

What are their meal hours when at work?—One hour for dinner.

What are the effects of such employment on the manners and morals of girls of 15 and upwards?—No particular effects; it is only seldom that a girl of 15 and upwards is ever at out-door work, being in yearly service before that age.

Have they any in-door occupation, as spinning, &c.?—Nothing of the kind.

Is there any allotment?—None.

Is out-door work preferred to in-door, and why?—There is no in-door work, except the care of their families.

What is the proportion of females employed in out-door labour compared to the total number in the parish?—Most of the labourers' wives, when able, and not incapacitated from age, go to out-door work when wanted.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married and unmarried labourers?—There are very few, if any, unmarried labourers in this parish.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do they go to work?—At 10 or 12 years.

What do they learn before going to work?—There is a National school in the village, which the children attend when not at out-door work.

What sort of work are they employed in?—Boys to tend birds from the corn, &c., and they and the girls plant potatoes, assist in hoeing turnips, gathering stones, and any other husbandry work they may be wanted for.

Do they work separately or together; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—They work together without bad consequences.

What are their hours of work?—From eight A.M. to 6 P.M.

What is their usual diet and meal hours?—The same as the women.

What are the effects of employment?—No ill effects.

What wages do they earn?—From 6*d.* and upwards per day, according to size.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might be earning something?—If any out-door work can be had, taken from school to do it.

Is there any domestic employment, as spinning, &c.?—None.

If not, what do they do when not at school or employed out of doors?—When not at school, they are idle, but very few such.

Are parish apprentices common?—None of late years.

What is the rent of an average cottage?—From 3*l.* 3*s.* upwards, according to the size of garden and orchard, or having a cow-gate or not, of which there are 20, in cottage pasture belonging to Lord Hotham.

What is the nature of the cottage accommodation?—Some cottages are of the old fashion, clay walls and thatched, with two or three large old rooms; the modern ones, brick and tile, generally consist of one or two rooms about 14 feet square, rooms over, with pantry and a slope behind.

Is there any clothing or benefit clubs; if so, are they eagerly entered; on the increase, or do they remain stationary?—Many of my parishioners belong to an old established benefit club in the neighbourhood, called the "Etton Club." A Foresters' Court has been lately instituted in the parish; both the above are prospering and on the increase; a few years ago my wife and daughters commenced a clothing club, which the cottagers consider advantageous to them.

What is the general character of the soil?—A clayey loam, well cultivated,

and a considerable quantity of old grass land, of a moderate quality, which would produce much more food for man, as well as rent to the landlord, if under the plough.

Evidence of Mr. *Smith, Bridlington.*

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women, in each month, in your parish?—From December to the end of March pulling turnips for cattle, and dragging turnips in the sheepfold; from thence till harvest, hoeing corn, putting manure into the turnip-drills, and making hay; a month or six weeks at harvest-work; some few are employed in preparing straw for thatching the corn-stacks.

What wages do they get?—Till harvest 9*d.* to 1*s.*, in harvest 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* per day for a month, and victuals.

What are their hours of work?—From eight o'clock in the morning till six o'clock in the evening; in harvest from six in the morning till seven in the evening.

What is their usual diet, and what hours are they allowed themselves for their meals?—When employed at 9*d.* or 1*s.* per day, dinner is the only meal they eat in the field; but if near the farm-house they generally have, on certain days, broth given them to a little seed-cake or bread, which they bring with them; sometimes the cake, with bacon inside; some will have an apple pie with the same paste as the cake; tea or coffee morning and evening, before going and after returning from work; they provide their own victuals when employed at 9*d.* or 1*s.* per day; at harvest time they board with the farmer. Breakfast at six, before going into the field, luncheon at ten, one hour for dinner (from 12 to 1), and a luncheon again at four, including one pint of ale each; supper at seven. There are a certain number who work the great, or, as we call it here, by-take, that is, without board, but the meal hours are the same.

What are the effects of such employment on health, especially girls?—An improvement in their health is always observable, and readily admitted by themselves; very few girls are employed in out-door work; there does not appear to be any ill effects on the manners or morals of those so employed.

Have they any in-door employments, as spinning and plaiting?—Spinning is wholly done away with, and plaiting is not practised.

Is there any allotment system in your neighbourhood?—There are none yet in full working in the Bridlington Union.

Is out-door labour preferred to in-door, and why?—Out-door employment preferred, the hours of labour being shorter.

Can you tell me the proportion of females employed, compared with the total number in the parish?—The greatest proportion are desirous of working when an opportunity offers, and generally willing, unless confined at home by young children; till married, the young women are in yearly service.

What is the rent of an average cottage?—From 30*s.* to 80*s.*, but more frequently from 60*s.* to 63*s.*

What is the nature of your cottage accommodation?—The old cottages afford but little comfort to the inmates, having but one living and one sleeping-room above, which they enter by a ladder; varies in size from 10 feet square to 16 by 26 or more; walls about seven feet high, in some cases with a few loose boards on the joists to hide the roof. Cottage accommodation is generally very poor, and ill adapted to the wants of a family, even in those more recently built; the living-room is 12 feet by 11

to 13, with a lean-to for the back kitchen, with two small lodging-rooms up stairs, one above the back kitchen.

Have you any clothing and benefit clubs?—There are a great many benefit clubs, but not many clothing clubs, but the latter are on the increase; there is one at Hambrough, under the kind superintendence of the Misses Creyke, of Marton, which is highly valued by the contributors.

What is the nature of the soil?—Chalky, gravelly, some clay, and a small portion of moor; with a few exceptions, adapted to the four-course husbandry.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children here go to work?—From 9 to 10 years old.

What do they learn before going out to work; do they retain it or forget it?—Boys learn reading, writing, and arithmetic; girls do the same, also knitting and sewing; in some cases it is not kept up, but forgotten, but generally it is much valued; it much depends upon the families they get into whether reading is practised or not.

What work are boys and girls employed in generally?—Boys in weeding corn, and girls likewise; also both are employed at harvest-work to make bands for the sheaves; some keep them at home to glean at harvest.

Do any bad consequences result from their working together?—No, they being very young, and under some overlooker; both boys and girls go to service as soon as a place can be had for them.

What are their hours of work?—From eight o'clock till six in the evening.

What is their usual diet and meal hours?—Same as the women.

What are the effects of their employment on health?—Beneficial, this being purely an agricultural district.

What wages are the children paid?—Both boys and girls 6*d.* per day, without victuals.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work?—The poorer children are taken from school to work; those in better circumstances will keep them at school when work can be had, but generally there is a disposition in their parents to allow them to work when an opportunity offers.

Is there any domestic employment, as plaiting, spinning, &c.?—Spinning is out of use here, and plaiting is unknown.

What do they do when not at school or employed out of doors?—Knitting and sewing.

Have you any allotments?—Where allotments exist the children weed, but they are as yet a rare sight.

Evidence of a Farmer whom I called upon, *Alwick*, near *Hornsea*.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour in each month?—In the spring months weeding corn; summer, hay-making, and after that harvesting; in the winter months there is little employment for women, except where a threshing-machine is at work, and occasionally a little turnip-pulling.

What wages are they paid?—10*d.* per day generally, hay-time 1*s.*, harvest 2*s.* 6*d.*

What are their hours of work?—From seven to seven in harvest, from light to dark at other times.

What is their usual diet and meal hours?—Tea, coffee, milk, and flour, and, as many kill or buy a pig, in the winter they live on the bacon, and purchase a fair proportion of fresh meat every week; they live a great deal on fruit pies in the summer; they have one hour to dinner.

What are the effects of such employment on the morals of girls of 15 years and upwards?—Girls of that age are not often employed out of doors, but are out at service.

Are there any allotments in your parish?—not any.

Do they prefer out-door work to in-door?—Women prefer out-door when to be had.

Can you tell the proportion of females employed in out-door work compared to total number in parish?—In hay-time and harvest nearly all that are able get employed, at other times about one-third.

Is any difference made in the rate of wages to married and unmarried?—Unmarried men and women, employed as day labourers, receive the same wages as married, if they are able to do the same work.

What is the rent of an average cottage?—They vary from 2*l.* to 4*l.* per annum.

What is their cottage accommodation, and how many and what sized rooms?—In a cottage rented at 2*l.* there will be two rooms below (mostly small), and one good chamber over them; a somewhat better cottage, with a piece of garden-ground, lets for about 4*l.*; there are some old cottages, belonging to the parish, into which the poor, who are incapable (from having large families) of paying rent, and some widows, are admitted at the mere nominal rent of 7*s.* per annum.

Have you any clothing clubs?—No such clubs.

What is the nature of the soil?—A strong clay soil, and condition of land good.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children go out to work?—As soon as they are capable of weeding they go out with their mothers, and begin when about 8 years of age.

What do they learn before going out to work?—They go to school till about 12 years of age, and are taken away previous to that age if there is out-door employment, if not they continue at school.

What sorts of work are boys and girls employed in?—Picking couch, both boys and girls, and making bands in harvest, after which they glean, by which a family will sometimes gather 12 bushels of wheat, some more, some less, according to size of families; boys also tend the pigs in the stubbles.

Do they work separately or together?—Sometimes 20 together, but a man always goes with them and superintends them.

What are their hours of work, diet, and meal hours?—The same as the women.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Conducive to health.

What wages do the children earn?—From 4*d.* to 7*d.*, according to age.

Are they taken from school to earn anything by work, or kept there though they might earn something?—Generally taken from school when an opportunity for earning anything occurs; but from Martinmas to May-day they are kept close at school; in short they are generally at school when not employed out of doors.

Is there any domestic employment, as spinning, &c.?—None.

Are parish apprentices numerous?—There are no parish apprentices.

Evidence of Rev. John Browne, Alwick, near Hornsea.

As to wages, &c., women get 1*s.* a-day and their meat for working at the threshing machine; there is little work, however, for women and children. Mr. Browne objected strongly to the system of "meating," as it is

called, the labourers, and denounced it as pregnant with evil. There are two charities in the village, which go to support a school; the surplus money is expended in binding boys parish apprentices, with premiums of 5*l.*, 7*l.*, or even 10*l.*; a month in harvest is excepted out of the year, and the wages earned are divided between the master and his apprentice.

Evidence of the Rev. *John Welhams*, *Siggleshorn*, near *Hornsea*.

Wages as at Alwick, Patrington, &c.; hardly any work for women; the children are taken away from school occasionally to tend birds, &c.; the women can earn as much, with their families, by gleaning as they can in harvest.

The rector, the Rev. William Bentinck, has taken great pains with this parish; the people are well educated, and the establishment of a lending library has given a taste for knowledge. He has also tried the allotment system; and 26 roods of land are let to 26 labourers, at 8*s.* a rood, with great success, as the farmer somewhat grudgingly and jealously admitted.

Evidence of the Clergyman, *Tickhill*.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women in each month?—Pulling peas, planting potatoes, and harvesting; only employed during the summer and early autumn months.

What wages do they get?—From 10*d.* to 1*s.*; 1*s.* 6*d.* in harvest time.

What are their hours of work?—From half-past seven to six; in harvest from six to six.

What is their usual diet, and what hours are they allowed for meals?—Tea generally, sugar, potatoes, and frequently bacon, bread; from 12 to 1 for dinner.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—The girls from the age of 12 and upwards go to service in farmers' houses, and are never employed out of doors.

Work agreeable or not, out-door preferred to in-door, and why?—They like work when they can get it.

What proportion of females are employed in out-door work compared to the total number in parish?—No definite answers can be given, it is so uncertain.

What is the rent of an average cottage?—From 3*l.* to 6*l.* per annum.

What is the nature of your cottage accommodation?—Generally good and comfortable; from two to three rooms.

Have you any clothing or benefit clubs?—A clothing club, sick clubs, and funeral clubs, and generally much liked and well filled.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children here go out to work?—From 6 years old for tending, and from 8 for general work.

What do they learn before going to work; do they keep it up or forget it?—A little learnt at the infant school, and tolerably well forgotten.

What sorts of work are boys and girls employed in?—Girls comparatively very little employed; boys tenting, dibbling, harvesting.

What are their hours of work?—From eight to six.

What is their usual diet and meal hours?—Bread, potatoes, and the washing out of their mother's teapot, no sugar; from 12 to 1 for dinner.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—Very good.

What wages do children earn?—From 4*d.* to 10*d.*, according to age and work.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work?—Always taken from school when there is a hope of earning anything; very often not sent back at all.

Is there any domestic employment, as plaiting, &c.?—None.

What do they do when not at school or employed out of doors?—Every mischief under the sun, including slides on the foot-paths, throwing stones at carriages, breaking trees, &c.

Are parish apprentices common?—Uncommon; scarcely any.

Evidence of Mr. *Benjamin Robinson, Rotherham.*

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women in each month?—Few or none are engaged in any other than agricultural employments; in spring and autumn in clearing the land; in summer in the hay and corn harvests, and in winter in gathering turnips.

What wages do they earn?—When by the day the average is 9*d.*, but during the harvest and turnip season the work is commonly let to them, when they can earn more than when by the day.

What are their hours of work?—From eight A.M. to six P.M. in summer, and from eight A.M. to four P.M. in the winter.

What does their diet chiefly consist of?—Tolerably nourishing animal food several times a week, during harvest-time a little ale is allowed.

What are their meal-hours when at work?—One hour for dinner, twelve o'clock, but usually rest a short time in the morning and afternoon, during which time they indulge in the use of tobacco.

What are the effects of such employment on the health and morals, especially of girls of 15 and upwards?—There are so few girls engaged in agricultural occupations about or above that period as to render us unable to make any reply, as they are generally employed in domestic service. In the manufacturing district here they are employed in the flax-mills and potteries, and those more particularly connected with flax-mills become demoralized.

Have they any in-door occupations, as spinning, plaiting, &c.?—There is no employment of that character here at present.

Have you any allotments?—There are no allotments in this district.

Is work agreeable or not, out-door preferred to in-door, or *vice versa*, and why?—We have no in-door work, except charing, and that preferred in consequence of getting more wages, as well as victuals.

Can you tell the proportion of females employed in out-door work, compared to the total number in the parish?—The whole of the females who can conveniently leave their families are employed in out-door work.

Is there any difference in the rate of wages to married and unmarried?—No difference.

What are the rents of cottages?—In the agricultural districts from 3*l.* to 5*l.*, in the towns and manufacturing districts from 4*l.* to 9*l.* per annum.

What is the nature of your cottage accommodation?—Generally good, except those occupied by paupers.

Have you any benefit or clothing clubs?—They generally avail themselves of such societies.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do they go out to work?—Rarely before 12 years.

What do they learn before going out to work?—Reading and writing, with the common rudiments of arithmetic: it is feared they do not keep it up.

What sorts of work are they employed in?—The boys in the farm-yards; the girls seldom engaged. In the town and manufacturing district the boys are employed in the potteries.

Do they work separately or together?—Generally along with persons of more advanced years.

What their diet, meal-hours, and effects of employment?—Much the same as the women.

What wages are they paid?—6*d.* per day in agriculture, in manufacturing considerably more.

Are they taken from school to work, or kept there though they might be at work?—Frequently taken from school when work is to be had.

Is there any domestic employment, as spinning, &c.?—Not any.

Are parish apprentices common; if so, to what trades?—Very few since the operation of the New Poor Law; frequently to colliers, shoemakers, and tailors; most to the former.

Are any premiums given?—No.

Do the masters pay them any wages?—No.

How are they treated?—Tolerably well.

Evidence of the Rev. Mr. Fullerton, *Thybergh.*

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women in each month?—Out-door labour, spring and summer, hay-harvest and corn-harvest.

What wages are they paid?—10*d.* a-day in spring, 1*s.* 4*d.* hay-harvest, corn-cutting taken by acre.

What are their hours of work?—Twelve hours.

What is the usual diet and meal hours?—Bread, bacon, and potatoes. Half an hour to breakfast and one hour to dinner.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—Healthy: none injurious.

Have they any in-door occupations?—None.

Is there any allotment system in your neighbourhood?—No: almost all cottages have gardens.

Can you tell me the proportion of females employed in out-door work compared to the total number in the parish?—One-half go out to harvest.

Is there any difference in the rate of wages to married and unmarried?—No difference.

What is the rent of an average cottage?—About 2*l.* 12*s.* per annum.

What is the nature of your cottage accommodations?—Two bed-rooms upstairs, kitchen and pantry below.

Are there any clothing clubs?—No.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children here go out to work?—Seven years old.

What do they learn before going out to work?—Reading and writing.

What description of work are boys and girls employed in?—Boys in tending birds.

What are their hours of work?—From six to six.

What are their usual diet and meal-hours?—Bread, pudding, cheese, meat, pie, &c. No regular meal hours.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—Very good.

What wages do the children earn?—6*d.* per day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work?—Taken from school.

Is there any domestic employment, as spinning, &c.?—Not any.

Are parish apprentices common; if so, to what trades?—Uncommon; if any, with carpenters or tailors.

What premiums are given?—Ten pounds for a carpenter.
How are they treated?—Very well.

Evidence of Mr. *W. Balderston, Sedbusk, near Hawes.*

Extract of Letter, dated 13th January, 1843, from Mr. *W. Balderston* to Sir *F. H. Doyle.*

DEAR SIR,—I am extremely sorry that I was from home when you were in this neighbourhood, and only received your letter this day with the questions (respecting women and children) enclosed; to which I shall be very happy, as far as I am able, to return answers. The population of the chapelry of Lunds, I believe, is less than 100 souls; and the only regular employment the women or children follow is that of knitting stockings, jackets, caps, &c.

1. The only out-door employment is that of hay-making (for about a month after Midsummer).

2. 3. Women cannot earn more than 6*d.* a-day in knitting, although they are employed from 10 to 12 hours.

4. The poorer class subsist chiefly on oat-bread and milk, which they buy of the neighbouring farms.

6. 7. The women are, generally speaking, industrious and moral.

9. The daughters of the poorer class generally go out to service at the age of 15 or 16, as they are scarcely able to obtain a livelihood by knitting. There are no ploughed lands, and consequently no hands employed in this species of labour.

10. The allotment system is unknown here.

14. There is not one sick person in the chapelry at this time.

1. The rent of a cottage will not be more than 1*l.* a-year.

2. There are generally two or three rooms in a cottage of a fair size.

3. There is no clothing club.

The only employment for poor women or children is knitting, and this is the reason why I am compelled to return so short answers to many of the questions.

CHILDREN.

1. 2. 3. There are some poor men employed in draining, and when their boys are 14 or 15 years old, they either go to service, or with their fathers to drain; some are kept at home knitting.

5. The children generally work the same hours as their parents.

6. Oatmeal and milk porridge, oat-cake.

8. The children appear very healthy.

9. In knitting, a boy or a girl will earn 3*d.* or 4*d.* a-day. There is only one day school, and this for only a few of the winter months.

12. Knitting.

13. No allotment system.

14. Parish apprentices are uncommon.

Evidence of Mr. *Blackwood, Kirkby-Fleetham.*

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women in each month in your parish?—The women are here employed in the fields entirely.

What wages are they paid?—8*d.* a-day for the winter months, 10*d.* during summer, and 1*s.* 6*d.* during harvest.

How many hours do they work?—Eight hours' work.

What is their usual diet and meal hours when at work?—Bread, bacon, and potatoes; twelve to one for dinner.

What are the effects of such employment on the health and morals, especially of girls of 15 and upwards?—The occupation of course healthy. Few girls of 15 employed in the fields, as they are generally in-door servants to the farmers.

Have you any allotment system?—No allotment system; but nearly every cottage has a garden about one rood, and a great proportion have a cow and pig.

Is there any difference in the rate of wages to married and unmarried?—No difference whatever.

What is the general rent of cottages?—From 3*l.* to 5*l.* per annum.

What is the nature of cottage accommodation, size of rooms, &c.?—Not less than three rooms where there is a family; two rooms varying from 12 to 14 feet or 15 feet square, the other a washing-up place; pig-stye and other conveniences generally behind them.

Have you any clothing or benefit clubs?—No clothing club; a cow club, from which they benefit on the death of a cow, and a most liberal supply of clothing in the winter from an individual.

CHILDREN.

I can only answer the questions generally. The boys and girls all go to the National school; the boys until of sufficient age to drive the plough or to be taken as in-door servants to the farmers; the girls until they can take care of children, or do any other work, when they are generally hired out.

We have no parish apprentices. The general condition of the children is good, both as to morals and health, with ample opportunity of receiving instruction at the school during the week, and their attendance is required at church on Sundays.

Evidence of Rev. *William Heslop*, Vicar, Parish of *East Witton*.

WOMEN.

What description of out-door labour are women employed in in each month?—Such as hay-making and reaping corn in the summer and autumn months; in the spring, clearing the land, hoeing turnips, planting potatoes, &c.; and in winter little or nothing.

What wages do they get?—From 8*d.* to 1*s.* per day.

What are their hours of work?—From eight till twelve morning, and from one till five afternoon.

What is their diet and meal hours when at work?—Bread and butter, tea or coffee, or potatoes and bacon; one hour for dinner.

What are the effects of such employment on the health and morals, especially of girls of 15 years and upwards?—There is not, I think, much to complain of.

Is there any allotment system; if so, of what size, and what are its effects on the condition and habits of families; what rent, and if regularly paid; if dug or ploughed?—There are three acres of land divided into 12 parts, of which 12 families have a part each; the ground is situate close to the village; some parts are dug, some ploughed; the rent of each plot, 10*s.* per annum, is regularly paid; the whole family take part in the cultivation, and the occupiers feel grateful to the Marquis of Aylesbury for so great and good a privilege.

What is the rent of an average cottage?—From 30*s.* to 3*l.*

What is the nature of your cottage accommodation?—They are exceedingly comfortable, dry and spacious.

Have you any benefit and clothing clubs?—There are one or two benefit clubs, which I believe are on the increase in point of question.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do children go out to work?—From 10 years old.

What do they learn before going out to work?—Reading, writing, and a little arithmetic. In the winter quarter they generally or very often return to school.

What sort of work are they employed in?—Generally agricultural, except that they do not reap corn, but glean it for their own bread.

Do they work separately or together?—Together, and no complaint as to morals.

What are their hours of work?—From eight till twelve, and from one to five.

What their usual diet and meal hours?—Tea or coffee, and bread and butter, or potatoes and bacon; dinner-hour from twelve to one.

What are the effects of such employments on health?—All very healthy.

What wages are they paid?—From 3*d.* to 6*d.* per day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something?—They are not taken generally from school before they are 9 or 10 years of age to earn anything, and afterwards they frequently return to school for a short period, and at different times of the year.

Is there any domestic employment, as spinning, &c.?—None.

If not, what do they do when not at school or employed at out-door work?—Some attend a night school, others do nothing at all.

Are parish apprentices common?—They are not.

Evidence of Rev. *James Barnaby*, Rector, Parish of *Melsenby*, near *Richmond*.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women in each month in your parish?—In the spring months they are employed in preparing the land for potatoes and turnips. In the summer months in hoeing and hay-making; in autumn and the winter months in reaping, storing turnips, and assisting in the barn.

What are their wages?—About 8*d.* a-day.

What are their hours of work?—In summer eight hours, in winter six.

What does their diet consist of, and what their meal hours?—Bread, bacon, and potatoes, tea frequently instead of substantial meals, and sometimes coffee; rarely fresh meat except on Sunday, with one hour at noon for dinner in summer, half an hour in winter.

What are the effects of such employment on health and morals, especially of girls of 15 years and upwards?—They are a healthy long lived race. Very few girls go out at that age.

Is there any spinning or plaiting, &c.?—Not any.

Have you any allotment system; if any; size of allotments; if dug or ploughed; distance from homes; amount of rent; if regularly paid; effects on the condition and conduct of families; whether the women and children cultivate them; regulations respecting them; nature of soil, and if well cultivated?—Many of the labourers have one-eighth of an acre of land allotted them; rent 5*s.* per annum, the landlord paying all rates and tithes; spade culture is used; the women and children assist; the distance from their homes is about a quarter of a mile; the ground is highly cultivated, and produces abundant crops; the soil rather strong in some places, in others sandy, with some clay; rents are regularly paid, and the general effect is good, encouraging the families to industry, and giving them some employment and resource when other work is scarce.

Is work agreeable or not, is out-door preferred to in-door, or *vice versâ*, and why?—Spinning, we think, preferred to out-door, if it could be obtained; whether generally so, cannot say; hay-making and reaping very agreeable and amatory to them all.

Can you tell the proportion of females employed in out-door work compared to total number in the parish?—In winter as 50 to 12 employed, in summer nearly the whole.

Is there any difference in the rate of wages to married and unmarried?—No difference.

Have you any diseases prevalent; if so, are they attributable to the employment?—Those labourers who work with the chisel in the quarries on Gatherby Moor die generally in the meridian of life; it is supposed from the collection of grit on the lungs.

What is the usual rent of a cottage?—About 3*l.* per annum.

What is the nature of cottage accommodation?—In general three rooms of a tolerable size.

Have you any clothing or benefit clubs?—A clothing club has been established here; it is of so recent a date that a correct opinion cannot be formed of it; it is entered into by almost all the poor families, and seems to be generally satisfactory and useful.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do children go out to work?—Boys at the age of fourteen or fifteen years.

What do they learn before going out to work?—Mostly kept at school till fit for service in some family, or for out-door labour; tolerably well informed afterwards when prepared for confirmation.

What sort of work are they generally employed on?—The boys are set to drive the plough, &c.; the girls either get hired into some family, or are employed in out-door labour.

Do they work separately or together; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—Together only in hay-making and reaping; I am not aware of any bad consequences resulting from this cause particularly.

What are their hours of work?—If at out-door the same as the women.

What is their usual diet and meal hours?—The same as the women.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—Very good for health.

What wages do they earn?—From 4*d.* to 6*d.* per day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept there though they might earn something by work?—As soon as they can earn anything most of them are taken from school.

Is there any domestic employment?—None.

If not, what do they do when not at school or employed out of doors?—Generally some domestic employment, as nursing children, &c.

Does the allotment system give any employment to children?—Yes, in gathering manure and assisting in planting potatoes.

Are parish apprentices common, and to what trades?—A few are apprenticed by the parish to trades such as shoemakers, tailors, wrights, &c.

What premiums are paid with them?—From 3*l.* to 7*l.*

Do they receive any wages from the masters?—None.

How are they treated?—Generally well treated.

The opportunities of school instruction are favourable, and few or any children are without some instruction, there being several dame schools, an endowed parochial school, another school of considerable extent, and a church Sunday school. In most of these the children are instructed in the Church catechism, and the Sunday school scholars are taken regularly to church.

Evidence of Mr. Maske, Marrick.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women, in each month, in your

parish?—Principal out-door employment from October to February inclusive, pulling turnips; March to June, gathering weeds; July to September, hay-making and reaping. A considerable number employed in washing lead ore all the year.

What rate of wages are they paid?—October to February, 8*d.* per day; March to June, 8*d.* to 10*d.* per day; July to September, hay-making, 10*d.*; reaping, 1*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.*; ore-washing 1*s.* per day.

What number of hours do they work?—Generally eight hours, hay-making sometimes ten hours.

What is their usual diet; what hours are they allowed themselves for their meals?—Breakfast, tea; dinner, bread and milk, or a little fried bacon and potatoes; supper, tea, or bread and milk. Breakfast at seven, dinner twelve to one, supper seven to nine.

What are the general effects of such employment on health?—I have no reason to believe that out-door labour has a tendency to injure the manners or morals of girls; but we almost invariably find that the girls of that age who are occasionally removed to the parish from the manufacturing districts are unfit for any domestic employment, their manners rude and vulgar, and of vicious habits.

Have they any in-door occupations; and if any, what can they earn?—Yes, knitting woollen frocks and stockings, 4*d.* per day.

What are the effects, moral and social, of no out-door employment, or of any regular domestic occupations?—It leads to habits of indolence.

Is there any allotment system in your neighbourhood?—Some few have portions of land from a quarter to half an acre, rent-free, chiefly dug by women and children, and well cultivated; if neglected (which is seldom the case), they are deprived of them; they tend greatly to foster habits of industry, and invariably improve the condition of the families of the occupants.

Is out-door work preferred to in-door work?—Out-door-work generally preferred.

Can you tell me the proportion of females employed in out-door work compared with the total number in the parish?—About one-third.

Have you any diseases prevalent, and what are they?—Bronchial and pulmonary affections are most prevalent, but may be attributed rather to the nature of the climate than to the nature of the employment.

What is the general character of your cottage accommodation, and what rent is paid for an average cottage?—Generally of two rooms and a pantry, dry, but ill ventilated, and the accommodations scanty and inconvenient.

Have you any clothing or benefit clubs?—Yes; they are encouraged, and increasing.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do children generally go out to work?—At about nine years.

What do they learn before going out to work, and is it kept up after?—To read and write; generally retained.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in respectively?—Many boys accompany their fathers to the lead mines, others employed in farm-work.

Do they work together in gangs, or separately, and do any bad consequences result from it?—In the fields together; I know of no bad consequences as a general result.

What are their usual hours of work?—If in the mines six hours, in the field about eight hours.

What is the usual diet?—Bread and milk or hasty-pudding (oatmeal).

What are their meal hours during work?—Same as their parents.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Out-door labour, conducive to health; asthma sometimes produced by labour in mines.

What amount of wages are they paid?—About 5*d.* per day.

Are they taken from school to earn anything by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work?—Both, according to the ability or otherwise of their parents to maintain them.

Is there any domestic employment?—The girls are employed in knitting.

Are parish apprentices common; about how many annually, and to what trades?—Not so common as some years ago; now about one in seven years; generally tailors and shoemakers.

Are any premiums given, and what?—About 5*l.*

How are they treated?—In case of improper treatment the parish officers would be required to interfere.

Evidence of Mr. John Snowdon, Parish of Middleton Tyas.

WOMEN.

What sort of out-door labour are women employed in in each month?—From November to February a small proportion of the women are employed in pulling turnips and attending to the threshing and winnowing machine: in March and April a much larger number knock about the manure droppings, and gather stones from grass pasture-lands; in July and part of August all the women who ever go out to work weed corn, gather twitch-grass, hoe turnips, make hay, &c.; in the remaining part of August and September, the harvest, gathering potatoes, twitch-grass, &c.

What wages are they paid?—Wages are 1*d.* per hour, or 8*d.* a-day; sometimes 1*s.* in hay-time; 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* in harvest.

What are their hours of work?—From 8 to 12 o'clock, and from 1 to 5; if there is, as in hay-time, any over-hours, they rest for half an hour about four.

What are their meal-hours and diet?—Breakfast about seven, dinner 12 to one, tea about six. Bread and tea are chiefly eaten at all meals when out at work, therefore the tea is often cold; now and then they have bread and bacon when out, and when at home, one day potatoes with the fat of the bacon, and the next with the bacon itself; sometimes they have hard boiled eggs in the fields; and in summer, fruit pies, without sugar to their tea; in the evening they have usually coarse, or sometimes, according to their circumstances, white hot cakes, but always tea or coffee to every meal when they can get it hot.

What are the effects of such employment on the manners and morals, especially of girls of 15 and upwards?—I am fully persuaded that no bad habits arise from their out-door work; they are almost always attended by the master or foreman; it improves their health, and affords, I believe, a kind of moral restraint upon young girls, especially as they dread nothing so much as that anything they have said or done should get out into the fields, as they say that it becomes the subject of gossip among the labourers.

Is there any domestic employment?—We have no domestic employment with us, except three or four dress-makers.

What are the effects of no out-door employment, or of any regular domestic occupation?—We would say that the effects of no out-door employment was bad, as with us none but the really idle are without it; I am not aware that any regular domestic employment is otherwise than conducive to good, except by those who, under any circumstances, are void of good principles, and of these we are at present more than usually free.

Is out-door work preferred to in-door, or *vice versâ*, and why?—Out-door work is, I believe, always preferred to anything else, hence we have sometimes to complain that our young people do not get off to service so soon

as desirable; it is agreeable on account of the earnings being about 4s. a-week on the average,—more, perhaps, if we except the winter months.

What do you consider to be the proportion of females employed in out-door labour compared to total number in parish?—I should say about 100 to 340, the number of female population.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married and single?—Not any.

What is the nature of cottage accommodation and usual rent?—Few have more than two rooms, and the greater part have two about, say 12 feet square, and they pay about 1*l.* for each room; with us, also, a great number have a few acres of grass land, and keep a cow; of course I do not mean the very poor, but those in the second grade.

Have you any clothing or benefit-clubs?—I commenced a clothing-club three years since, when I came here as curate; in the first year we had about 80 depositors, and the last two years we have averaged more than 90: our club is much valued by the poor.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children go out to work?—Not before they are 12 years old.

Do they learn anything before going out to work?—The boys learn to read and write, and the girls to read and sew, but the improvement by no means corresponds with the time spent; our girls' and dames' schools are efficient to the extent they go, but our boys' school is much less so; our schools are private ones, and though many charitable persons put boys and girls to school, yet the effects would be better if a regularly established school could be supported; more efficient masters may now be had if one knew what to do with the old ones.

What are they generally employed at?—They are only employed in gleaning in harvest, and a few of the older girls in hay-time.

Do they work separately or together; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—They are always under the master's or foreman's eye, therefore no bad consequences ensue.

What are their hours of work?—Exactly the same as the women.

What wages do they earn?—On an average 4*d.* per day, when employed.

Are parish apprentices common; if so, to what trades; and what premiums are given?—Parish apprenticeships to trades are not common: I dare say they would be well treated, but, of course, receive no wages; premiums to trades from 3*l.* to 5*l.*; it is more common to send them to farmers to do their work; they have their clothes for the first year or two, and after that small wages.

Evidence of the Rector, Parish of *Marsh*.

WOMEN.

What sort of out-door labour are women employed in?—Generally agriculture.

What wages do they earn?—From 9*d.* to 1*s.* per day.

What are their hours of work?—Eight hours a-day.

What is their diet and meal hours when at work?—Generally tea and milk, bread and potatoes, and one hour for dinner.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—Generally healthy and good.

Is there any domestic employment, as spinning, plaiting, weaving, &c.?

None in this parish.

—Is there any allotment system in this parish?—The labourers in the parish of *Marsh*, under Timothy Hutton, Esq., have mostly gardens and some waste ground attached to them for potatoes, &c., paying a small acknowledgement.

Is out-door work preferred to in-door?—Out-door work preferred.

What proportion of females are employed in out-door work compared to total number in parish?—All are employed that are able.

Is any difference made in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—None.

What is the usual rent of the cottages?—From 1*l.* to 2*l.* 10*s.* per annum.

What is the nature of cottage accommodation and size of rooms?—Generally two rooms, pretty good size.

Have you any benefit or clothing-clubs?—There are not any.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do children go out to work?—At 9 or 10 years old.

What do they learn before going out to work?—They generally go to a free school.

What work are they generally employed in?—Agricultural work.

Do they work separately or together; if the latter, do any bad consequences arise from it?—Together generally, without any bad consequences.

What are their hours of work?—Eight hours a-day.

What their diet and meal hours when at work?—The same as the women.

What the effects of such employment on health?—Generally good.

What wages are they paid?—From 6*d.* to 9*d.* a-day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept there when there is work for them?—Mostly taken from school.

Is there any in-door employment, as spinning, &c.?—Not any.

Are parish apprentices common; if so, how many annually, and to what trades?—One annually; to joiners, masons, grocers, shoemakers, &c.

What premiums are given?—From 5*l.* to 10*l.*

Do their masters pay them any wages?—Generally at the latter part.

How are they treated?—Generally very well.

Evidence of Mr. C. Hammond, Clerk, *Richmond Union, Yorkshire.*

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women in each month in your parish?—Hay-making, hoeing, shearing, gathering couch, and assisting in the light work of farming, according to the seasons.

What wages do they earn?—8*d.* in the winter, 10*d.* in the spring, 2*s.* and 2*s.* 6*d.* in harvest.

What are the hours of work?—From eight morning till five evening; one hour allowed for dinner.

What is the usual diet?—Tea or coffee in the morning and evening, or porridge in the evening; dinner, potatoes and bacon.

What are the meal hours when at work?—From 12 to 1.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—As a class they may be considered extremely healthful, and their morals, generally speaking, good.

Have they any in-door occupations?—None, except the business of their own houses.

Is there any allotment system in your parish, and what are its effects?—A very small portion, a quarter of an acre, at short distances from their dwellings; dug, ploughs not allowed; rent varying from 9*s.* per quarter of an acre per year to 1*l.* 5*s.*, according to the quality of land and its situation; generally the rent well paid; the effects of such work considered advantageous; the women and children assist in cultivating the allotments; the soil varies; generally speaking well cultivated and managed; the 12 months' rent, in most cases, is paid in September, that being the time when the produce is most marketable.

Is work agreeable, or out-door preferred to in-door?—Out-door preferred.

What proportion of females are employed in out-door work compared with the total number in the parish?—The whole are employed in out-door work.

Have you any diseases prevalent?—Consumption and scrofula.

What is the rent of an average cottage?—Rent varies from 30s. per annum to 5l.; few are so high as 5l., being a better class of house; the average cottage rent is 3l. 10s.

What is the nature of your cottage accommodation?—The first class of cottages two rooms, with pig-stye, &c. &c.; second class, one room, and very poor accommodation.

Have you any clothing-clubs in the neighbourhood?—We have no such clubs.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children go out to work?—14 or 15 years of age.

What do they learn before going out to work, and if kept up?—They generally attend the parochial schools until that time; their education is not much attended to after they leave school.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in generally?—Light farming work, the boys driving the ploughs, harrows, and carts, and the girls employed the same as the women.

Do they work separately or together?—Separately.

What are their hours of work?—From eight in the morning till five in the evening.

What is their usual diet and rest hours?—Same as the women.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Good in general.

What wages are they paid?—From 4d. to 8d. per day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work?—Taken from school in one or two of the summer months for the purpose of enabling their parents to realize something for the winter months, when work in this district is very scarce.

Is there any domestic employment, as plaiting, spinning, &c.?—None in this district.

If not, what do they do when not at school or employed out of doors?—The elder children take charge of the younger children, to enable their parents to go out to work.

Are parish apprentices common?—Very uncommon; when so bound, fee from 1l. to 3l.

Do they receive any wages from their masters?—No.

How are they treated?—Generally very well.

Evidence of the Rev. *James Holmes*, Vicar of the Parish of *Kirkby-Fleetham*.

WOMEN.

What sort of out-door labour are women employed in?—Agricultural.

What are their wages?—8d. a-day.

What are their hours of work?—Eight hours, according to the season.

What is their usual diet?—Good and plentiful.

What are their meal hours when at work?—Breakfast at seven, dinner at twelve, supper at six.

What are the effects of such employment on health and morals?—Generally good.

Is there any domestic employment?—No.

Is there any allotment system; if any, size of allotments; if dug or

ploughed; distance from homes; rents, amount of, and if regularly paid; effects on the condition and conduct of families; whether the women and children cultivate them; regulations respecting them; nature of soil; if well cultivated?—The poor have portions of land allotted to them, to the extent of from half to a whole acre, which are let at the rate of 1*l.* 16*s.* per acre; they are cultivated by the spade; the result is very beneficial, and the rents most regularly paid. The children assist their parents in the cultivation.

Is work agreeable or not, out-door preferred to in-door, or *vice versâ*, and why?—There is reason to believe the work is agreeable; out-door preferred.

What proportion of the females are employed in out-door work?—About one-half.

Is any difference made in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—None whatever.

Are there any prevalent diseases; if so, are they attributable to any of the occupations common about you?—No; the place is most salubrious.

What is the rent of an average cottage?—Very low.

What is the nature of cottage accommodation, number and size of rooms?—Good, and rooms airy and commodious.

Have you any clothing or benefit clubs?—None.

What is the nature of the soil and condition of land?—Very good.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do they go out to work?—At 12 years old.

What do they learn before going out to work; if kept up or forgotten?—They are well instructed gratuitously, and their learning kept up.

What work are they employed in?—Agricultural labour.

Do they work separately or together?—Separately.

How many hours do they work?—Eight hours a-day.

What is their usual diet and meal hours?—The same as the women.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Excellent.

What wages do they earn?—From 4*d.* to 6*d.* a-day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something?—They are never taken from school so as to injure their education.

Is there any domestic employment?—Nothing; except cleaning the house, sewing, &c., or playing.

Is there any allotments; if so, what employment does it afford for children?—It affords very little employment for children.

Are parish apprentices common?—There are none.

Examination of Mr. *Hewgill*, *Northallerton*.

WOMEN.

What kind of labour are the women employed at in your neighbourhood?—Field-labour; gathering weeds, stones, and potatoes in autumn.

What wages are they paid?—From 10*d.* to 1*s.* a-day.

How many hours are they employed in each day?—From eight in the morning to five in the evening.

What is their usual diet?—Bacon and bread, and milk; in the summer, fruit pies.

What are their meal hours when at work?—From 12 to 1.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—Nothing particular, either one way or the other.

Can you tell me the proportion of females employed in out-door work compared with the total number in the parish?—About one-third.

Is there any difference in the rate of wages to married and unmarried labourers?—No difference.

Is there any particular disease prevalent in this neighbourhood?—No particular diseases of any kind.

What do you consider to be the principal employment in this neighbourhood?—This not being a manufacturing parish, and very little of an agricultural one, of course the work is varied according to circumstances; one part of the year many may be employed, and the other part very few. In the harvest all hands go out to work.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children here go out to work?—From about 10 years.

Do they learn anything before going to work?—Boys reading and writing, some arithmetic; girls reading and sewing.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in respectively?—Boys generally drive the plough; and girls any work that their employers think they can do.

What are their hours of work?—The same as the women.

What is their usual diet and rest hours?—Same as the women.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Same as the women.

Have they any in-door occupations?—Same as the women.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—Generally good.

What wages do the children earn?—From 6*d.* to 8*d.* a-day, depending on their ages.

Are they taken from school to earn anything by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work?—If able to earn anything, taken from school; if not, kept there.

Is there any domestic employment,—as plaiting, spinning, &c.?—No in-door employment at all.

Are parish apprentices common; how many annually; and what trades?—Very few; but generally shoemakers, tailors, bricklayers, and carpenters.

Do they get any wages from their master?—No.

How are they treated?—Generally very well.

What is the nature of your cottage accommodations, and what rent is paid for an average cottage?—Generally three rooms, the larger four or five rooms; the rent is usually from 2*l.* to 5*l.*

Have you any clothing clubs in your parish?—There are no clothing clubs.

Evidence of Mr. *J. Rider*, Clerk; and Mr. *Smith*, Chairman of the Board of Guardians, *Thirsk*.

WOMEN.

1st. What sort of out-door labour, if any, in each month?—From Michaelmas to March in each year there is very little employment for women; turnip-pulling and topping are the principal description; in March scaling commences, then wickening, weeding corn, &c. Turnip-hoeing succeeds; afterwards hay-making, harvest, and potatoes taking up terminates the year's work.

2nd. What wages are they paid?—Generally 8*d.* a-day, in hay-time 1*s.*, and in harvest 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.*, and occasionally more; turnip-hoeing, and cutting corn are often done by acre; in that case, a man, his wife, and such of his family who are at home, and old enough, work together, and earn good wages; they of course work long hours.* Girls and women hired by

* At the commencement of the Union in 1837, an inquiry was made into the amount of wages received by the labouring population. It then appeared that, on a reasonable calculation, the wages received by a woman did not exceed, on an average, 2*s.* a-week, or 5*l.* 4*s.* a-year. Women's wages have not changed since that period, but work is not so plentiful.

farmers as servants, have wages varying with age and capability; commencing in some cases with girls at 20s. a-year, and a clever servant will often have 10*l.* a-year, in addition to being boarded in the house, lodged, and washed.

What are their hours of work?—A woman's day in the fields commences at eight in the morning and continues until six in the evening. In winter the hours are shorter.

What is the usual diet?—To breakfast, tea or coffee, occasionally milk; dinner, potatoes, and a little bacon, or other fat; supper, same as breakfast, or perhaps potatoes; bread to breakfast and supper, generally without butter. The bread is now commonly made in cakes from good second or fine wheat flour, and always made at home, but sometimes baked at a common oven. Brown bread, made from meslin, was formerly the common bread of the poor, as well as of farmers and their servants; it still remains to be used commonly by the latter; but the poor prefer white bread, and are of opinion that it is cheaper; brown bread, therefore, is now gradually disappearing; rye and barley bread are now unknown, though in scarce seasons 30 years ago in use; cakes made from bean-meal, once used, are now unknown.

What are their meal hours when at work?—One hour is allowed for dinner, which is generally eaten in the field.

What are the effects of employment generally, and especially of out-door labour, on the manners and morals of girls of 13 years and upwards?—Girls at that age are rarely at home with their parents, as they usually go into service as soon as possible, often at 12 years of age; if in farmers' service, they are employed in house-work, and occasionally in the fields, and their employment in association with the men is injurious to them. Their sleeping apartments are often situated near the men's, and instances occur of great exposure on this account; the general conversation of men of this class is often obscene, and conversation and jokes of this character often pass in the presence of the master or mistress without rebuke; these causes operating, together with frequent opportunities of unobserved intercourse between the men and women servants in farmers' places, renders breaches of chastity and modesty very common; and generally, women usually employed in field-work are disagreeably rough in their manners.

Is there any domestic employment, such as spinning plaiting, weaving &c.?—Not any; a few women are employed in washing and charing; also old women in knitting.

What are their earnings from it?—Those who go out to wash and char earn 1*s.* a-day and their day's food; knitting is a poor employment, and none earn more than 6*d.* a-day by it.

What are the effects, moral and social, of no out-door employment, or of any regular domestic occupation?—Not able to state any facts, except that it is a frequent observation at the Board of Guardians, that daughters kept at home by their parents frequently bring a burthen on the parish by becoming mothers of illegitimate children, proving that want of full employment has an injurious moral tendency.

Have you any allotments; if so, what size; if dug or ploughed; distance from homes; amount of rent, if regularly paid; effects of on the condition, conduct, and habits of families: whether the women and children cultivate the allotments; regulations respecting them; nature of soil, and if well-cultivated?—Newby-Wisk, the only township in Thirsk Union where any plan has been tried approaching the allotment system, the particulars required I cannot give; the effect, so far as it has been tried, has been considered beneficial in promoting industrious, temperate, and orderly habits.

Is work agreeable or not, is out-door preferred to in-door, or *vice versa*?—Much depends upon the character of the individuals; some of the farmers' servants prefer out-door labour; but generally, labour in the house has the preference given to it on account of its being easier, less exposed, and

also from its being held by the poor to be more respectable. Those who prefer out-door, are those who have robust health, and are careless as to their companions, or incline to associate with the men servants.

Can you tell me the proportion of females employed in out-door work to total number in parish?—Nearly every wife (if in health and able-bodied) of a labourer; and every widow of such, are employed in the summer season in country places; in large places (Thirsk or Sowerby, for instance), there is more employment as washerwomen, charing, &c.; the proportion of those employed in the fields is difficult to ascertain.

Is there any difference in the rate of wages to married and unmarried labourers?—No difference in wages; day-labour is unusual for girls or young women; they generally hire by the year, either as household servants, or to farmers; they are maintained in the family, and in addition to household work are also employed in the fields; the employment by day is to the wives of labourers, or their widows.

Are there any prevalent diseases?—Not any.

Evidence of Mr. Sowerby, Stokesley.

WOMEN.

What sort of work are women employed in?—Altogether agricultural, except in three or four townships, where there are some weavers.

What wages do they earn?—8*d.* per day, except in hay-time and harvest, when in the former 1*s.*, and in the latter from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* per day is given.

What are their hours of work?—From eight o'clock to five, allowing an hour between twelve and one for dinner.

What is their usual diet?—Bread and milk, and potatoes; occasionally meat.

What are their meal hours when at work?—Twelve to one.

What are the effects of employment on the health and morals generally?—The agricultural labourers are healthy; the weavers generally more unhealthy, and a smaller race of women. The morals of the agricultural labourers are better than those of the weavers.

Is there any domestic employment in weaving?—There is one spinning mill (a small one) within the Union.

What are the earnings from it?—From 4*s.* to 5*s.* per week.

Is there any allotment system?—None.

Work agreeable or not, out-door preferred to in-door, or *vice versâ*, and why?—Some prefer out-door labour, and others have a decided objection if they can procure in-door employment, such as working, cleaning, and in the weaving districts they seldom go to out-door labour.

What proportion of females are employed in out-door labour compared to total number in parish?—A large proportion are employed in out-door labour, except in the three or four weaving towns.

What is the nature and rent of your cottage accommodation?—With two lower and two upper rooms, from 2*l.* to 3*l.* a-year, and smaller cottages are seldom less than 2*l.*

Have you any benefit or clothing clubs; if so, do they increase?—There are some benefit societies which are rather on the decrease, and some clothing clubs on a small scale, which are on the increase.

What is the general character and description of the soil?—Strong soil, suitable for wheat and beans; it has been much ploughed, and there is a large proportion of tillage; upon the whole, the district is in a good state of management, and has of late been a good deal drained.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children go out to work?—From the age of 10 years.

Do they learn anything prior to going out to work?—They are generally at school until they are sent out to work, but seldom go afterwards. Schools, however, are common, and there are very few who are not sent to school, and learnt to read and write, and needle-work.

What work are they generally employed at?—Agriculture, spinning, and weaving.

Do they work separately or together; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—Generally together; there were lately two large spinning mills in Stokesley, during the working of which the morals of the children suffered much: since they have been given up, a great improvement has taken place in that respect.

How many hours do they work?—From eight to five or six, allowing an hour for dinner.

What is their usual diet?—Bread, milk, and potatoes, and occasionally meat.

What are the effects of employment on health?—The agricultural labourer is strong and healthy; the weaver and spinner not near so much so.

What wages do they earn?—About 6*d.* per day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something?—Generally at school till about 10 or 12 years old; but before the late Factory Act they were often taken from school at a much earlier age.

Is there any in-door employment, as spinning, plaiting, &c.?—Only one small spinning mill in the district; but some weaving.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—None.

Are parish apprentices common; if so, to what trades?—There are but few parish apprentices,—those generally to shoemakers, tailors, cartwrights, and other mechanics.

What premiums are given?—None; sometimes the parish finds them a few clothes.

Do their masters give them any wages?—Sometimes at the close of their apprenticeships.

How are they treated?—Generally as one of the family.

Evidence of Mr. *H. T. Robinson*.—*Leyburn*.

WOMEN.

What sorts of out-door labour are women employed in in each month?—Partially employed six months in field-labour; none the other six months.

What wages are they paid?—9*d.* common labour, 1*s.* hay-time, and 1*s.* 6*d.* harvest.

What are their hours of work?—From eight A. M. to six P. M.; one hour allowed for dinner.

What is their usual diet?—Various; they provide themselves.

Have they any in-door occupations?—None.

What are the effects, moral and social, of no out-door employment? Bad, of course.

Is there any allotments here?—They are but little known as yet.

Is work agreeable or not; out-door preferred to in-door? Generally agreeable; no in-door employment.

What proportion of females are employed in out-door work compared to the total number in the parish?—Five-sixths are employed.

Is any difference made in rate of wages to married and unmarried? None.

Have you any prevalent diseases ; are they attributable to employment ?
 —None attributable to employment ; employment healthy.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children here go out to work ?—As soon as they are able to meet with a situation ; chiefly 10, and upwards.

What do they learn before going to work ?—Little is learned before ; their chief instruction is obtained from Sunday schools.

What sorts of agricultural work are boys and girls employed in ?—The commonest sort of agricultural labour, viz., weeding corn, potatoes, turnips, &c.

Do they work separately or together ?—Together.

What are their hours of work ?—Same as women.

What is their usual diet and meal hours ?—Same as their parents.

What are the effects of employment on health ?—Beneficial.

What wages do the children earn ?—6*d.* per day till 15, and then same as their parents.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work ?—Generally taken from school to work during summer, and in harvest.

Is there any domestic employment, as plaiting, &c. ?—None.

Are parish apprentices common ; if so, how many annually, and to what trades ?—Rare, and watched by parishes, and so avoided for boys, only to shoemakers, tailors, joiners, blacksmiths, &c., from 10 to 12 annually.

What premiums are given ?—None.

How are they treated ?—Generally well treated.

Evidence of Mr. *Robert Otten Blytheman*, Surgeon, *Swinton*, near *Rotherham*.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women in each month ?—The greater number are employed in the potteries ; a few only in the different agricultural pursuits.

What wages do they generally earn ?—The wages in the potteries range between 6*s.* and 12*s.* a-week, and even more in prosperous times.

The wages from the agricultural pursuits vary from 10*d.* in winter without food, to 1*s.* a-day with food in hay and corn harvest.

What are the hours of work ?—From six to six in the potteries, and from seven to five in agricultural pursuits.

What is their usual diet ?—Upon the whole good, bordering on extravagance in prosperous times ; mostly sufficient animal food.

What are their meal hours when at work ?—From half-past eight to nine morning, and from twelve to one at noon.

What are the effects of such employment on health ?—Generally good, though somewhat poorer than those engaged in the fields.

Have they any in-door occupations ?—No.

What are the effects, moral and social, of no out-door employment, or of any regular domestic occupation ?—Home more comfortable, children more cleanly, and generally more honest and better conducted than those employed from home.

Is there any allotment system in your neighbourhood ?—None.

Is work agreeable, out-door preferred to in-door, and why ?—All appear industrious and willing to work ; work in the potteries preferred to any other, from the rate of wages being higher.

Can you tell me the proportion of females employed in out-door work, compared to the total number in parish ?—In prosperous times, at least one-half ; at the present time much less.

Is any difference made in the rate of wages to married and unmarried?—None whatever.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children here go out to work?—In the potteries when about six years old.

Do they learn anything before going to work?—If anything, reading at the Sunday schools only.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in?—In the potteries, being distributed in the workshops.

Do they work separately or together; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—Together; this, along with the hot workshops, leads to premature development of the *feelings*, and but too often followed by bad moral conduct.

What are their hours of work?—From six in the morning to six in the evening, if by the day; if by the "take," often until eight.

What is their diet?—Diet on the whole good, with a sufficiency of animal food; this, with the walk to and from the works, generally a mile, has a beneficial influence on health.

What are the meal hours when at work?—From half-past eight to nine, and from twelve to one at noon; and if they work late at evening, from six to half-past six for tea.

What are the effects of employment on health?—On the whole they do not suffer much, though in appearance they are sometimes pale and sickly; this may be in part accounted for by the wholesome diet they usually have, and by the walk night and morning to and from the manufactory.

What wages do children earn?—From 2s. 6d. to 6s. per week.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work?—They would undoubtedly be taken from school to work, if it could be procured.

Evidence of Mr. Breckon, Clerk, of the *Whitby Union*, and Mr. Cuby, *Whitby*.

British and foreign schools for boys and girls.

Population 8,000.

Average attendance of boys about 150; from 6 to 14; and are taught reading, arithmetic, mensuration, navigation, geography, writing. Books, &c., gratis, and pay each 1d. per week for education.

In the winter season, perhaps an average number of ten are kept away from school to hold coal bags during the delivery of coals; 9d. per week; engaged about three hours per day; most of them go out to sea after leaving school; there are very few apprentices.

There are two infant schools, and children who have been there generally read easy lessons.

There is no National school.

Average attendance of girls at the above 70; most of whom go out to service after leaving school.

The poor are very badly off; many parents have hard work to raise even 1d. per week for their children's education.

The state of the poor here is attributable to the failure of ship-building.

The children in the town not employed out in the fields in the vicinity.

There are some parish apprentices bound out; six at most per year, and most to a seafaring life; they receive no wages, but the masters find meat and clothes, and they are well treated.

Cottage property very good.

Evidence of the *Vicar of Osmotherley*.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour in each month?—Besides working in the fields in hay-time and harvest, the women are employed at various periods in weeding, spreading manure, hoeing and pulling turnips, &c.

What wages do they get?—Hay-making 1s. per day, in harvest from 1s. to 2s. per day, and for ordinary labour 8d. per day.

What are their hours of work?—From eight A.M. to five P.M. (and in summer to six) in the evening.

What is their usual diet?—Tea, coffee, bread, salt (and occasionally fresh) meat and potatoes.

What are the meal hours when at work?—Breakfast at seven, dinner at twelve, tea at six.

What are the effects of such employment on the manners and morals, especially of young women?—The effects of out-door employment are less pernicious, both as respects manners and morals of young people, than those which result from their being employed in factories.

Have they any in-door occupations?—Only a little winding.

What are their earnings from it? About 2s. per week.

What are the effects of no out-door employment or of any regular domestic occupation?—There are very few, if any, in this locality, that want employment.

Is work agreeable or not, out-door preferred to in-door, or *vice versa*, and why?—Out-door employment preferred, because more can be earned, and because by bringing them together it affords opportunities of hearing and telling the news of the village.

What is the proportion of females employed in out-door work compared to the total number in parish?—Except in hay-time and harvest, the proportion to the whole number is small.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to single or married?—No difference.

What is the usual rent of a cottage?—From 2l. to 4l. per annum.

What is the nature of your cottage accommodation?—Some with two lower and two upper rooms, with offices; and others with one lower and one upper room, with offices.

Have you any clothing or benefit clubs; are they entered into; on the increase, or do they remain stationary?—Commonly entered into, and on the increase.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children go out to work?—At 10 years old.

Do they learn anything before they go to work; is it kept up?—Reading and writing; the former in many cases kept up by attendance at a Sunday school.

What work are they generally employed at?—Boys drive the plough; girls thin turnips, gather potatoes, weed corn, &c.

Do they work separately or together; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—Together; but as they are generally in company with their parents or other older persons, bad consequences but rarely ensue.

What are their hours of work?—From eight A.M. to five or six P.M.

What is their usual diet?—Milk, bread, potatoes, and bacon.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Beneficial.

What wages do they earn?—6d. a day.

If they can earn anything by work, are they taken away or kept at school?—Taken (generally) from school at every opportunity of earning anything.

Is there any domestic employment, as plaiting, &c.?—Only winding; but

as this is more frequently the employment of women than of girls, they are generally sent to school.

Are parish apprentices common?—Parish apprentices are uncommon, in fact quite obsolete in this neighbourhood.

Evidence of Mr. R. Brecon, Clerk, Township of *Fyling Dales*, near *Whitby*, County *York*.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour in each month?—Agriculture and fishing trade; in the former they are engaged in spring, summer, and autumn; in the latter all the year round.

What wages do they earn?—The rate of wages vary in agriculture, according to the avocations or employments, from 8*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per day.

In the fishing business wages are rarely given, the women being daughters or wives of the fishermen, for the most part.

What are their hours of work?—10 hours.

What is their usual diet and meal hours?—Breakfast at seven, tea, milk, treacle, brown or white bread, with occasionally a small quantity of butter; dinner 12 o'clock, fruit pie, milk and bread, cheese and bread, potatoes with fat, fresh or salt fish, rarely bacon or butcher's meat; tea and supper similar to breakfast.

What are the effects of such employment on the health and morals of girls of 15 and upwards?—The legitimate and out-door employments in this township are, not of themselves, injurious to the manners and morals of girls of 15 and upwards; the out-door employments of agriculture and the fishing trade have certainly not that effect; but there is a practice in this county, of young men and women sitting up alone at nights, with the permission of their masters or mistresses, which is an employment coming neither under the head of agriculture or the fishing trade, but of evening amusement, which is highly prejudicial to the manners and morals of young women of 15 years and upwards.

Have they any in-door occupations, as spinning, &c.—Dress-making, cap-making; the in-door part of the fishing business, such as preparing bait, and baiting the lines, and coiling up the lines ready for sea, making nets, and lines. There is no weaving, spinning, plaiting, &c., in this township.

What are their earnings from it?—The earnings are very small in this neighbourhood; the farmers and fisherpeople do their work chiefly within themselves, except in harvest, and even then only some of the large farmers employ extra hands; the system of mowing, instead of shearing, corn has diminished the demand for labour in harvest; hardly any of the women in this township earn sufficient by agricultural labour, or any other kind, to support themselves, with the exception of the younger, who are in farm-service, who may earn from 7*l.* to 10*l.* per annum, and have their meat found; a great portion of the female population consists of sailors' wives, who are supported out of their husbands' earnings.

What are the effects, moral and social, of no out-door employment, or of any regular domestic occupation?—First, of no out-door employment, I should say it produces idleness, and bad moral and social effects; 2*nd*, regular domestic employment has a good moral and social effect.

Have you any allotment system; if any, size of allotments; if dug or ploughed; distance from homes; amount of rents; if regularly paid; the effects on the condition, conduct, and habits of families; whether the women and children cultivate the allotments; regulations respecting them; nature of soil; if well cultivated?—There are allotments of moor land on the moor edges, rarely amounting to an acre, chiefly varying from a rood to an acre. They are cultivated by the spade, and are from 30 yards to half

a mile distant from the houses of the owners. The rents are generally nominal, being taken in by consent of the freeholders and the lord of the manor, 4*d.*, 6*d.*, and so forth, paid as acknowledgments only; these rents are regularly paid. The tenants of these allotments are generally hard-working steady persons, regular in their habits, decent in their conduct; their condition is improved by enabling the family to grow potatoes to feed a pig, and this operates as an inducement to make them buy corn to assist in fattening it; the tenants of these allotments are not disturbed; the allotment is well cultivated; potatoes generally grown; the rent cannot be raised or put on at an *ad valorem* rate without consent of the freeholders, which is never done; the women and children occasionally assist in cultivation. The soil is moor, and light.

Is work agreeable or not, is out-door preferred to in-door, and why?—There is little work to choose upon, it is scarce; few would go from agriculture to fishing business, and *vice versa*; with the exception of the in-door fishing business, it cannot be said there is any in-door employment in this township, the dress-makers form so very small a proportion of the women.

Can you tell me the proportion of females employed to total number in parish?—As 200 to 1000, at a rough guess.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children go out to work?—From 13 and upwards.

What do they learn before going to work?—Reading, writing, arithmetic, occasionally a little navigation; the girls learn the same, with addition of sewing, knitting, &c.

What sorts of work are boys and girls employed in?—Many of the boys go to sea in the colliers; some go to the alum works, and wheel small sized wheel-barrows on iron rails; others go out to service in farmers' places; some are also employed in the fishing business to assist in gathering the bait on the sea-beach. The girls assist their mothers in domestic employments until they marry, or go out to farmers' service.

Do they work separately or together; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—At the alum works in gangs, but otherwise separately, with no bad consequences.

What are their hours of work?—About 10 hours, including dinner hour.

What is their diet, and usual meal hours, when at work?—The same as the women.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Not prejudicial.

What wages do the children earn?—From 6*d.* to 1*s.* a-day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school, though they may earn something by work?—Taken from school when able to earn anything.

Are there any domestic employments?—None; perhaps a little net-cone making, and sundry necessities for the family.

Are there any allotments?—There are allotments, but no system of allotting, and no employment for children thereby.

Are there any parish apprentices?—There are no parish apprentices.

Evidence of Rev. George Dixon, Curate of *Fyling Dales*, near *Whitby*.

WOMEN.

What sorts of labour do women do in each month in your parish?—In farming occupations they spread mole-hills, and gather stones in April; set or plant potatoes in May; weed corn in June; make hay in July and part of August; harvest work part of August and September, and sometimes the fore-part of October; take up potatoes the latter part of October and fore-part of November, if the season be fine. A few pump water at the alum works all the months in the year.

What wages do they earn?—8*d.* per day in April, with victuals; in May, ditto; in June, ditto; in July and part of August, 10*d.* with victuals; in harvest 1*s.* 3*d.* with victuals; 8*d.* for gathering up potatoes, with victuals.

What are the hours of work?—About nine hours each day.

What is their usual diet, and what hours are they allowed for meals?—Generally beef and bacon, with vegetables, &c.; but if they find their own meat, it is then more weak and poor, but their wages are better, with about one hour for dinner.

What are the effects of such employment on the health and morals of girls of 15 and upwards?—Out-door work generally conducive to health, and the morals of the girls pretty good, as far as I have heard.

Have they any in-door occupations, as spinning, &c.?—Spinning is laid aside; and when the women are at home, they employ themselves among their families.

Is there any allotment system in your neighbourhood, and what are its effects on the condition of families?—The lord of the manor suffers, with the consent of his jurors, any of the poor belonging to this parish to take up allotments from the moor or waste, and they vary from one rood to more, and some less. They are commonly dug, but a few ploughed—they generally pitch the allotments near the enclosure—the distance varies sometimes nearly a mile. It does not appear that the effects are particularly visible, any more than furnishing them with potatoes, and towards feeding a good pig for their better comfort. The women do not dig, but they and their children commonly endeavour to keep them from weeds. The lord of the manor, for some according to their size, perhaps lays on annually 2*d.*, 6*d.*, 9*d.*, and sometimes, but very seldom, 1*s.*, and gives such rents to be distributed amongst the poor of this parish. The rents are regularly paid, with very few exceptions; there are no more regulations respecting them than what is above stated. The soil is of a light description, being new-land. Some are very well cultivated.

Is work agreeable or not, is out-door preferred to in-door; if so, why?—There is but little in-door work profitable to the inhabitants of this parish; and as to the out-door work, it is the only way they have to procure a livelihood; I think the work is agreeable.

Can you tell me the proportion of females employed in out-door work compared to the total number in the parish?—I think about one-third, if we exclude the village of Robin Hood's Bay, in this parish, consisting of about 1000 inhabitants, chiefly occupied by mariners and fishermen, but their wives gather bait on the coast for their husbands' lines.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married or unmarried?—They are paid nearly alike.

Have you any particular disease prevalent?—No; we esteem this parish very healthy, sound dry land, bounded on the east by the German Ocean.

What is the nature of your cottage accommodation?—They are of various sizes, and the rooms vary according to size.

What rent is paid generally?—From 2*l.* to 4*l.*, according to the size of the gardens attached thereto.

What is the general character of the ground?—Some very good strong clay and loam, others hilly and lighter, but generally good wheat land. The cultivated land is passable.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do the children here go out to work?—To the sea-service at 10, 11, and 12 years of age. The children who go to agricultural service go as soon as any will hire them; 10 years or so, sometimes 11 and 12 years of age.

What do children learn before going to work?—They are generally sent to school, some for a quarter, and some for a year or two; those that go to no school spend their time in playing.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in generally?—There is no employment for the boys and girls but agriculture, the sea, or the fisheries; except the girls do a little sewing sometimes.

Do they work separately, or in gangs; if the latter, do any bad consequences arise from it?—Sometimes separately, sometimes in gangs; it depends upon the employers whether sent separately or together. I know of no bad consequences arising from their working in gangs.

What are their hours of work?—Similar to the women.

What is their usual diet and meal hours?—Their employers find them victuals; the same as they eat themselves generally; breakfast at 8; dinner at 12; supper at 6.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Generally pretty good.

What wages do they generally earn?—Small boys at the alum works 10*d.* per day, exclusive of meat, 6*d.* with meat; at harvest the fishermen employ their own families. The mariners generally receive 8*l.*, 10*l.*, and sometimes 15*l.* per year, with meat during their apprenticeship, and when their time is expired they do the best they can for themselves.

Are they taken from school when they might be able to earn something by work, or still kept there?—If an opportunity for work, they are taken from school; they are not kept there when any work offers that they can do.

Is there any plaiting or spinning done in this parish?—No.

What do they do then when not at school or employed out of doors?—Playing and idly spending their time.

Are there any allotments in your parish; if so, what employment is there for children?—If any necessary work, as weeding, they are employed, or planting and measuring potatoes.

Does the parish apprentice any of the children?—I have not heard of any for some length of time.

Evidence of Rev. R. Worsfall, Curate, *Normanby and Risboro'.*

WOMEN.

Extract of a Letter from Rev. R. Worsfall, Curate, to Sir F. H. Doyle, dated *Normanby*, January 30, 1843.

DEAR SIR,—I am extremely sorry that I was absent when you were in this parish, but I now have the pleasure of making the following answers to your questions respecting the condition of the women and children in this parish.

We have a very small population, and consequently it will not be possible to answer every question proposed. The women are very little employed in out-door labour—in spring they weed the corn, and assist in planting potatoes; in autumn they assist in reaping the harvest; but in every case it is at their own option, and at reasonable wages. The children, boys and girls, go out to place at 13 or 14; but in these cases they are only for the first and second year employed in very light work; prior to this, the children have very little to do, but if employed, it is generally in summer in tending the cattle, and in autumn in paying the birds off the corn.

2. Wages 1*s.*; in autumn 1*s.* 4*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per day.

3. Hours of work?—From seven till five afternoon, taking one hour for dinner.

4. Diet?—Wholesome and plenty.

6. Effect of work?—Excellent for health and happiness.

9. Effects moral and social?—I think not injurious, as there are seldom more than two or three together.

12. Proportion employed?—But very few, as they are now regularly

employed in out-door labour, say one in five. We have no allotments, the men generally cultivate their gardens and potato beds.

Rent of cottages?—From 2*l.* to 3*l.*, a few at 3*l.* 10*s.*; in this case a little land is added.

Nature of cottage?—Generally very good, an exception or two,—not more. We have no clothing clubs, the people are very frugal and temperate, and are in comfortable circumstances.

Nature of soil?—Very good and very well cultivated, one-half at least under the plough.

CHILDREN.

I have very little to add under this head; I can answer all the questions in one. Before going to place they receive the rudiments of learning, reading and writing; at 13, 14, or 15 they are engaged as agricultural servants at fair wages by the year. The number of children from 40 to 50.

Evidence of the Clerk to the *Union, Helmsley.*

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women in each month in your parish?—January, February, March, pulling, topping, and tailing and dragging turnips, assisting in threshing by machine, and winnowing corn; April, May, and June, spreading manure with a rake, and gathering stones and sticks on the grass-land; July, August, and September, hay and corn-harvest; October, November, and December, the same as the three first months.

What wages do they earn?—8*d.* a-day in winter, and 1*s.* in summer, and find their own meat.

What are their hours of work?—In winter, from eight to half-past four; in summer, from eight to six.

What is their usual diet, and meal-hours, when at work?—Very little animal food, chiefly milk, bread, and potatoes, with half-an-hour for dinner.

Have they any in-door occupations?—None at all.

What are the effects, moral and social, of no out-door employment or of any regular domestic occupation?—Indolent habits.

Is work agreeable or not, out-door preferred to in-door, or *vice versa*, and why?—Yes; a preference for out-door employment in summer, as most conducive to health, but in winter, if any in-door work could be obtained, it would be preferred.

Can you tell me the proportion of females employed in out-door work compared with the total number in the parish?—Five per cent.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—None whatever.

Have you any prevalent diseases?—Rheumatism occasionally, attributable to exposure to cold in the winter season.

What is the average rent of a cottage?—About 1*l.* 15*s.* each per year.

Of what nature is your cottage accommodation?—Limited accommodation; many having two, and some only one room each.

Have you any benefit or clothing clubs in your parish?—There is a benefit club, and a clothing club in Helmsley, which have been established some years, and are all in the district; we have also a medical club here, and another at Kirby Moorside.

What is the general character of the soil?—The land in this district is generally pretty good, with a thin soil on a limestone rock; there is a large tract of moor-land, from which turf is procured for fuel.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do children go out to work?—From 8 to 10 years.

What do they learn before going out to work, if kept up or forgotten?—Reading and writing, which is in a great measure often forgotten.

What work are boys and girls generally employed at?—Generally the first work is weeding turnips in June and July, and the other part of the year are employed at the same work as women.

Do they work together or separately; if together, do any bad consequences result from it?—They work together, without any bad results.

What are their hours of work?—In winter, from eight to half-past four; in summer, from eight to six.

What is the usual diet and meal-hours?—The same as the women.

What are the effects of such employment on health?—Good.

What wages do they earn?—6*d.* a-day, and find their own meat.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept there though they might earn something by work?—Taken from school to work as soon as possible.

Is there any domestic employment, as plaiting, spinning, &c.?—None.

If not, what do they do when not at school or employed out of doors?—When not in regular work, and which is only about half of the year, they return to school in the interim.

Are parish apprentices common; if so, about how many annually, and to what trades?—None since the passing of the New Poor Law Act (14th August, 1834).

Evidence of —, *Cleveland.*

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of out-door labour for women in each month?—Harvest-work, weeding, scaling; in what month depends upon the season.

What are their wages?—2*s.* a-day in wheat harvest; at other times 9*d.*

What are their hours of work?—From eight, morning, till five, evening.

What is their usual diet?—Good brown bread, milk, tea or coffee, potatoes, and a small piece of bacon, week-days; one or two pounds of fresh meat on Sundays.

What are their meal hours when at work?—Dinner-hour, from twelve to one o'clock.

What are the effects of such employment on the health and morals of girls of 15 and upwards?—The morals and manners of girls of 15 and upwards engaged in out-door labour are such as to call for no particular remark.

Have they any in-door occupation?—None but as connected with their houses.

Have you any allotments?—No allotments in this neighbourhood nearer than Hiplin; with respect to which, I am sure Lord Tyrewood will give every information. The men are in full employment here, and it will be difficult to find any willing to cultivate allotments; otherwise, I have land that I would so appropriate.

Is work agreeable or not, out-door preferred to in-door, or *vice versâ*, and why?—This must depend upon the weather; generally speaking, the small population here seem contented and happy.

What proportion of the females are employed in out-door labour compared to the total population?—About one-fifth.

What is the rent of a cottage?—From 1*l.* 10*s.* to 2*l.* 10*s.* a-year.

What is the nature and description of your cottage accommodation?—It varies; some have only two rooms of small size, and in a few others there is a want of accommodation which delicacy and, perhaps, health require.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do children go out to work?—When they are old enough to drive the plough.

What do they learn before going out to work?—There has been a school established here for some time, to which, by the assistance of the rector or his family, all poor persons, at a very trifling expense, may send their children. The instruction of the children does not much exceed that which is necessary to make them Christians, and to be useful in their line of life as agricultural labourers,—keeping market accounts, &c.; and that knowledge, as far as it goes, they appear to retain.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in?—Boys, at the plough; girls, when old enough, with their mothers, at smaller wages.

What are their hours of work?—From eight, morning, till 5, P.M.

What their diet and meal hours?—The same as the women.

What wages do the children earn?—Difficult to say; it depends so much upon their ages and powers.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something?—When they are fit for work or for service, they leave school; and that is the rector's wish.

Are parish apprentices common? Not common; none at present; we have employment for all at home.

Evidence of Rev. Mr. *Wyneard, West Rounton, Cleveland.*

WOMEN.

1. What sort of out-door labour, if any, in each month?—In the months of November, December, January, and February, attending to the threshing-machine and pulling turnips; March, April, May, and June, knocking manure, gathering stones, planting potatoes, and weeding corn; July and part of August making hay and hoeing turnips; August, September, and October, harvesting, taking up potatoes, and gathering twitch.

2. What wages are they paid?—One penny per hour, excepting in harvest, and then the wages are from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. per day.

3. What are the hours of work?—From eight in the morning till five in the evening.

4. What description of diet?—Coffee and tea, potatoes, bacon, and a small quantity of butchers' meat.

5. What are the meal hours when at work?—From twelve o'clock to one.

6. What are the effects of employment on health?—I consider them to be good, and are to be commended.

7. What nature of domestic employment, if any?—Dress-making—there is no spinning.

8. What do they earn from it?—I should think about 1s. per day.

9. What effects, moral and social, of no out-door employment, or of any?—Where there is no employment, I consider the effects bad, both on moral and social habits.

10. Is there any allotment system in this parish?—Not any.

11. Is work agreeable; out-door preferred to in-door, or no, and why?—Work is agreeable, on account of earnings. I should say out-door work is preferred on account of health.

12. Is there any difference, in rate of wages, to married and unmarried labourers?—Not any.

13. What proportion of females are employed in out-door work to total number in the parish?—Taking the total number of women at 150, perhaps 80 are employed in out-door work;—as 80 to 150.

Are there any prevalent diseases; if so, are they attributable to any of the occupations common about you?—There are no prevalent diseases.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do children go out to work?—From ten to twelve years.

Do they learn anything before going out to work?—Some are educated and some not, though all have the privilege of going to a Sunday-school, which is highly valued and well attended.

What sort of work are boys and girls employed in?—Boys in plough driving, watching birds, and women's work. Girls in watching birds, and women's work.

Do they work separately, or together in gangs; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—Principally in gangs, attended by masters or bailiff, consequently no bad consequences result from it.

What are their hours of work?—Boys from seven o'clock to five; girls eight o'clock to five.

What is their diet and meal hours?—Similar to their parents.

Meal hours during work?—From twelve o'clock to one.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Very good.

What wages do children earn?—Sixpence per day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work?—Very seldom taken from school, but unfortunately many have no education except what they get at the Sunday-school.

Is there any domestic employment, as plaiting, spinning, &c.?—Knitting and sewing. I am sorry to say, the spinning-wheel is almost extinct.

Are parish apprentices common?—Very rare.

What is the nature of your cottage accommodation, and what rent is paid for an average cottage?—Tolerably good; two rooms, pretty good size; rent from 3*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.*; some from 2*l.* to 2*l.* 10*s.*

Have you any benefit or clothing-clubs in your neighbourhood?—Yes, and great benefit is derived from them, and they are highly to be recommended. They are eagerly entered into by the poor, and much appreciated by them. I should say they are decidedly on the increase.

Evidence of the Gentleman who acts as Clerk to this parish, *Morpeth*.

WOMEN.

What are the sorts of labour for women in each month?—In January and February, pulling turnips and working in the barn occasionally,—say two days a-week; March, stoning pretty constant; April, stoning, turnip-hoeing, and backing constant; May, backing and quickening, constant; June, quickening and hay-harvest, constant; July, the same, constant; August, hoeing turnips, and corn-harvest; September and October, corn-harvest, gathering potatoes; November, gathering potatoes in the beginning; December, pulling turnips.

What wages are they paid?—For ordinary out-door work, 10*d.*; for barking, 1*s.*, and for corn-harvest, as the wages may be. It may be observed however, that the bondagers have 10*d.* a-day for all work except reaping, when they have 1*s.* 6*d.* a-day.

What are their hours of work?—In summer, from 7 A.M. till 6 P.M.; in winter, from sunrise to sunset; an hour's rest at twelve, for dinner, and sometimes a quarter of an hour at ten and four.

What does their diet usually consist of?—Porridge or coffee before going out; where they live at a distance, bread and cheese, and a bottle of milk or small beer for dinner, and tea at night.

What are the effects of such employment generally on the morals and manners of girls of 15 and upwards?—This is very difficult to answer, but I am strongly of opinion that the style of conversation adopted in the harvest-fields is anything but conducive to the morals of girls of 15.

Is work agreeable or not ; out-door preferred to in-door, or *vice versa* and why ?—Out-door work agreeable ; but as there is no in-door employment, it does not admit of comparison.

What is the proportion of females employed compared to total number in parish ?—The whole of the females are employed in out-door work, except, perhaps, in each village one female may carry on dress-making.

What is the average rent of cottages ?—3*l.* per annum.

What is the description of cottage accommodation ?—Very bad indeed ; generally one room only, 17 by 15 feet.

Have you any clothing or benefit-clubs ?—None.

What is the description of soil ?—Generally cold clay, interspersed with sandy soils, suited for turnips ; in the latter the employment for women is more plentiful than in the former.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do they go out to work ?—When work is plentiful, as early as 9 or 10 years old.

Do they learn anything before going out to work ?—Generally taught to read before sent out to work. As soon as they can work they are taken from school during summer, but sent back during the winter ; they generally attend Sunday schools during the whole year.

What sort of work are they employed in ?—The same as the women generally ; but when the boys are strong enough, they are employed to drive a cart or a threshing-machine.

Do they work separately or together ; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it ?—Together, generally ; no bad consequences result from it.

What are their hours of work, diet, and meal hours ?—The same as the women.

What are the effects of employment on health ?—Good.

What wages do they earn ?—From 3*d.* to 6*d.* per day ; when able to drive a cart, 10*d.* or 1*s.*

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept there though they might earn something ?—Seldom kept at school when anything is to be earned ; though I have known instances to the contrary.

Is there any in-door employment for them ?—None.

Are parish apprentices common ; if so, to what trades ?—Not very common ; perhaps two annually, to shoe-makers, tailors, and masons.

What premium is given ?—An outfit of clothes, and 4*l.* or 5*l.* paid to the master.

Do they receive any wages ?—None ; the master provides them with all necessities.

How are they treated ?—Very well.

MORPETH.

British and Foreign School for Boys.

Average number is 100, from the age of six to that of fourteen generally ; books, &c., gratis, and about one-half being freemen's boys, are educated free of expense ; the rest pay 2*d.* per week.

The school is much thinner in summer, owing to the boys going out to work. On market-days many of the boys stay away from school to attend to the cattle in the market, by which they earn 1*s.* per day. Most of them, after they leave school, are apprenticed to some trade, such as tailors, shoe-makers, &c.

Infant School.

Average about 80, admitted at three, and the rule is for them to be retained no older than seven ; some stay till they are nine. Two-thirds are

mostly freemen's children, but the proportion varies; the rest pay 2*d.* per week, and generally learn to read pretty well before they leave. They then go—the boys to the free school mentioned above, and the girls to one on the same principle, established for girls—where the latter learn to sew and write. In this the average number of girls is 70, ages from six to fourteen; they are taught sewing, reading, writing, and arithmetic. About one-half here are freemen's children, and are educated gratis; the rest pay 2*d.* per week. Most go to service after leaving school, some few out to work in the fields, but going to service is preferred. The school has been opened about six years. Many in the town kept away, either to attend to the younger part of the family, or because of the inability of the parents to pay the 2*d.* per week.

Summary of the Evidence of *John Fenwick, Esq., of Letherton*, and others in the neighbourhood of *Morpeth*.

In the neighbourhood of Morpeth I went with Mr. Fenwick to several houses. I have given the Morpeth conditions in the Report. This is rather a pit district than an agricultural one. The people, though better educated than in Yorkshire, are not so acute apparently or so well educated as in the north and west. Many of the pitmen are fond of learning, and though they leave school early, take it up afterwards. There are instances of mathematical talent and proficiency found among them to a degree which could hardly have been anticipated. The bondagers have 10*d.* a-day for hoeing turnips, &c.; 1*s.* 6*d.* for sheaving corn: 1*s.* 6*d.* is higher than in most parts of Northumberland. The children assist their mothers and sisters, and earn perhaps 5*d.* or 6*d.* a-day.

The diet is much the same all over Northumberland—oatmeal, barley and pease bread, potatoes, milk, and bacon. They most of them keep a pig. The people are well off. The cottages are improving, though there is still much to be done. I went into several of them; they are well furnished. Many of them have a good deal of furniture, and the box-beds are gradually disappearing, which is in itself an improvement, and, besides, foretells the downfall of the single-room cottage. The children of agriculturists begin to work at 12 or 13; those of the pitmen much earlier.

Evidence of Messrs. *Hindmarsh, Nelson, &c., Alnwick*.

The women top and tail turnips in the winter, attend at the threshing-machine. In the spring they weed the land, prepare for potatoes and turnips, hoe turnips, make hay, and sheave corn in harvest; they spin a little, but it is dying away. The bondage earnings are 10*d.* a-day for small work, and 1*s.* 6*d.* for harvest. The women not bondagers get higher wages—1*s.* a-day for small work; 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* for shearing. I should say four women to 100 acres found employment in the summer in the turnip districts. The wages given to a bondager are 5*l.*, and her board, or even more lately; as high sometimes as 7*l.* 7*s.* Of this wage, if hired for the summer half-year, they would receive two-thirds. The Northumberland system is very uniform—one district much like another, except, of course, that where the strong wheat land preponderates women are less employed than about Wooler and in the turnip districts towards the Border.

The children go out from 11 to 12 to help the women, or do little odd jobs, such as looking after cattle in the fields, &c. They earn from 4*d.* to 6*d.* a-day. Though they may leave school in the summer, they come back in the winter, and seem to keep it up well. There are few of the young men but what are able to read and write, with some knowledge of arithmetic. This information extends to a large part of Northumberland,

as for many years Mr. Nelson, who is an experienced agriculturist, held a large farm in the North, from whence he removed to Alnwick.

The Duke of Northumberland's cottages are not inhabited by hinds. He disliked the bondage system, and lets a cottage and a piece of land to every one of his tenants at a rent of 1*l.* 5*s.* The system does not seem to answer, and as the leases drop in, this partial exception is gradually re-absorbed into the system of the county.

Evidence of Mr. W. Hindmarsh, West Horton, near Wooler.

My farm contains 1100 acres, 600 under tillage. I have eight hinds, and eight bondagers in the winter. In the summer I have to hire additional hands. The wages are 8*d.* a-day in winter, 10*d.* in summer, and 1*s.* in harvest. Women not bondagers earn more, only one of my hinds has to hire a bondager: it is rare that some one of the family is not able to fulfil this office. The children go out occasionally at 12 or 13, and earn about 5*d.* a-day at first. In the agricultural districts of Northumberland the habits of the people are the same. I have a sheep-farm of 5000 acres up the Reed Water; the shepherds are paid in stock, receiving annually so many sheep and lambs. They are an extremely intelligent and respectable class of men. With that exception, the only difference is between the wheat lands and the turnip districts. In the turnip districts about here, we, of course, employ a greater number of women; but the habits and the mode of life are quite uniform. The bondagers are not worse than other women; but those people here, in point of chastity and morality, as far as the sexes are concerned, are below the rest of their character. They are, in other respects, much to be approved of—quiet and contented, with quite a sufficiency of food and clothing. They dress not only well but with considerable taste. They are sober, industrious, and civil, with a strong sense of religion, and an interest in the doctrinal and metaphysical points of it, which they discuss with great acuteness and earnestness. All that is wanting is, that they should be better housed. The Northumberland cottages are a drawback upon all the other advantages they possess, and the cause, I doubt not, of great relaxation in morals. The children seldom go out much, at least for any regular employment, before 13 or 14. They all attend school in the winter, and learn reading, writing, and ciphering. Nor do they forget this; on the contrary, they are fond of study and thought in after-life, and in most cottages you will find books, particularly theological works, which constitute a favourite branch of reading.

I also examined another farmer, the innkeeper at Wooler. His evidence would merely be a repetition of Mr. Hindmarsh's. The children, he says, do not go out before 12; and that you cannot go into any cottage without finding a Bible and other religious books. The gentry and farmers of Northumberland are so perfectly agreed about their system being a good one, and the features of it are so strongly marked, that it is unnecessary to swell this Report with further evidence. Mr. Grey, of Dilston; Mr. Fenwick, of Letherton; Mr. Hindmarsh and Mr. Nelson, of Alnwick; Mr. W. Hindmarsh, of Wooler; Mr. Bigg, of Lenton; Mr. Ogle, of Bedlington; Mr. Jobson, of Chillingham; are the gentlemen from whom I have derived my principal information. I went about with Mr. Fenwick, and saw several farmers and cottagers; but these gentlemen, among whom are some of the most experienced and intelligent agriculturists in Northumberland, put me so completely in possession of what there was to be learnt, that I did not think it necessary to collect together anything like the quantity of evidence which I had done in Yorkshire, where the practical farmer is quite a different person in point of station and education.

Evidence of Mr. Jobson, Practical Farmer, *Challingham*.

Farming 1000 acres, of which there are 750 acres chiefly under a five-course shift, viz.—150 in oats, 150 in fallow and green crop, 150 in barley and wheat, 300 in one and two-year old grass, the remainder in old sward and unimproved moor—about 150 acres of the arable land is strong wheat soil, the remainder suitable for turnips and other green crops.

The number of women of 16 years of age and upwards employed throughout the year for 5-6ths of the working-days	16
In summer there are nearly regularly employed in addition to the above	6
In summer there are also about the same number of girls above 8 and under 16 years of age employed at light work, such as collecting couch, weeding corn, hoeing corn, and turnips . . .	6
Total	28

Besides those stated above, there are several more occasionally employed at various light occupations in summer, suitable to their age and experience, frequently from 15 to 20 besides employed in harvest.

Besides the men who are regularly employed, there are three boys of 14 years of age who drive single horses, carting turnips in winter, and other light jobs in summer.

Here are also four younger boys who get employment about three-fourths of the year, and go to school for three months in winter.

All the children, boys and girls capable of receiving instruction, are taught to read and write, and the boys also the simple rules of arithmetic.

Evidence of Mr. B. Bigg, *Linton, Northumberland*.

WOMEN.

What sorts of out-door labour are women employed in in each month?—Collecting stones from the clover lands intended for hay. Handpicking weeds upon land intended for turnips, spreading dung for sowing turnips through April, May, and June; hay-making, turnip-hoeing in July and August; harvest in September and October; towards the end of the year carrying in stocks to the barn, attending the threshing-machine, pulling turnips, and afterwards topping and tailing them.

What wages do they get?—From 9d. to 1s. for small work and hay-making, 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. for harvest, and their dinners.

What are their hours of work?—Morning 7 to 12, P.M. from half-past one to six.

What is their usual diet?—They find their own porridge and milk, and bread dinner at harvest.

What are the effects of employment generally on health?—Women who work out of doors are the healthiest; and their morals not worse than those of domestic servants.

Is there any employment, as spinning, plaiting, &c.?—A little spinning, knitting, and sewing.

What are their earnings from it?—Now 6d. to 1s. per day, if at needle-work.

Is there any allotment system here?—No allotment system in this parish; almost all the cottages have gardens which are cultivated by the men at spare time, and are a great benefit to the family,—near 200 to 400 square yards or more.

Is out-door work preferred to in-door?—In general out-door work is preferred.

Is there any difference in rate of wages to married and unmarried?—No difference.

Are there any prevalent diseases; if so, are they attributable to any of the occupations common about you?—No particular diseases, parish very healthy, greatly owing to the cottagers keeping cows upon the large common, and there being plenty of milk for the children; 30 cows are kept in the village of Long Horsley; all the hinds upon the farms are paid in kind, and have cows maintained by their masters.

What is the average rent of a cottage?—30s. to 50s., including a garden.

What is the nature of your cottage accommodation?—One room, with an entrance taken off as store-room or dairy; 18 feet by 16, inclusive of entrance.

Have you any clothing-clubs?—No clothing clubs.

What is the character of soil generally?—Very various; land tolerably cultivated.

CHILDREN.

At what ages do they go out?—None under twelve, and more generally fourteen.

What do they learn before going to work?—Few at that age who cannot read and write. Reading kept up in general, and some keep up their writing also.

What sort of work do they generally do?—Generally field-labour and driving horses in the plough, &c.

Do they work separately or together; if the latter, do any bad consequences result from it?—There is generally a person to superintend the gang; no bad consequences are attributable to the employment of them together.

What are their hours of work, diet and meal hours, &c.?—The same as the women.

What are the effects of employment on health?—Beneficial.

What wages do they earn?—From 4d. to 8d. per day.

Are they taken from school to earn something by work, or kept at school though they might earn something by work?—In summer they are taken from school when work is plentiful; they return to it in winter.

Is there any in-door occupation, as plaiting, spinning, &c.?—None, except when employed in taking care of a very young child.

Are parish apprentices common; if so, to what trades?—Very few parish apprentices; when there are any, they are bound to mechanics.

What premiums are given?—Merely money to fit out the apprentices with clothes.

What wages do they receive?—Nothing except meat and clothes.

How are they treated?—In general very well.

Evidence of John Grey, Esq., Dilston, Northumberland.

Farm servants, or hinds, hired by the year, are furnished with a cottage, small garden, a cow's keep, and wages, paid partly in money and partly in corn and potatoes. A female or boy from each house is required to work on the farm at 8d. per day, except in harvest, then at 1s. or 1s. 6d.

The independent labourers, *i. e.*, those who are not hired by the year, but work for day's wages, have had till lately 2s. or 2s. 3d. per day; now all are reduced to 2s., and many to 1s. 3d.

Women are much employed in clearing land for the turnip crops, hoeing turnips, making hay, and in reaping. Those who are not bound to the farmer, in consequence of having a cottage free of rent, with coals carried from the pit, and other perquisites, get 10*d.* per day, for ordinary work, in both summer and winter, and in harvest their wages vary according to the demand,—from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* per day.

The females who work in the fields are generally the best attired and most healthy of the population.

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